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# [Impact of Social Entrepreneurship on Socio Economic Development and Employment Development in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa]

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**ABSTRACT**

This study examines the impact of social entrepreneurship on socio-economic development and employment development. This research followed a cross sectional, quantitative research design and survey research methodology which was undertaken in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan. For sampling Snowball sampling technique was used. Thus, by Andre 2022 sampling formula total sample size of 384 social entrepreneurs were selected from unknown population in province Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan. The obtained data from the questionnaires were examined through Smart PLS4 and SPSS software version 21. A Self-administrated questionnaire was used for the measurement items. The face validity of questionnaires was confirmed by expert. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient value for social entrepreneurship (.837), socio economic development (.914) and employment development (.886) for all items indicated high reliability of questionnaires. The results of the research study have shown a significant and positive association among social entrepreneurship and socio-economic development and employment development. The outcomes of the current study have some practical implication and precious and valuable suggestions for social entrepreneurs to understand the status and as well as relationship of social entrepreneurship with socio economic development and employment development particularly in the Province Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

**Keywords:** Social entrepreneurship, Socio economic development, Employment development

**Introduction**

During the last few decades the scholarly attention has been drawn towards the concept of social enterprises and social entrepreneurs. Social Entrepreneurship is important for the development of state of different portions of populations that have suffered and do not have the capability to change their situation, marginalized, different firms or people use the business orientated ideas in the entrepreneurial method for improvement in their existing positions in the society (Seelos & Mair, 2005; Thompson, 2002).

Entrepreneurship covers the approaches, activities and processes within the stipulated resources (Coulter, 2001). The term “entrepreneur” is defined differently in various time periods from social and economic aspects (Nicholls, 2012). It means putting an investment with innovative approach for implementation. Moreover, it focuses on the assessment of business undertaking within a specific locality (Munir, & Hussain, 2020).

From the researcher (Bowen, 1953), it is evident that Social Entrepreneurship (SE) concept has been around us since 1950s, but SE research have an integral part of entrepreneurial activities within the last decade. For instance, SE is an important instrument for alleviation poverty, women empowerment, social transformation (Bloom, 2009; Datta & Gailey, 2012; Ghauri, Tasavori, & Zaefarian, 2014). Keeping in view the diversity of SE attained from various branches of knowledge entrepreneurship, economics, sociology, anthropology (Weerawardena & Mort, 2006). Surprisingly SE has substantial debate for definition (Choi & Majumdar, 2014) and its challenges in methodological field (Kroeger & Weber, 2014).

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Rivera-Santos (2015) have the idea that SE programs are the basis of attaining socioeconomic development. It has a significant impact on both micro and macro level contribution in the process of economic development (Henry et al., 2003). In a study of re-examination of the theme of SE by the researchers Gibb and Cotton (1998) that besides its traditional benefits has several global, social, individual and organizational benefits too. Likewise, benefits on individual level focus problem solving skills and innovative skills for development. Furthermore, organizational benefits of SE has more focus on collective economic and social benefits. SE also deals with innovative solutions to social issues faced by societies. SE offered innovative means in order to tackle social problems, determined in their efforts to elevate the social fabrication of the society.

Thus, entrepreneurs are considered a vehicle of socioeconomic development and to promote sustainable development in economies. However, further investigation is needed as the issue of sustainability is still low in economies where technological change is very fast (Scherer, 1998). Furthermore, many entrepreneurs have low understanding of measuring or dealing with sustainability issues. In this connection proper research is needed to measure efficiently the sustainability achieved through SE.

Therefore, entrepreneurs always plays an important role in modernization, growth of the economy, the generation of jobs and wealth, and also improves the health sector. It is considered as self-employment and it is considered as the natural technique to solve issues with creating jobs, especially for youngsters (Papaleontiou et al., 2014).

