

Social Entrepreneurship and Social Work for Transformational Change: Re-Envisioning the Social Work Profession, Education, and Practice

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Abstract: *Social entrepreneurship is a social action that the profession of social work can use as a working model to propel the profession forward economically, professionally, and socially. Social entrepreneurship can help mitigate complex and vexing social and environmental issues in the future, while creating a larger social impact and transformational shift to social change and social justice, through the social enterprise. The social enterprise brings social policy efforts to life through immediate social action. This article will discuss the historical perspective of the social work profession and social entrepreneurship, the imperative need for social innovation and social impact through the utility of education of social entrepreneurship, and the social enterprise in social work practice models.*

Keywords: *Social entrepreneurship, social enterprise, social innovation, social impact, social justice, contemporary social problems, social work transformational change*

The profession of social work was formalized due to the economic and social pandemonium wrought by the industrial revolution, supremely the societal struggle to cope with the consequential large-scale urban-based poverty and its underlying problems (Lau, 2020). Currently, those who enter the social work profession achieve high credentials such as graduate degrees and licensure exams, but they are met with laborious work and low pay due to the profession's historic orientation. More than 100 years later, the social work profession is now pondering, where do we go from here? In the true nature of the social work profession, we must begin where we are, while operating in the profession's three tiers of micro, mezzo, and macro practice. In the profession's historical context, emerging social workers have been educated to work for others as the National Association of Social Worker's (NASW) *Code of Ethics* seldom discusses social entrepreneurship beyond micro-level private practice. However, the profession of social work was birthed from the creation of the social enterprise of the Jane Adams Hull House and many other social work pioneer settlement houses. These houses were developed during the progressive era as institutions in an inner-city area providing an ecosystem inclusive of educational, recreational, and other social services to the community and families. To address the overworking and underpayment of today's social workers, the social work profession should return to its roots of the social enterprise. Today, a social enterprise can be described a community-based, for-profit business aimed at building a sustainable, fair, and socially just future by providing services which facilitate a social need within a specific population centered in connectedness, equality, and solidarity.

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Due to the lack of social entrepreneurship competencies in social work curriculum, there is a synapse in education and implementation in carrying out various social work entrepreneurship services outside of nonprofits (e.g., Briar-Lawson et al., 2020; Nandon et al., 2019). Similar to the industrial revolution, the current social climate of racial unrest, exacerbated by a longstanding global pandemic, has adversely impacted many people throughout all levels of the socioeconomic stratification. Parelle to the industrial revolution, the social work profession has played a strong role in the world's response to the pandemic. Social workers have created and advocated for social inclusion for the most vulnerable populations, provided awareness, served on task groups and coalitions, facilitated mental health therapy, created and advised policies, engaged in philanthropy, strengthened communities, conducted research and data analytics, lectured, and provided psychosocial support in a myriad of other ways. Now social workers must find various ways to participate effectively in the pandemic-related recovery and rebuilding on a larger scale through economic and community development. This is where social work social entrepreneurs come in. These entrepreneurs can fill the social and financial gaps that Covid has created, providing social action through coaching, resources, support, and technical advancement to all people in a way that generates an increase in income. Social entrepreneurship differs from traditional forms of entrepreneurship, as the primary goal of the social venture is to address social problems and needs that are as yet unmet; the driving force of such ventures is social value creation (Beugré, 2016).

Berzin (2012) defines social work entrepreneurship as a transformational practice that creates social value. They turn to authors such as Dees (1998), who links the skill set of the entrepreneur with the purpose of the social worker and surmised mission-driven business acumen would lead to the alleviation of suffering. Where Reisch and other social policy advocates see the marketplace as the source of problems, Berzin, Dees, and others see the marketplace as the template for solutions.

As stated by McNeill (2011), whilst the practice of social entrepreneurship and social enterprise are distinguishable, the terms have begun to become interchangeable over the past fifteen years. Since the terms of social entrepreneurship and social enterprise first began to appear in text and practice, advocates and practitioners have discussed and debated definitions, forms of practice, and other technical considerations in the field of social work. Definitions remain diverse and contested. The social enterprise refers to a broad set of approaches that use business acumen to address social goals for social action. Though minimally used in social work for a long time, social enterprise has recently been thrust into the spotlight in debates about the future of social policy and community services (Gray et al., 2003). It is imperative social workers conceptualize the epistemology and implications of the social enterprise if they are to apply them critically, reflectively, and responsibly, as well as partake in debates in reference to its relevance in promoting individual and community empowerment (Gray et al., 2003). However, being in the capacity of the business sector in the field of social work can result in new service delivery models and concepts which would not have been established under traditional auspices, therefore sustaining the profession of social work. It is the responsibility of professional social workers to experimentally test the effectiveness of such models to determine whether to continue them or to revert to traditional models (Germak & Singh, 2010).

In the competitive global market, many professions and roles have encroached upon the profession of social work; as the world changes, so must the profession. Social work must alter how and whom it serves in order to generate professional and monetary growth, and social entrepreneurship is an essential tool in this shift. However, this alteration must take place without sacrificing the profession's ultimate goals to serve, impact, and empower vulnerable populations. This article will focus on action-oriented components of social entrepreneurship, social work education, social innovation, social impact, and the social enterprise in order to pivot and rebrand the social work profession. Social workers must make this pivot by changing our perception of vulnerable populations in our care models and including social work entrepreneurship in social work practice models. Social entrepreneurship is a mindset, and it establishes awareness of the importance of social change and sustainability for a transformational shift to society. This sets the profession of social work and its practitioners apart by applying business and entrepreneurship competencies in the social sector, including revenue strategies that further the social work mission, social work education, social work policy, and the social enterprise—these elements of social entrepreneurship will be identified further in an all-encompassing holistic approach to the profession of social work.

