

Sustaining the Society and Businesses with Sustainopreneurship

Prof. (Dr.) Gaurav Lodha*
Arun Gautam**

Introduction

The Concept of **Sustainopreneurship** is evolved from the emergence of social entrepreneurship and eco-preneurship through the evolution of sustainability entrepreneurship in the world. It has been tried to explain the creative business organization to solve glitches related to the sustainability related schema to generate social and environmental sustainability as a strategic objective and resolution, at the same time regarding the restrictions set in order to uphold the life support systems in the process. It has been evolved as the concept of **“business with a cause”** - where the ecosphere difficulties are curved into business prospects by placement of sustainability innovations. In brief -entrepreneurship and innovation for sustainability is taken in it.

- Disposition of sustainability innovations: For Sustainability the Entrepreneurship and innovation are taken together.
- Intra-/entrepreneurship considered for Sustainable development of the society.
- The purpose is emphasizing on one or more (world/social/sustainability-related) problems and to discover/identify and/or discover a answer to the problems and fetch the innovation to the society by forming an effective society. With the mission/cause-oriented sustainability business accumulating ecological/economical/social standards and advantages, with a bias towards the intangible-through dematerialization/re-socialization. The value created simultaneously preserving, restoring and/or finally increasing the basically utilized capital stock, in order to sustain the capacity to satisfy the requirements of present and future cohorts of the beneficiaries.

* Professor, Department of Commerce, Manipal University Jaipur, Rajasthan, India.

** Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, Manipal University Jaipur, Rajasthan, India.

The Major Dimensions of Sustainopreneurship

Three distinguishing dimensions are considered significant in highlighting the definition of Sustainopreneurship and with all three being concurrently present in the applied (inter)action it replicates. The I is concerned with towards "why" - its purpose and motive. The II and III are demonstrating two "how's"-related dimensions & its process:

Ñ **To explain sustainability-related complications, Sustainopreneurship intentionally sets out to find and/or create innovations**

Before offering forms into an institutionalized business entity, the cognizant mission that guides the action, especially in the nascent '-preneurial' stage is to knowingly find real-world and unique solutions to problems related to the sustainability schema. To distinguish this category of entrepreneurial activity and behavior characterized sustainopreneurship from general entrepreneurial activity, it was proved to be the main key. To recognize and additionally understand what is meant by sustainability glitches, central sources in the global sustainable development discourse are identified that tell us to what is meant virtually and operationally by *sustainability in action*. In the list of "*sustainability-related problems*", the results of diverse sources are abridged and determined by the political action plan documented in "*Agenda the Millennium Declaration defining the Millennium Development Goals* both agreed at the *Millennium Summit* in New York 2000, and the *WSSD Plan of Implementation* decided upon at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg". This list is obtained from these sources, lines up areas with associated problems to solve, goals to reach and values to create:

- **Poverty**
- **Water and Sanitation**
- **Health**
- **Education/illiteracy**
- **Sustainable production- and consumption patterns**
- **Climate change and energy systems**
- **Chemicals**
- **Urbanization**
- **Ecosystems, biological diversity and land use**
- **Utilization of sea resources**
- **Food and agriculture**
- **Trade Justice**
- **Social stability, democracy and good governance**

Ñ **Sustainopreneurship aims to derive the answers to the market through imaginative organizing**

One can be easily depressed by the above line-up. On the contrary a essential attitude to obtain and sustain when this list of sustainability-related problems is gathered and then considered is to avoid falling into disempowerment and despair. The most important thing is to take the agenda as entrepreneurial *challenges* – to view problems as *possibilities*, obstacles as *opportunities*, and resistance as a *resource*, whatever the nature of the resistance. It is equally vital to take it to the market in a creative and innovative way, if the solution is produced by creativity and innovation. “There is nothing that actually differs from the common entrepreneurial description in this dimension, but it comes natural since sustainopreneurship is a conceptual extension and development from the social phenomenon named entrepreneurship, and thus inherits one of its perceived key dimensions, ‘entrepreneurship as creative organizing’”.

Ñ **Sustainopreneurship in process adds sustainability value with respect for life support systems**

The awareness that the (economic) market is an embedded sub-system in the “socio-sphere” that is in turn a part of the ‘bio-sphere’ is made explicit. This awareness naturally and self-evidently makes the sustainopreneurial team maximize harmony with life support systems in the process. With joy and pride the epitome of the generic definition of “sustainable development” lives in business venturing. In short – living the generic definition of sustainable development as defined by WCED, with respect to the needs of present and future stakeholders, keeping the holistic world-view and making it guide everyday (inter)action.

Sustainable vs. Sustainability Entrepreneurship

The need is to clearly differentiate between sustainable, vs. *sustainability* entrepreneurship. From this point of view, a very significant difference is appealed - *sustainability* entrepreneurship as in the concept *sustainopreneurship*; “the use of entrepreneurial activity in a *determined action orientation towards solving a sustainability-related problem* with (creative) business organizing as a *means* to solve the problem(s) – ‘*business with a cause*’: to turn business activity from a part of the problem to a part of the solution”.

Sustainable entrepreneurship is said to be just a general entrepreneurial process that considers the boundaries set by sustainability, and neverreport where to and why, the destination, the purpose or the aim of the venture. The intention and the business idea in itself are not related to sustainability *per se*, sustainability just being an “attachment” to the entrepreneurial process. The II and III dimensions are represented, but not the I. What is taken as its source of existence and strategic goal to resolve a sustainability-related problem *are Sustainability* entrepreneurship, in contrast. All three dimensions are concurrently existing: to take a sustainability innovation to the market through creative organizing with respect for life-supporting systems in the process.

