THE IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXTS ON THE DIRECTION AND STRATEGIES OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP (SUMMARY)

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SUMMARY

THE IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXTS ON THE DIRECTION AND STRATEGIES OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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Principal Topic

Prior research has shown that entrepreneurship is strongly affected by the cardinal environmental dimensions encompassing munificence, dynamism, and complexity (Dess & Beard, 1984; Sharfman & Dean, 1991; Mitchell et al., 2011). Resource availability, in particular, may affect the rate of new venture creation (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Baker & Nelson, 2005; Edelman & Yli-Renko, 2010). Such resource availability due to environmental munificence, dynamism and complexity may explain the diversity of socio-entrepreneurial ventures, and their direction and strategies. Our focus was on the situation of women in different institutional environments and the effect of environmental munificence, dynamism and complexity on strategies of new social entrepreneurial ventures (SEVs) pursuing women's advancement and enfranchisement as key objectives.

Methods

Using NVivo we identified the key themes or nodes characterizing the environmental dimensions and types of disenfranchisement arising in particular institutional contexts and their potential influence upon the direction and strategies utilized by social entrepreneurial ventures. Following prior research (Navis & Glynn, 2010), we developed special code books for each of the analyzed subjects.

Results and Implications

As hypothesized, low environmental munificence was associated with SEVs’ attempts to combat and reverse both economic and cognitive disenfranchisement. This impetus was realized through the pursuit of educational strategies; environmental sustainability strategies; and self-support and sourcing strategies. Environmental complexity was associated with SEVs’ attempts to combat and reverse political disenfranchisement. This impetus was realized through the pursuit of anti-discriminatory strategies and empowerment strategies as well as alliance strategies. Finally, environmental dynamism was associated with SEVs’ attempts to combat and reverse social disenfranchisement. This impetus was realized through the pursuit of social integration and social support strategies seeking to overcome the disembeddedness of the fragmented modern society. Analyzing the effect of disenfranchisement faced by a group in a particular institutional context on the direction of social entrepreneurial ventures allows developing a better understanding of social entrepreneurs’ choice of effective strategies.

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