Literature Review

The Historical Perspective of the Social Work Profession and Social Entrepreneurship

Ambrosino et al. (2015) indicated that as early as 1814 in Scotland, the Reverend Thomas Chalmers expressed concern over the wasteful and inefficient approaches of relief programs. Chalmers encouraged the development of a more humane and effective system for providing services and support. The Progressive Era (1895-1915) is often hailed as a proud moment in social work history as early figures in social work have been lauded for their efforts on behalf of social action. Jane Addams is frequently chosen as a model of the “involved” social worker and social entrepreneur. Not only was the Progressive Era a prominent time for social work advocacy, but these were also the years during which social work was established as a distinct vocation. Case managers from charity organizations and settlement houses that existed in that era are heralded for having been in the vanguard of advocacy and social reform through social enterprise development.

According to Fernando (2015), in the United States, more than 400 houses were formulated across a 20-year period in the early part of the 20th century. Organizations such as Hull House were created to meet the social, economic, and cultural needs of select disadvantaged populations. These organizations have framed the way social welfare has been done in this country since the 1900s. Although the spread of these organizations has not been considered an entrepreneurial endeavor, the vast growth of settlement houses across England and the United States demonstrates that early social workers created socially innovative organizations to meet a variety of contemporary social problems.

Ambrosino et al. (2015) further mentioned that for more than 100 years, social workers have entered the profession with a desire to serve people in need, especially the vulnerable,

and have since been preoccupied with professionalizing social work. The structured approach to managing charitable efforts quickly resulted in the need for the trained social workers movement initiated by Mary Richmond who inaugurated the first training program for social workers at the New York School of Applied Philanthropy. However, African Americans did not share in the country's good fortune as they were not allowed to participate in settlement houses or receive care from the settlement homes.

Between the 1890s-1920s rampant anti-African American literature was published throughout the South and the nation, with many scientists and social scientists publishing in journals about racial inequities and the inferiority of African Americans. African Americans were viewed as intellectually inferior, uncivilized, and immoral. As a result of institutionalized racism and discrimination, African Americans began erecting social welfare organizations. African American Women's Clubs were formed by historic women social worker pioneers such as Ida B. Wells and Mary Churchill. The social enterprises created for African Americans included the National Association of Colored Women founded 1896; the National League of Urban Conditions Among Negroes founded 1911, which was synonymous with social work in the African American community by 1916; and the American branch of the Universal Negro Improvement Association formalized in 1916 (Carlton-LaNey, 2001). Many African American settlement houses sprung up during that time, including the White Rose Mission and Industrial Association founded in New York City in 1897 by Victoria Earl Mathews. This association included a mother's club, adult classes, home lodging for young women, service for domestic workers, traveler's aide, kindergarten classes, a social club, relief assistance, and a library made available to members of the community (Waites, 2001).

Haynes and Mickelson (2000) wrote that with the New Deal era of the 1930s came another wave of engagement from social workers. During the years from the New Deal through the 1950s, social work matured as a profession and had the methods and sanction to engage in social reform. Schools of social work developed community organizing curriculum. Social workers became active in antiwar, civil rights, and welfare organizations. Black social workers such as serial social entrepreneur and powerbroker, Whitney M. Young Jr., were active in the political arena.

One of the most significant and controversial efforts to achieve social reform in the 1960s came through the Economic Opportunities Act of 1964, commonly known as the War on Poverty. The objective of this act was to eliminate poverty through institutional change (Ambrosino et al., 2015). The hallmark of social worker's engagement in the social reform of this era revolved around focus on community organizing, social action, increasing economic opportunities, and empowering (rather than "fixing") the poor—social workers commonly accomplished this through different business endeavors. Initially, this movement did not incorporate social workers because the intent was to rely less heavily on professionals and instead acknowledge that groups in the community were experts on how to escape their own poverty (Chapin, 2017). However, social workers were providing advocacy through community involvement for social justice through social entrepreneurship and the social enterprise. The 1950s and 60s brought a variety of events that distressed the country—and the settlement house movement—to the core. Against the backdrop of the undeclared war in Vietnam that generated ever rising phrenzy, there were

intertwined movements of profound significance for low-income neighborhoods. One of the endings to the settlement house movement was the rediscovery of poverty and a crusade for its elimination, and the other was the Civil Rights Movement (Chambers, 1986).

Reid-Merritt (2010) indicated most notably that the Civil Rights Movement was a strong social enterprise in the community that gathered all walks of life to support the need for equality and equity of African Americans and Black people in the United States in efforts to end racism. Due to racism, African Americans were not allowed to join settlement houses, African American social workers relied heavily on Black intellectuals, sociologists, and psychologists such as Carter Godwin Woodson, W.E.B. DuBois, E. Franklin Frazer, William Cross, Na'im Akbar, Whitney M. Young Jr., and Kobi Kabon. Understanding this important historic role that social work has played in the battle for civil rights not only provides inspiration for social workers, but it also illuminates the influence social work has had on society as a whole (Social Work License Map, 2013). Decades after the Civil Rights Movement, considering the stagnation and lack of federal programs from previous administrations, the Clinton administration placed greater pressure on nonprofits to fill gaps in service provision. In 1996, the controversial welfare reform bill known as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families was passed. During this decade, schools of social work received increased funding for research and evaluation activities in areas such as domestic violence, child welfare, mental health, and aging that shifted the social work paradigm (Simmons University, 2021). This increased funding led to the growth of the social work profession into what it is today. In the current era of mass change, the profession should implement new skillsets in the growing economy in order to participate in the global competitive market by creating social change on a larger level, using the social enterprise as a conduit.