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objectives of the research study are as under:

- To examine the relationship between social entrepreneurship and socio-economic development in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan
- To examine the relationship between social entrepreneurship and employment development in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study examines the effect of social entrepreneurship on employment opportunities and socioeconomic development sustainability. Secondly, the study is also significant from view point of SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) achieved through social entrepreneurship in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Thirdly, this study is literal contribution to the constraints of social entrepreneurship and socioeconomic development sustainability. This study will also lead ways to new avenues in the field of social entrepreneurship. Fourthly, the present study will lead to identification of new variables that may be highly significant in the field and area of sustainable development, socio-economic development, and employment development.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Social Entrepreneurship**

The people and organizations who use the economic resources and technological innovations for achievement of established social goals are known as Social entrepreneurs. Instead of just profit-seeking, its primarily objective is to pursue a human society (Noya, 2009). The main focus of the entrepreneurs is on promoting sustainable development. Moreover, entrepreneurship foster the technological changes and it is considered as a vehicle of socioeconomic development, however, considerable study is

required to look into the vague role specifically dealing with the issue of sustainability (Scherer, 1998). According to Dees (1998), although the term "social entrepreneurship" became popular in 1970, the idea of a socially conscious organization had been around for much longer. The concept of social entrepreneurship has seen rapid growth in the twenty-first century, drawing the attention of numerous academicians and researchers. (Perrini, Vurro & Costanzo, 2010).

#### **Socio Economic Development**

Socioeconomic development is a dynamic concept that encompasses economic, social, and environmental dimensions, influencing the well-being and quality of life of individuals and communities. The literature provides valuable insights into the complex interplay between socioeconomic factors and various aspects of development. The Development is considered as a multi-dimensional phenomenon. In another research study Das (1999) investigates that there are some major dimensions which includes: Education level, the level of economic growth, modernization, level of health care services, nutritional level, status of female, access to communication, the distribution of goods and services, and the quality of housing.

#### **Employment Development**

Human capital is considered as a very important and vital component of individual career development and organizational competitive advantage (Ployhart, et al., 2014). Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) are contributing in a meaningful way to socio-economic development i.e. Employment creation, entrepreneurship, industrial development and promotion in exports, (Miroro 2016; Taruté and Gatautis 2014). SMEs are playing very vital role in addressing the issues of national development, such as creations of jobs and income generation, and they are considering as pillars for development of skills, empowerment, poverty alleviation and sustainability of communities' livelihood. (Esselaar, Stock, and Ndiwalana 2007; Makoza and Chigona 2012).

#### **Social Entrepreneurship and Socio Economic Development**

Social entrepreneurship always plays a very important part in socio-economic development by addressing the challenges of society through bringing innovations in business models. Many research studies have discovered the impact of social entrepreneurship on alleviating poverty, economic growth, poverty and social progress. In the research study conducted by (Stephan, Uhlaner, & Stride, 2015) highlighted the role of institutional support, institutional configurations and institutional voids in shaping social entrepreneurship. They emphasized the importance of considering institutional factors in promoting social entrepreneurial activities, which can contribute significantly to economic and social development. Moreover, (Hessels, Van Gelderen, & Thurik, 2008) examined the determinants of entrepreneurial aspirations and motivations, emphasizing the impact of economic factors on different forms of entrepreneurship. Their findings suggested that GDP growth positively influences opportunity entrepreneurship, which can lead to economic development and job creation. Additionally (El Ebrashi, 2013) discussed the sustainable social impact of social entrepreneurship, emphasizing the role of social entrepreneurs in creating new social institutions, promoting social movements, and mobilizing resources for sustainable development. The study of (Zulkefly, Abdul Ghani, Chin, Hamid, & Abdullah, 2022) focused on modeling and predicting the social

impact of social entrepreneurship. They highlighted the economic implications of social entrepreneurship, such as creating employment opportunities, generating business revenue, and enhancing economic sustainability. This study underscores the multifaceted benefits of social entrepreneurship on economic development. In the light of above literature, the following hypothesis was developed

H1: There is significant positive relationship between Social Entrepreneurship and Socio economic Development.