The Challenges

The contemporary world problems such as Poverty, Climate Change, HIV/AIDS and Recently CORONA are lined up. We are living in the world where approximately 5 billion people live on less than \$4 a day. Increase in the temperature led to severe climate effects with weather catastrophes, droughts, floods and polar ice meltdowns and so on. The CORONA epidemic is on its way to make the major part of a whole continent implode, with vicious circles that makes China, Italy to lose parents, teachers, doctors, farmers and bread-winners for families.

Major Response

The means to meet these challenges are troubled with business-as-usual thinking. What we need is a more entrepreneurial approach, to think—and act!— outside the box. Or act as if there were no box at all! But not just any kind of entrepreneurship, but entrepreneurship and innovation for sustainability— **'Sustainopreneurship'**. In short — **Business with a Social Cause.**

Creative Business Organizing for Sustainability

Practically, it means to use business organizing and venturing as a means to solve sustainability-related problems, and while doing so – in the process do things so it does not jeopardize the present and the coming generations ability to fulfill its needs. Usually, when talking about sustainability in the business context, this has been in the focus—to adjust, to adapt, to put constraints to business, and business seen more as of a problem than of a solution. Sustainopreneurship flips this reasoning upside down, as well as from where the solution comes: It views the sustainability agenda as something that creates even greater business opportunities than the problems—making powerful businesses out of mind-blowing creativity of sustainability innovations. And the solution and business emerges from the local context, bottom-up, not top-down. Acting local, thinking global!

Sustainability Entrepreneurship

To the multi-faceted notion of Entrepreneurship all these aspects and flavors in general formed and added with these extensions and new connections with ecological and social as new tags still leaves us unsatisfied when brought to the sustainability context. The risk of giving these types of specific categories of entrepreneurial behaviors is to miss the holistic, integrated approach implied by the sustainability paradigm, as demonstrated by the holarchy model in the introduction. In short – all things related to each other and isolated singularities in the eco-/biosphere does not exist and actually they all are the matter of institutionalized frames, mindsets and social structures. The action in one end affects another in this concept. Sustainability with entrepreneurship clarifies a new strand of conversation in this modern age. A business organization is considered as a means to create solutions and opportunities of the heavy agenda forced by the movement formed by the sustainable development.

The keyword is always *integration* which mean to integrate social, ecological and economical aspects with entrepreneurial behavior.

- **The Sustainability Imperatives**

To figure a context for these trajectories on, and to move them ahead in order to integrate all dimensions of sustainability, its suggested to have a three-dimensional “imperative” of sustainability, i.e. what sustainability requires “target board model”;

- The ecological imperative is to stay within the biophysical carrying capacity of the planet,
- The economic imperative is to provide an adequate material standard of living of all, and
- The social imperative is to provide systems of governance that propagate the values that people want to live by

- **Suggested Definitions**

In line with earlier reasoning, “sustainability entrepreneurship by Gerlach suggests both ecological and social objectives to be reached by the venture, to solve both social and ecological problems with sustainability innovations”. In this area, Hockert in his PhD Dissertation takes the attempt, “beyond a work with a grounded theory approach to suggest working definitions of concepts “sustainable firm”, “sustainability innovation” and sustainability entrepreneurship”. These definitions give core idea contributions in the work to fill the concept “sustainopreneurship” with meaning. Sustainability at the firm level, according to **A sustainable firm** meets the needs of its stakeholders without compromising the firm’s ability to meet the needs of future stakeholders as well. Hackers defines Sustainability Innovation as follows:

“**Sustainability Innovation** is any process of social change which increases the proceeds derived from current natural, social, and economic capital, while at the same time protecting and enhancing the underlying capital stock”.

Sustainability Entrepreneurship consists of the identification of a sustainability innovation and its implementation either through the foundation of a start-up or the radical reorientation of an existing organization’s business model so as to achieve the underlying ecological or social objectives.

- **Sustainable vs. Sustainability Entrepreneurship**

If we take these definitions together, they call for further development, since a process view is quite biased in the Hackers’ definitions, what I would rather describe as *sustainable* Entrepreneurship attaching an attribute to the “generic” entrepreneurial process. This is Illustrated further by the core content in Hackers’ as mentioned he is predominantly researching process and management issues. At the same time, the holistic view required by sustainability is not reflected neither, since “or” is included in the last part of the sustainability entrepreneurship formulation. Sustainability requires “and”,

as in “*ecological and social objectives*” - the integrated meaning that follows from and is implied by the sustainability approach. If only one of the two optional dimensions besides the economical “entrepreneurship as-usual” is present, then it would reflect the case clearer to stick to either eco-premiership or social entrepreneurship, respectively. “To illustrate that the need to emphasize sustainability further on is motivated, is e.g. the first “World Symposium on *Sustainable Entrepreneurship*” (my italics), the use of entrepreneurial activity in a *determined action orientation towards solving a sustainability-related problem* with business organizing as a means to solve the problem(s) – “*business with a cause*”: **To turn business activity from a part of the problem to a part of the solution**”.

Thus, it can be viewed that Sustainopreneurship is a path that leads to the achievement of the solutions to those problems which play a major role in the society in tune with the commercial and social aspects of the globe. These problems are taken as opportunity and thus measures are taken to set up new avenues.