The Need for Social Work Rebranding

In order to address the demands of the profession, the NASW's Code of Ethics underwent a formal and thorough revision process in 2021 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the racial and social justice crises (National Association of Social Workers [NASW], 2021). Therefore, NASW (2021) states the primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, or living in poverty. According to Kurzman (2000), social workers operating in industries outside of traditional social work must not only abide by the NASW Code of Ethics, but also establish a "normative discipline of morality that underscores the principles of advocacy and equity" (p. 160). A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession's focus on individual well-being in a social context and the well-being of society. Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living. Social workers promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients. The term "clients" is here used inclusively to refer to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice. These activities may be in the form of direct practice, community organizing, supervision, consultation, administration, advocacy,

social and political action, policy development and implementation, education, and research and evaluation. Social workers seek to enhance the capacity of people to address their own needs. Social workers also seek to promote the responsiveness of organizations, communities, and other social institutions to individuals' needs and social problems (NASW, 2021).

One problem with the public's perception of social work as a profession is the unrestricted use of the title "social worker." Paraprofessionals, including technicians and social service aides, whose job qualifications may derive from life experiences or from educational backgrounds in fields other than social work, are often labeled as social workers alongside professionally trained individuals who hold a BSW or MSW degree from an accredited social work education program (Crocker-Billingsley, 2015). This indiscriminate use of the title "social worker" causes public confusion and is the principal impediment to the unequivocal recognition of social work as a profession (NASW, 1987). In the minds of many, social workers are identified as "welfare" workers who are employed in public assistance programs (Ambrosino et al., 2015)

Boles (2021) articulated that to begin the rebranding process inclusive of social entrepreneurship concepts, we must define social work in terms that are understandable to the business world. The social worker's perspective equips and qualifies social workers to take on some of the world's most pressing business and social challenges and can transform business, which confirms the need to rebrand (Boles, 2021). Following the lack of unanimity in earlier literature, Nouman and Cnaan's (2021) research goal was to provide some clarification and define social entrepreneurship. As a result, the authors defined social entrepreneurship as a vital practice in social work that delivers pioneering, unique, and prolonged solutions to difficult and pervasive societal issues (Nouman & Cnaan, 2021). Social entrepreneurship provides a revitalization of social work's action from individuals, groups and / or communities by allowing social guidance assistants to act proactively, focusing always on critical reflection, applying their experience, knowledge, and skills in the most dynamic situations through a social enterprise lens (Germak & Singh, 2010).

According to Mouro (2006), the professional future of social work depends on its own capacity of self-confrontation by meeting itself in the reality of where it is, and reconstruction of its intervention styles and the re-identification of social problems, by beginning with the end in mind, as they are among the best prepared professionals to respond to the world's social problems. Given the tremendous need for solutions to today's pressing social challenges, it is time for social workers to stand up and embrace much of the business sense found in social entrepreneurship, a hybrid of social work macro practice principles and business innovation activities (Germak & Singh, 2010).

Berzin's (2012) makes plain the need for the rebranding of social work to encompass social entrepreneurship. According to Berzin (2012),

Although the business and public policy communities have ignited a national movement toward embracing social entrepreneurship as a laudable enterprise and a critical piece in addressing social problems, social work remains notably absent from the discussion and definition of this field. Though the values and practices of social entrepreneurship are closely aligned with social work, social work scholars

and institutions have been less at the forefront of this movement than have representatives of other disciplines. (Berzin, 2012, p. 185)

Forbes author Josh Bersin (2018) identified through data that companies today must be social in a truly extrinsic sense. Customers, stakeholders, communities, business partners, and employees all have an expansive impact on a business's brand, growth, and profitability. Facilitating a social enterprise illustrates proceeding beyond a focal point of revenue and profit and distinctly comprehending that we all operate in an ecosystem. All the relationships in the community and social arena are equally important (Bersin, 2018). Social entrepreneurship is a process in which social entrepreneurs establish business ventures called the social enterprise. By instituting the social enterprise, businesses strive to convey fundamental, systematic, and sustainable social change in whatever field they work, such as education or healthcare, economic development, or social work (Dees, 1998). Social entrepreneurship has been viewed as a method of ameliorating the position of the disadvantaged groups in the society as well as the environment, facilitating connectedness (Hibbert et al., 2001). The social enterprise is committed to nurturing economic empowerment and self-determination among the individuals in the community through its socio-political activities. By empowering the community, social enterprise amplifies the productivity and ascends the assets of the individuals in the community (Wallace, 1999).

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and European Union (OECD & European Union, 2017), social enterprises are long-standing agents of inclusive growth and democratization of the economic and social spheres. They have demonstrated resilience amid economic adversity, all while addressing contemporary social problems and socioeconomic challenges in social innovative procedures, re-integrating people back to the labor market and contributing to overall social cohesion. Social enterprises are an operator in the social economy whose main objective is to have a social impact rather than make a profit for their owners or shareholders. It operates by providing goods and services for the market in an entrepreneurial and innovative fashion, using profits to achieve social objectives. Social enterprises are managed in an open and responsible manner and, in particular, involve employees, consumers and stakeholders affected by its commercial activities (European Commission, 2011). The social policy and public debate increasingly call attention to the contribution of social enterprises in tackling socio-economic challenges—such as widespread unemployment and increased inequalities—often in socially innovative and sustainable ways at the local, regional, and global levels. More precisely, social enterprises provide the opportunity to disadvantaged individuals to integrate or re-integrate into the labor market while contributing mainly to building cohesive and creative societies (OECD, 1999; Noya & Clarence, 2007).