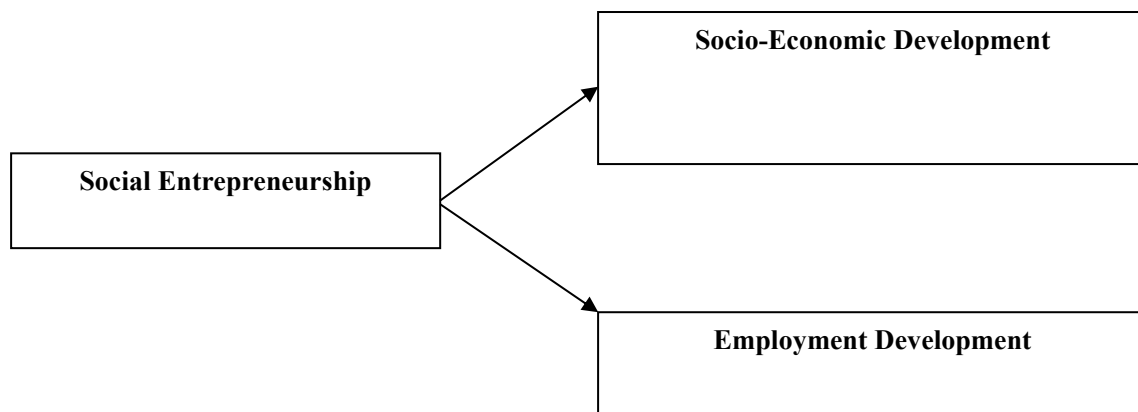
#### **Social Entrepreneurship and Employment Development**

Social entrepreneurship has been acknowledged as a significant driver of employment development, contributing to economic growth and social progress. Various studies have investigated the relationship between social entrepreneurship and employment outcomes, shedding light on the impact of entrepreneurial activities on job creation and sustainable employment.

According to the study of (Osabohien, Worgwu, & Al-Faryan, 2022) revealed a significant positive impact of social entrepreneurship and technology diffusion on future employment prospects, highlighting the potential of innovative business models to drive job creation and economic development. Additionally, (Ijiwole, 2019) has studied the effect of social entrepreneurs on creations of jobs and reducing poverty emphasizing the role of social entrepreneurs' initiatives in tackling unemployment challenges and promoting socio-economic development. The study underscored the importance of social entrepreneurship in fostering job opportunities and reducing poverty levels. Moreover, (Kazmi, 2018) explored the perceived barriers to youth entrepreneurship in Pakistan and Hungary, emphasizing the positive impact of new business enterprises on employment generation, poverty alleviation, and socio-economic development. Their study highlighted the potential of entrepreneurship in addressing unemployment issues and fostering inclusive growth. Furthermore, (Jelinčić, Baturina, & Franić, 2022) investigated the impact of service learning on social entrepreneurship and youth employment. In the light of above literature, the following hypothesis was developed.

H2: There is significant positive relationship between Social Entrepreneurship and Employment Development.

#### **Conceptual Framework**



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

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### Methodology

#### Measurement

For this study to measure items self-administrated questionnaires were used. For data analysis smart PLS software was used.

#### Reliability and Validity

The Cronbach's alpha values for SE (.837), SED (.914) and ED (.886), shown high consistency of questionnaire. Further, Table 1 shows that composite reliability is over the estimation of 0.7 as suggested by (Hair et al., 2011) that confirmed reliability.

#### Convergent Validity

The AVE (average variance extracted) values for every all constructs are over the estimation of (0.5) value as suggested by (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2011) thus confirmed convergent validity as shown in Table-1.

**Table-1 Reliability Scores**

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
ED	0.886	0.897	0.929	0.813
SE	0.837	0.819	0.883	0.567
SED	0.914	0.934	0.930	0.630

#### Discriminant Validity

To determine discriminant validity the Fornell-Larcker Criterion technique was used and the results shown that general guidelines of Fornell-Larcker Criterion are fulfilled as shown in table-2.

