TURNING EMOTIONAL MOTIVATIONS INTO SOCIAL GOALS: THE INTERRELATIONS BETWEEN SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS’ PASSION, SELF AND SOCIAL IDENTITIES (SUMMARY)

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TURNING EMOTIONAL MOTIVATIONS INTO SOCIAL GOALS: THE INTERRELATIONS BETWEEN SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS’ PASSION, SELF AND SOCIAL IDENTITIES

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Main Topic

Entrepreneurial passion plays an important role in new venture formation and performance (Cardon, 2008; Cardon et. al. 2009). Passion evokes prolonged intense feelings toward venture-related objects (Cardon, 2008). Although passion is recognized as one of the key entrepreneurs motivators (Shane, Locke and Collins, 2003), entrepreneurial passion has not been studied systematically especially in the field of social entrepreneurship. Social entrepreneurs are motivated by ‘social advocacy’ based on emotional motivation that reflects personal experiences and a desire to create social objectives based life experiences (Yitshaki and Kropp, 2011).

Research on motivating factors for social entrepreneurs is limited. We argue that social entrepreneurs’ passion and self-identity are highly interrelated. Social entrepreneurs identify new opportunities to remedy social injustice based on high social awareness, personal experience and their passion. Social entrepreneurs’ passion represents a deepening of emotional motivations to create salient collective action that is congruent with their self- and social identities.

Methods/Key Propositions

The study is based on interviews conducted with 45 Israeli social entrepreneurs based on life stories methodology. The life stories method is an inductive approach, reflective in nature, that examines respondents way to express their self-identity by the references they make to past, present and future actions (Lieblich et al. 1998; McAdams, 1999; Hytti, 2005; McKenzie, 2005; Rae, 2005). Preliminary analysis indicates that passion is dominant in social entrepreneurs’ discourse. Social entrepreneurs’ construct their self-identity based on their self-conception of their ability to contribute to social justice. Social entrepreneurs’ self-identities appear to be interrelated to their passion to provide social solution for a problem they faced as individuals in the past. By doing so, social entrepreneurs transform individual sensitivity related to their self-identity into collective actions.

Implications

The findings add to the literature by empirical examination of the interrelations between social entrepreneurs passion, self and social identities. Theoretically, the study contributes to the understanding that social entrepreneurs are motivated emotionally and that they tend to expose their emotional aspects of actions by interrelating between their passions and self-identity. The findings suggest multi-stages of motivation along the venture evolution. It is also suggested that social entrepreneurs’ self and social identities are nurtured by the high visibility of their action and the legitimacy they get in the social discourse.

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