United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF, 2020), inclusive of social workers and other helping professions, reported that a wide range of stakeholders, including policy makers, entrepreneurs, citizens, and investors have become increasingly interested in social enterprises and social entrepreneurship as a result of this positive dynamic; Millennials and Generation Z in particular are displaying great willingness to participate actively in addressing societal issues through social entrepreneurship (Hill, 2022). Many social workers are heretofore exposed to the business sector by virtue of their working in nonprofit environments. Encompassing nearly 1.6 million organizations while

experiencing an aggregate budget of approximately \$820 billion, the nonprofit sector in the United States has a robust socioeconomic influence (Bain & Company, 2006). Social workers and the human service enterprises that they manage sit squarely in the midst of this competition. “As responsible social work professionals, we would be remiss not to *mind our own business* and join the ever-increasing ranks of social entrepreneurs” (Germak & Singh, 2010, p. 80).

Brinckerhoff (2000) adequately expounded on the client need versus client demand, stating that conceptualization of market demand is so fundamental to the success of a for-profit business, but it can also be explored in a social services context. What do our clients candidly want? Is what we dictate that the client needs, really what they want? In a sense, a client’s right to self-determination is impeded by programs that dictate what a client needs. Questions of client’s rights and autonomy can be assuredly resolved in a social entrepreneurship paradigm. When a business is immune from dependency on government contracts and designated charitable donations, the business can act in response to market demand and, in fact, develop services in reciprocity to what consumers are acquiescent to pay for (Brinckerhoff, 2000).

Fernando (2015) posited that today’s world is experiencing unprecedented complexities, and governments, businesses and nonprofits have longevity in solving these contemporary social problems. The economic recession of 2007 exposed a significant decline in public and private support for social services (Pitt-Catsouphes et al., 2012). It also exposed the need for social workers to facilitate new ways of addressing the complex, interwoven problems of poverty, racism, social inequity, and discrimination. This need results from the complex, unprecedented social issues we face in the United States from a global pandemic with many variants to racial injustice, global warming, and more. Now more than ever, social workers need to understand how social services can utilize new strategies with new solutions to address these issues (Berzin, 2012).

Shuman and Fuller (2005) originated the phrase *revolution will not be funded*, indicating that nonprofits all over the country must devise new income-generating strategies to empower disadvantaged groups. Although the media reports that the U.S. economy has rebounded, foundations and governments still expect social service nonprofits to leverage new forms of revenue to accomplish their missions. There is also some precariousness with regard to how nonprofits will be funded sustainably as local, state, and federal government dollars dwindle. In addition, some have declared that social service organizations develop complex programs that do not match the business pursuits of funders (Foster et al., 2009). Due to the uncertainty of non-profits, there is a shift to social enterprises that have the ability to take on a new responsibility.

Social Policy and Social Entrepreneurship

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD/European Union, 2017) based in the Paris, France, pronounced social enterprises can be significant partners for governments, assisting them to meet major chosen policy objectives (e.g., addressing poverty, reducing unemployment, and increasing social connectedness). However, they are often faced with numerous barriers (e.g., a lack of legal recognition and

difficulty accessing markets and finance) that can confine and stifle their impact and halt them from reaching their full potential. The recent report of the Expert Group on Social Entrepreneurship of the European Commission (European Union, 2020) stressed that favorable policy ecosystems are essential to helping social enterprises overcome these barriers. With the assistance of political social workers and policy advocates, social enterprises can secure the funding, concessions, and rights it needs in order to sustain itself. “To build tailored policy ecosystems, policy makers first need to develop a sound understanding of the features, mission and needs of social enterprises before translating into policy actions supporting their development. Policy makers can also support efforts to raise funders’ awareness of social enterprises, aided by social finance intermediaries, who help funders design appropriate financing schemes” (OECD/European Union, 2017, p. 5). Sustained policy support is critical to constructing an enabling ecosystem that permits social enterprises to prosper over the long term. Political impetus can act as a catalyst to bolster well-established ecosystems, fostering and accelerating beneficial conditions for social enterprises (OECD & European Union, 2017).

Germak and Singh (2010) recounted that, additionally, some theorists accredit the advent of entrepreneurial pursuit among nonprofits to the rise of conservative American policies since the mid-1970s in which the federal government has strived to lessen welfare spending and alter the responsibility for social welfare funding to the nonprofits themselves or to induce for-profit alternatives, such as privatized social services (Abramovitz & Zelnick, 2015). Political arguments notwithstanding, unknowing of the drive toward social entrepreneurship, it is now a viable, functional, and increasingly popular alternative to traditional operating funding models in the non-profit and for-profit sectors.

Social Work Education and Social Entrepreneurship

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) is the governing body for social work education and uses the education policy and accreditation standards (EPAS) to validate and champion baccalaureate and master’s level social work programs that have met baseline aptness. CSWE (2001) first stated that the educational policy of schools of social work must promote “excellence, creativity, and innovation in social work education and practice” (p. 3). However, the 2015 EPAS lack social entrepreneurship competencies (CSWE, 2015).

Considering the future of social work, the current 2022 EPAS has addressed Anti-Racism and Diversity Equity and Inclusion to Competency 2 (CSWE, 2022). There is no distinction as it relates to competencies focused on macro practice to focus on social entrepreneurship. CSWE standards highlight excellence, creativity, and innovation as key foundational concepts of schools of social work, and these same key concepts are also found in social entrepreneurship—there is no reason why social work educational institutions cannot incorporate social entrepreneurship into the curriculum (Germak & Singh, 2010).

Researchers have advocated social workers need more training in leading and managing social enterprises that are currently shaping the field of social work (Chandra & Shang, 2021; Healy, 2002; Nouman & Cnaan, 2021; Shier & Van-Du, 2018). One of the

most constructive ways of helping social enterprises become viable and sustainable is to foster social entrepreneurs' business skills and know-how. To this end, support structures (e.g., incubators) and networks rely on professionals who understand both traditional businesses and social enterprises and build social entrepreneurs' capacity to become sustainable without diluting their social mission (OECD & European Union, 2017).