**Table-2: Fornell-Larcker Criterion of Discriminant Validity**

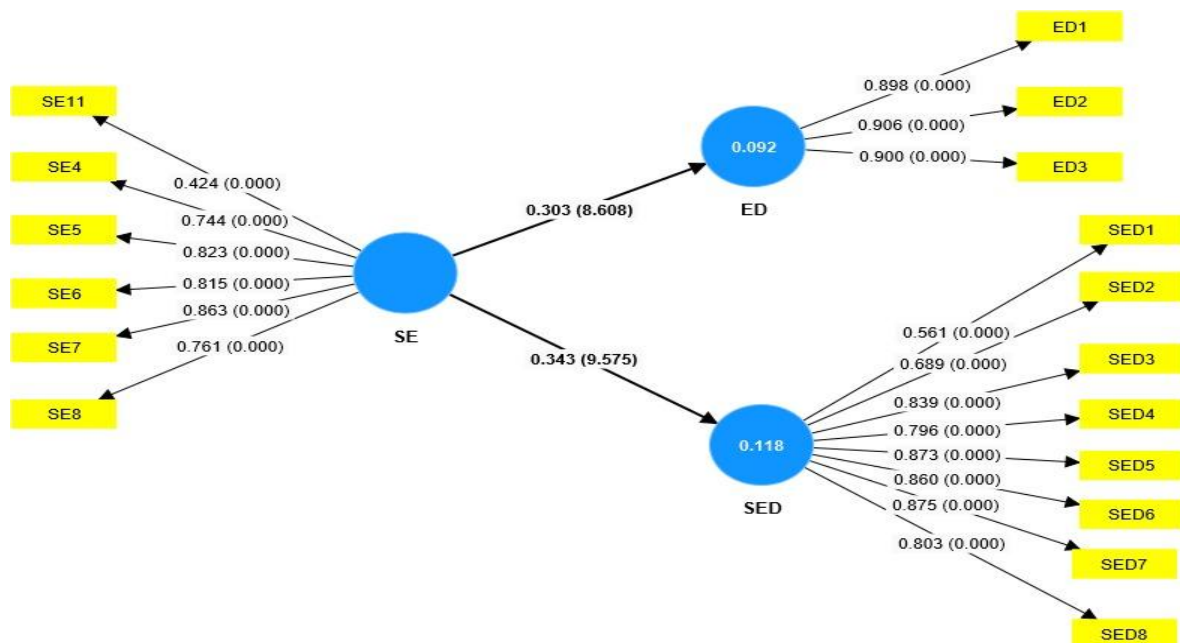
	ED	SE	SED
ED	0.902		
SE	0.303	0.753	
SED	0.470	0.343	0.794

#### Structural Model

For measurement of structure model shown in Table-3 and Figure-2. The outcomes determine that Social entrepreneurship (SE) has a positive and significant relationship on Employment Development at (beta=0.303, t-value=8.608 & p-value<0.000). While, SE has also a positive and significant relationship on Socio economic development at (beta=0.343, t-value=9.575 & p-value<0.000).

**Table 3: Structural Model Results**

	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values	Decision
Social Entrepreneurship -> Employment Development	0.303	0.308	0.035	8.608	0.00	Accepted
Socio Entrepreneurship -> Socio-Economic Development	0.343	0.349	0.036	9.575	0.00	Accepted



**Figure 2: Structure Model**

## Discussion

**Hypotheses 1:** There is a significant positive relationship between SE & SED.

The result of this research study have confirmed positive and significant relationship among social entrepreneurship and Scio economic development which support the study of (Mair and Marti 2006; Hessels et al. 2008; El-Chaarani & Raimi 2022; Osabohien, et al 2023). Thus there is positive influence of social entrepreneurship on business sustainability, job creation, and economic growth, emphasizing the importance of social entrepreneurship in fostering sustainable development. Moreover, social entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in advancing sustainable development goals by addressing social and environmental challenges through innovative business models. Therefore, due to the various challenges raised by sustainable development, Pakistan and other countries, or in specific organizations and other social actors, are questioning the roles it plays and also wishes to take some proactive approaches towards social responsibility.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is a significant positive connection between SE & ED.

