

International Conference on Strategic Innovative Marketing, IC-SIM 2014, September 1-4, 2014,
Madrid, Spain

Brand Orientation: A Case Study Approach within the Context of Social Entrepreneurial Businesses

Holger J. Schmidt^{a,*}, Carsten Baumgarth^b

^aKoblenz University of Applied Sciences, Konrad-Zuse-Str. 1, 56075 Koblenz, Germany

^bBerlin School of Economics and Law, Badensche Straße 5, 10825 Berlin, Germany

Abstract

International attention is increasingly being drawn to Social Entrepreneurial Businesses (SEOs). Basically, these new types of businesses aim to solve social, environmental or societal problems by using modern management practices and means of innovation. Compared with traditional non-profit organizations, many SEOs strive to work profitable: They have earned income strategies or are even profit-driven. Their founders are commonly called Social Entrepreneurs.

Although SEOs are a popular field of research, so far little attention has been given to their different strategic orientations. Strategic orientations can be defined as guiding principles that influence the strategy-making and concrete behavior of organizations. Strategic orientations that have been researched intensively in the past include customer, market, competitive, employee, product, resource, entrepreneurial and – most recently – brand orientation.

In this paper, a conceptual model of brand orientation in the context of SEOs is introduced. Then, a case study method based on in-depth-interviews with Social Entrepreneurs is used to illustrate and to discuss the model.

© 2015 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

Peer-review under responsibility of I-DAS- Institute for the Dissemination of Arts and Science.

Keywords: Strategic Orientations; Brand Orientation; Social Entrepreneurial Businesses; Social Entrepreneurs

1. Introduction

The Social Entrepreneurship Organization (SEO) is a new kind of business that, despite of the young age of the term, has already been discussed widely in the press, in politics, and in science. The founders of such SEOs set

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +49-261-9528-182 ; fax: +49-261-9528-150

E-mail address: hjschmidt@hs-koblenz.de

social priorities without excluding well-known business principles – instead, they use them, putting them in a new framework. In general, SEOs aim at generating social impact by using innovative solutions to resolve well-known problems (Weber et al. 2013; Dacin et al. 2010). They work profit-oriented, but their earnings stay completely or at least to major parts within the organization (Yunus 2010, S. XVII).

In the last years, there has been a lot of research around SEOs. Commonly, those studies focused on their overarching purpose or on the processes underlying innovative and entrepreneurial activity (Luke/Chu 2013). A key, yet under researched concept in explaining the survival and success of SEOs is the concept of strategic orientations (Schönbucher 2010), sometimes called “the corporate mindset” (Talke 2007) or the “dominant general management logic” (Prahalad/Bettis 1986). A company’s strategic orientation can significantly influence the degree to which it accomplishes its goals from a macro- and micro-perspective (Gatignon/Xuereb 1997). Aside from the work of Ma et al. (2012) and Hong/Cho (2012), not much attention has been given to the impact of different strategic orientations on the performance of these new, hybrid social businesses. One strategic orientation that in recent years has been discussed within the profit sector is the so called brand orientation. In this paper, we develop a model of brand orientation within the context of SEOs and test it with the goal of validation by using secondary data generated by a study that conducted qualitative interviews with social entrepreneurs.

2. Literature Review

2.1. *Social Entrepreneurs, Social Entrepreneurship and Social Entrepreneurship Organizations (SEOs)*

SEOs are founded and managed by social entrepreneurs. Although the use of the term social entrepreneur is increasing rapidly, there seems to be some confusion about what exactly a social entrepreneur is and does. The term as currently used seems vague and undefined. This lack of a common concept raises questions regarding which social or profit-making activities fall within the spectrum of social entrepreneurship (Abu-Saifan 2012). Dacin et al. (2010) identify 37 definitions of social entrepreneurship or social entrepreneur, the most common one being the one provided by Dess (1998, revised 2001). According to Dess, social entrepreneurs “play the role of change agents in the social sector, by:

- Adopting a mission to create and sustain social value (not just private value),
- Recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission,
- Engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning,
- Acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand, and
- Exhibiting a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created” (Dess 2001, 4).

For Cho (2006, 36), social entrepreneurship is “a set of institutional practices combining the pursuit of financial objectives with the pursuit and promotion of substantive and terminal values.” According to Yunus (2008, 32), “any innovative initiative to help people may be described as social entrepreneurship. The initiative may be economic or non-economic, for-profit or not-for-profit.” Zahra et al. (2009, 5) assert that social entrepreneurship “encompasses the activities and processes undertaken to discover, define and exploit opportunities to enhance social wealth by creating new ventures or managing existing organizations in an innovative manner.” According to Abu-Saifan (2012), it is important to set the function of social entrepreneurship apart from other socially oriented activities such as philanthropy, social activism or environmentalism and to identify the boundaries within which social entrepreneurs operate. He views the social entrepreneur as a “mission-driven individual who uses a set of entrepreneurial behaviors to deliver a social value to the less privileged, all through an entrepreneurially oriented entity that is financially independent, self-sufficient, or sustainable” (Abu-Saifan 2012, 25).

Many approaches to defining SEOs focus on the primary mission and outcomes of the social entrepreneur. This highlights the fact that SEOs aim at generating social impact by using innovative solutions to resolve well-known problems (Weber et al. 2013; Dacin et al. 2010). The above-mentioned definitions of social entrepreneurship therefore agree that the concept places a central focus on two features, i.e. social or environmental outcomes and innovation. Many authors also emphasize that social entrepreneurs distribute their socially innovative models via

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1111080>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1111080>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)