According to Nandan et al. (2015) one of the paradoxes of trying to convey the significance of social entrepreneurship and social work practice surrounds ethics. While social workers have historically been innovative in their approaches to designing social programs and facilitating systems change for problem-solving at the local, national, and international levels of intervention, many practitioners and academics have unwittingly viewed social entrepreneurship by social workers as unethical and detrimental to the core values of the profession (Nandan et al., 2015).

According to Germak and Singh (2014), given the funding crisis in the nonprofit sector combined with the professional training and motivation of social workers to respond to social problems, social work administrators must take more risks by embracing entrepreneurial endeavors into practice. If Master's-level social workers do not reclaim such discourse and establish themselves as leaders in an ever-changing environment, other professionals may lead social work agencies in greater proportions, and the social impact on the clients served would be a result of the values and ethics of professions other than social work (Wuenschel, 2006). In fact, according to Healy (2002), if social workers are to generate service outcomes consistent with their values, they must be au fait with the new public management discourses now shaping the field. Subsequently, social workers practicing social entrepreneurship need to be aware of the field-shaping management discourses that now involve applications of business sector practices such as strategic planning, market research, and response to consumer demand in the community (Germak & Singh, 2014).

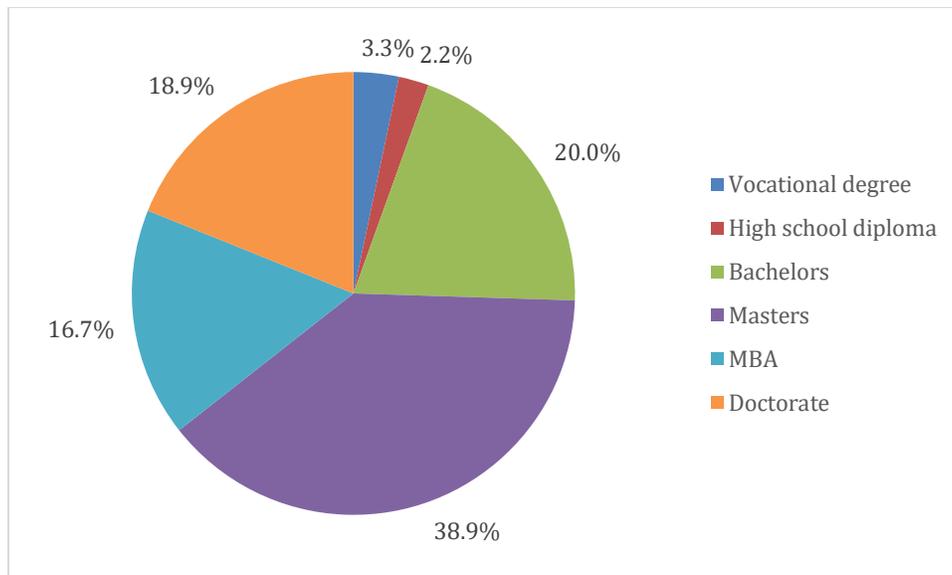
Nandan et al. (2015) reported that in order to reply to students' expanding interest, business schools have adopted social enterprise clubs and competitions. In addition, business schools have redesigned their curriculum to include social entrepreneurship. The business sector seeks sustainable models, and business schools have responded by developing programs that meet the aspirations of a generation of social change makers, but that do not have the social work or helping professional knowledge, values, or skills to truly educate the social entrepreneur. As a result, as the nonprofit sector continues to grow, the administrators of social service agencies are not social workers, but public affairs and business professionals (Wuenschel, 2006).

Tan (2004) recognizes that without social workers in capacities of leadership, these agencies may not prioritize social work's contributions of service, empowerment, and social justice. Social work educators need to be willing to reshape the curriculum to equip students with the values of the profession and the business sense to make these social entrepreneurial organizations sustainable. In light of these realities, social work education must include social entrepreneurship in its body of knowledge so that it can develop students who understand the business side of social work. This will equip them with forward-thinking knowledge, skills, and abilities to respond to the complex social

problems. In doing so, social work schools could attract emerging social entrepreneurs with an educational experience that develops competencies related to cultural humility, social and economic justice, and the social environment. They could also build understanding of social problems at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Unfortunately, only a few social work schools have incorporated social entrepreneurship curricula into their BSW and MSW programs (Fernando, 2015).

Figure 1 adapted from Heinecke et al. (2014) depicts a high percentage of Master’s-level social entrepreneurs. Figure 1 indicates that there is a high percentage of current social entrepreneurs that have master’s degrees at 38.9%. If social work master programs cater to future social entrepreneurs, there can be an increase in enrollment and models that transform the profession. Following behind is bachelor’s degrees, and then doctorates, indicating that social entrepreneurs are highly educated. If there is an increase in social entrepreneurship, then there will be an increase in enrollment if there are structured accredited academic programs centered in the growth of this needed area.

Figure 1. Education of Social Entrepreneurs—Schwab Foundation Survey Results



Heinecke et al. (2014)

Berzin (2012) mentioned congruence between social entrepreneurship and social work that suggests a need to revisit the role of the social work field in developing this area and navigate how to implement social entrepreneurial concepts into social work teaching. Social workers could benefit from exposure to these concepts and the ability to obtain funding through these sources. The social work profession could learn from the work of current social entrepreneurs and their approaches to solving contemporary social problems. Increasing course offerings in MSW programs, bolstering collaborations with business schools in this domain, engaging in public discourse through conference presentations and journal articles, and connecting to foundations that focus on social entrepreneurship could

strengthen this collaboration. Models that could be adapted to traditional social service agencies could also spur innovation and change within existing structures.