Result of this research study have also confirmed positive and significant relationship among social entrepreneurship and employment development which support the study of Parker Harris (2014); Asif et al (2018); Ijiwole (2019); Osabohien et al. (2022); Jelinčić et al. (2022). Thus, social entrepreneurship has been acknowledged as a significant driver of employment development, contributing to economic growth and social progress. Furthermore, like other countries employability is a major issue for Pakistan. Different efforts were done for the solution of the issues and one among them is promoting entrepreneurship development having intention to intensify creation of entrepreneurs between graduates by creating opportunities for employment on their own and for others as well. Therefore, by social entrepreneurship activities the government can cope with the unemployment issue.

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### **Conclusion**

Generally, it can be concluded easily that yet the social entrepreneurship environment in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan is still in its early stage. Although Social entrepreneurs are playing a very significant role to the society by creations of Jobs, empowering the women, youth and marginalized groups as well. They are also working for the environmental and social impacts as well as a profitable organization. Though, even if their numerous contributions for solving the social problem are very large, their existence and work done up till now are not well appreciated and encouraged.

It is also concluded that many challenges like Financial resources, human resources and legal factors are faced by social entrepreneurs i.e. little awareness about social entrepreneurship, minimum support from community very weak channels of distribution, less opportunities for interest free loans, weak tax system, barriers to initial capital and very high cost of labours.

### **Theoretical and Practical Implications**

This research study contributes to the existing literature of social entrepreneurship, Socio economic development and employment development. Moreover, the findings of this study also confirm that there is a significant relationship between social entrepreneurship and socio economic development and employment development. Thus, the current research study has made some theoretical contribution, and also gives a significant contribution to the theories such as Institutional theory of entrepreneurship, and Structuration theory of entrepreneurship and proposes that these two theories can also be used to interface and conceptualize social entrepreneurship to various variables. Furthermore, this study has provided valuable information's to the researchers especially interested in social entrepreneurship for further research and the social and welfare activities on the part of organizations doing volunteer activities, government and private organizations, and other institutions as well. In addition, the employment generation, social and educational importance, this research may also be a foundation for researchers in future in the field of social entrepreneurship in relationship with sustainable developmental goals, as the current research study may also provide a foundation stone for researchers in near future to discover the most relevant areas of interest.

The outcomes of the current study have some practical implication and precious and valuable suggestions for social entrepreneurs, socio economic development and employment development particularly in the Province Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Some of the practical implications of this research study are as under. The outcome demonstrated significant positive relationship between social entrepreneurship, socioeconomic development and employment development. Hence this research study has specified some of the variables that may be very important to the decision makers specially in the area of social entrepreneurship, employment development and sustainable socio-economic development.

### **Recommendations**

Results of this research study some of the following recommendations are suggested.

1. The Print and electronic media should take the responsibility for creating awareness in the society to propagate the importance of social entrepreneurship



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by different media platforms.

2. Enough support should be given by the government for facilitating the social entrepreneurship and also give the facility and accessibility to interest free credits and other financial services to make them able to run their business and also maximize their social impact.
3. Government should give political commitment to treat social entrepreneurs in making different policies, laws and procedures that will enhance the existing operations as well as formation of new social enterprises.
4. Social enterprises must also struggle for better and competitive provision of services to their beneficiaries, to gain the attention from all concerned stakeholders including the society.
5. As the entrepreneurship course taught in higher business education, the social entrepreneurship course must be taught in order to emphasis the significance of the subject.
6. The existing social entrepreneurs shall also strengthen their unions and other legal bodies to influence the concerned government officials.

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