Social Entrepreneurial Leadership

Germak and Singh (2010) posited that, given the tremendous need for resolutions to today's pressing social challenges, it is time for social workers to accept much of the straightforward business sense found in social entrepreneurship, embracing a hybrid of social work macro practice principles and business innovation activities. There are three levels of analysis that are pertinent to social entrepreneurship: the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. The micro level concentrates on the traits and the leadership of the individual. The mezzo level focuses on cultivating innovation, while the macro level focuses on economic and social development (Cukier et al., 2011).

The World Economic Forum (Heinecke et al., 2014) professed that leadership is about both character and competence, and the crucial question remains surrounding what leaders need to cope with, given constant changes, crashes, and crises. Specifically, leaders of social enterprises face manifold challenges: many leaders do not have a formal business education and were driven by the passion to solve a social cause. Their intrinsic motivation comes first, and economic reasons rank low. But business procedures need to be implemented, teams built, and money earned to run a social enterprise successfully. Delegation of tasks and, more importantly, responsibilities, by the social entrepreneur is key to the success of a growing organization. A conducive organizational structure and environment needs to be built to allow for the heavy load of tasks and responsibilities to be distributed across the team, including comprehensive organizational charts, adequate job descriptions with clear allocation of responsibilities and defined processes for communication and decision-making, and good governance. For any highly engaged, overworked, and self-sacrificing social entrepreneur, it is important to realize that appropriate delegation benefits not only themselves but also the team members and the organization as a whole. This produces less workload for the leader and more capacity for other important tasks, development opportunities for the team members and motivation from new challenges, and better performance due to appropriate division of labor and avoiding bottlenecks in the organization (Heinecke et al., 2014).

Social Entrepreneurship, Social Impact/Innovation, and Scale

Social entrepreneurship promotes innovation and adaptable, yet scalable, strategic responses to complex social and human problems. The recent economic crisis and global recession have increased the already tremendous need to position a social question at the heart of the economy. Social entrepreneurship can prove to be an effective tool for economic value creation and simultaneously a means to deal with various social issues. This coexisting concept appears to be developing popularity in spheres of both theory and practice, with the rise of social entrepreneurship as a new field of research (Nicholls, 2010). The concept of social entrepreneurship has been quickly emerging in the private, public, and non-profit sectors over the last few years (Anderson et al., 2006). Social entrepreneurship is especially important in developing countries, where there is a lacuna in

terms of social development and economic discrimination still exist, not unlike the United States of America (Chell, 2007). Social entrepreneurship catalyzes different social capabilities to conquer inequalities across different spheres (social, economic, environmental, and political). This can bridge social gaps by making social and economic development desirable (Light, 2006; Mair, 2010, Seelos & Mair, 2005).

Pearce and Conger (2003) described that in early stages of the development of the social entrepreneurship and social enterprise field, policy and funding goals were largely concerned with propagating larger numbers, greater variety, and more geographic spread in activity. The centrality of social impact to the work of social entrepreneurs and social enterprises is a uniting factor in discussions on the way forward for social action (Anderson Battle & Dees, 2008). For social entrepreneurs, the point is not to be more business-like or more nonprofit-like. "It is to be more effective at changing the world, using whatever organizational forms or management methods are most conducive to that" (Anderson Battle & Dees, 2008, p. 156). There is no good reason why social workers cannot work in for-profit, proprietary settings or behave entrepreneurially, compensating themselves accordingly for innovative practice (Masi, 1992). Likewise, social workers should not necessarily take a vow of poverty even though they frequently work with populations stricken by poverty. Arguably, a for-profit mentality, such as higher compensation levels for social workers or bonus schemes, could attract more talent to the field and bolster the morale of those already practicing at marginally acceptable income levels (Giffords, 2000; Guo, 2006).

El Fasiki (2012) emphasized that social entrepreneurs are individuals who start up and lead new organizations or programs that are dedicated to mitigating a social problem and positioning change strategies that differ from those that have been used to address the same social problems in the past (Bloom, 2009). While specifying the mission of their enterprise, social entrepreneurs have to specify their systematic, strategic path of scaling social impact as well. It is obvious that their position between lucrative and social, meets the challenge of expanding social impact. In their thinking of scaling social impact, social entrepreneurs think not of competitive activities but rather of cooperative forms of activities (El Fasiki, 2012). The willingness to allow others to replicate the same business model helps change attitudes and thus change social actions. Defining the innovation is the most effectively transferable way of scaling social impact. As a way to define their innovations, social entrepreneurs need to specify the nature of their ventures, the way they will help spread the innovation, and how they will be accepted in other communities (El Fasiki, 2012). Social impacts include all social and cultural consequences to human populations of any public or private actions that alter the ways in which people live, work, play, relate to one another, organize to meet their needs, and generally cope as members of society. Cultural impacts involve changes to the norms, values, and beliefs of individuals that guide and rationalize their cognition of themselves and their society (Burdge & Vanclay, 1996, p. 59).

Social Enterprise Models

Theorists have described social enterprise in terms of more than one model. Figure 2 is an example of how social work is imperative to the social entrepreneurial venture for

education, sustainability, and framework. The models aim to provide a comprehensive, cutting-edge resource, introducing the unique concerns and challenges that face social ventures through a comparison with the principles of traditional entrepreneurship with solutions through the social enterprise model.

Figure 2. *Social Work and Social Entrepreneurship Model* (Veni Mary, 2018)

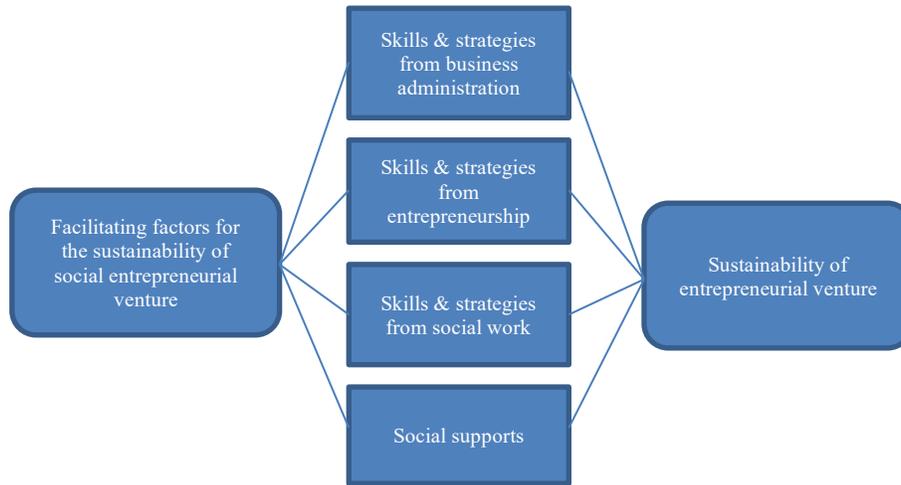


Figure 2. Displays that in order to sustain the social enterprise venture, one must use skills and strategies from business administration, entrepreneurship, social work, and social supports such as social policy and public-private partnerships.

According to a study by Wolfgang Grassi (2012), there are nine types of Social Enterprise Business Models

1. *The entrepreneur support model* that sells business support services directly to the entrepreneurs in its target population,
2. *The market intermediary model* that helps clients by marketing or selling clients' products or services for them,
3. *The employment model*, in which a social enterprise provides clients with job opportunities and job training,
4. *The fee-for-service model* where a social enterprise charges the customer directly for the socially beneficial services it provides,
5. *The low-income client model* where a social enterprise generally offers social services directly (as in the fee-for-service model) while focusing on low-income clients,
6. *The cooperative model*, a fee-based membership organization that provides member services to a group that shares a common need or goal,
7. *The market linkage model* that focusses on building relationships and otherwise connecting clients with markets for clients' products and services,
8. *The service subsidization model* that funds social programs by selling products or services in the marketplace, and

9. *The organization support model*, which also sells products or services to fund social programs (as the service subsidization model). However, the social programs they fund are part of a separate, parent organization.

As there are many variations of these models, they can provide ideas on to how to create sustainable benefit to society while balancing one's finances.

Discussion

The social work profession is constantly evolving and continuously learning and acquiring new values and skills to be au courant of developments within the industry. The profession of social work is that of advocacy, which produces agents of change. Solutions and ideas that will help pivot social work to mitigate complex and vexing issues into the future will utilize social entrepreneurship and the social enterprise as a social action that should be implemented on the micro, mezzo, and macro practice level. This will move toward envisioning a future of larger profit, larger impact, and greater innovation.

Social enterprise can facilitate the rebuilding and recovery of our nation due to the impact of the global Covid-19 pandemic, poverty, and its underlying issues, racial, gender, and political unrest. It can also uncover and help to address issues like the need for criminal justice reform, climate change, environmental and animal cruelty, disparities, and limited access to mobility for many people of color and people who are in poverty, food scarcity, and disenfranchisement. Additionally, social enterprise certainly addresses the need for funding social work agencies. All of this can be accomplished with the assistance of social work implementation to carry out effective, sustainable, and professional virtue in our communities.

The social work professional approval is the current missing link to the social enterprise model. Having the social work professional approval of social work and social entrepreneurship and enterprise model, would assist in greater integrity and soundness in the social enterprise. The social work framework would provide the social enterprise the professional, intellectual guidance needed for working with communities, individuals, families, and groups. Social work will enable the social enterprise to manage governance as it creates efficiency in the social entrepreneur's conduct. In addition, good social work governance practices in social entrepreneurship and the social enterprise highlight errors and problems in the field. By flagging potential issues, social entrepreneurs have the chance to respond quickly and appropriately with the assistance of the social work profession and social policy.

A key strategy for closing development gaps is by recognizing and promoting social entrepreneurial leadership and taking advantage of social workers' talent internationally in the context of commercial agreements and regional integration platforms, and by utilizing their talent within companies. Equality and equity in economic activity and development are profitable, generate wealth, are sustainable, further welfare and opulence, and above all fortify our democracies.

Social entrepreneurs have helped fight the Covid-19 global pandemic and will participate greatly in the rebuilding, recovery, and restructuring of our communities. The

World Health Organization (WHO) declared in the year 2020, a global pandemic emerged. Governments have struggled greatly to respond to the public health crisis, but also to the economic and social consequences. With great optimism propelled by social innovation, thinkers and doers envisioned not just to address urgent social and basic needs, but to transform entire systems and ecosystems through social entrepreneurs. The world needs social entrepreneurs right now—hyper-practical, disruptive leaders who relinquish traditional practice to tackle enormous social problems. We stand at the nexus of multiple, colliding crises; thus, we need to invest in converging solutions. Who better to find and implement those solutions than social entrepreneurs and social workers? Social enterprises are well positioned to address gaps in the market and to grasp constituents whom governments can or will not. Economically and socially distressed communities are the hardest hit by this pandemic; but that same disadvantaged position makes it difficult for government relief and services to make any resolve, making the efforts of social enterprises even more vital to the global society (Bersin, 2018).

Social entrepreneurship is a mindset, and the social enterprise is the business model. In order for the mindset and business model to work cohesively to promote outreach, growth, and development, the profession of social work should make its efforts to announce the model as new outreach efforts arise in the profession. The profession of social work has a historical involvement in social entrepreneurship. In fact, one can argue that the profession of social work created social entrepreneurship and the social enterprise with the onset of the Jane Addams Settlement house. This served as a catalyst of mass following and formation of settlement houses across the United States of America and Europe, creating global reach. Social enterprises offer an innovative approach to bringing about desired change through reconceptualizing the mission of the enterprise and rethinking the of value creating logic (Brown & Wyatt, 2015). Social entrepreneurship starts with comprehending a social opportunity, then moves into an enterprise model, amasses the necessary resources for execution, gives life to and nurtures the enterprise, and eventually reaches the intended destination (Doherty et al., 2014).

Social Workers have been notarized for working for agencies; however, the creation of social enterprises provides an opportunity for social workers to become leaders in their communities by using the same social work CSWE knowledge, values, and skills to solve societal problems through creating a social enterprise and implementing social impact in communities. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice (NASW, 2021); therefore, social entrepreneurship should be placed within the CSWE curriculum and placed in social work models and care models and recognized by the NASW.

Social policy and social enterprises can act as collaborators and actors for the United States and globally for the destruction of social problems. Social enterprises are developed to assist social policies in carrying out and facilitating the needs of the community, prior to and after the formation of policies. Policy creators can create opportunities for social workers who operate in social enterprises with funding, and with student loan forgiveness for the development of agencies to this magnitude. Social work education governed by the CSWE should address social entrepreneurship in the 2022 EPAS to provide social work

students the opportunity for advancement to tackle social problems, and provide them the knowledge, values, and skills needed to implement this model.

With the rise of social and racial injustice in the United States and abroad, social enterprises alleviate these problems and add value to the community at large. With field placements for social workers in scarcity, this also provides the ability for social work placements in social enterprises facilitated by social workers. What is the future of social work? Michael Reisch (2013) posed this question in his paper, *Critical and Radical Social Work* and later that year in his book *Social Policy and Social Justice: Meeting the Challenges of a Diverse Society*. This question is a good place to anchor a discussion on what practitioners will face moving forward and how social work entrepreneurship can and should be situated as the transformational change needed to deal with a country in the midst of historic inequities and widening disparities.

It is within this political context of welfare reform and economic context of neoliberal policies that social entrepreneurship has evolved. The social policies we as a culture promulgate and the social systems that we build reflect the biases, priorities, and goals of a society. Neoliberal principles also gave rise to a positive view of entrepreneurs and their skill set. It is a small step to bring that unique ability to the social workspace.

Social work training has meant in the past, teaching the ability to translate theory into effective practice. However, social enterprise training embeds entrepreneurial thinking within social work instruction and practices, essentially, as Germak and Singh (2014) suggest, changing the way social workers do business and ultimately changing the way they are perceived in the country. Germak and Singh (2010) implore social workers to move from the periphery of social policy debates with creative solutions that combine business innovations with social work practices. This pushes back against Reisch, who sees the market as a problem, and against staid curricula that remain out of step with 21st-century social work demands. As Gray et al. (2003) contend, social entrepreneurship should work in tandem with government, funders, and the nonprofit community. At the same time, entrepreneurship should encourage students and early career social workers to take a solutions-driven approach based on experience and design creative, credible answers that sustain social value. However, that will require today's social workers to fearlessly jump into debates around some of the community's most pressing social issues and develop options to mitigate human suffering.

Grassi (2012) indicated that social enterprises are independent businesses autonomous of state or government control, owned and controlled by the interest of the organization's social and environmental mission. There are three measures that define whether a business model in general is successful or not: the model's ability to generate profit for its owners, its ability to generate positive change in the world, and its ability to achieve a balance between profit and positive change. The latter is applied to social enterprises. A social enterprise model is therefore a structure, design, or framework that a social enterprise follows in order to bring about a positive change while maintaining healthy financial returns.

Social enterprises constitute the three levels of social work practice: micro, mezzo, and macro practice. The micro level are private practices that provide fee by income or offer a

certain amount of pro bono cases a year or coaching people in the community on various matters from love, self-esteem, self-help, or on a specific topic that will enhance the human experience. Social enterprises on the mezzo level of social work can provide group services and, on the macro level, can provide various services to the community that make an impact for the greater good. Social entrepreneurs around the world have been unparalleled catalysts for social change. They use market-driven strategies to tackle critical social issues in brand new ways. Social entrepreneurs have promoted a broad range of solutions focused on sustainable development, decades before they were called Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The real power of social entrepreneurs is their talent for identifying market failures that are holding humanity back, and their skill in tailoring and implementing solutions. These include providing access to renewable energy, clean water, financial inclusion, high-quality educational resources, and critical information that allows life-giving agriculture to flourish like hydroponics in urban communities.

The World Economic Forum (Göler von Ravensbur et al., 2018) insisted that as the field of social entrepreneurship has matured, so too has the complexity and depth of the social issues at stake. We are confronted by a rising tide of crises—fluctuating democracies, racial injustices, gender and LGBTQ discrimination, environmental catastrophes, population growth, food instability, nationalism, and technological advances that require new skills and workforce training. Not to mention the alarming rise of displaced populations caused by natural disasters or conflict, including the global pandemic and wars. The time is now for social action, social change, and continued growth in the social work profession. The time is now for inclusiveness, community, and connectedness. These can be achieved through social entrepreneurship in the profession of social work as a working model that can propel the profession forward professionally and financially. It can also create a larger social impact and transformational shift to social change and social justice by addressing contemporary social problems through the social enterprise.

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