



## Effects of Social Entrepreneurship Training Program : Can Social Entrepreneurship Be Made?

Lavanh Vongkhamsane

Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, National University of Laos

### บทคัดย่อ

การพัฒนาผู้ประกอบการเพื่อสังคมเป็นสาขาที่เกิดขึ้นใหม่โดยมีจุดมุ่งหมายเพื่อให้เกิดผลกระทบเชิงบวกต่อสังคม จุดมุ่งหมายของงานวิจัยนี้คือการศึกษาผลของการพัฒนาอบรมผู้ประกอบการเพื่อสังคมที่มีต่อการเปลี่ยนแปลงแนวความคิดเชิงประกอบการเพื่อสังคม การวิจัยกึ่งทดลองจะถูกนำมาใช้ในการระบุว่าการยกระดับความตระหนักรู้สามารถเปลี่ยนแปลงแนวความคิดเชิงบวกแก่การพัฒนาผู้ประกอบการเพื่อสังคม ประสิทธิภาพของการอบรมจะถูกวัดโดยการเปรียบเทียบจากการทดสอบคำถามก่อนและหลังการอบรม กลุ่มตัวอย่างจำนวน 30 คนในงานวิจัยนี้เป็นนักศึกษาภาควิชาการจัดการ ชั้นปีที่ 4 คณะเศรษฐศาสตร์และบริหารธุรกิจ มหาวิทยาลัยแห่งชาติลาว โดยเข้ารับการฝึกอบรมเป็นเวลา 30 ชั่วโมงใน 10 สัปดาห์ ผลการวิจัยพบว่าแนวความคิดเชิงประกอบการเพื่อสังคมส่งผลต่อการเปลี่ยนแปลงต่อรูปแบบของการทำธุรกิจ การวางแผนธุรกิจ ส่วนแบ่งการตลาด และผลตอบแทนที่ยั่งยืนอย่างมีนัยสำคัญ ความเข้าใจต่อการประกอบการเชิงสังคม ระดับความเสี่ยง การเข้าไปมีส่วนร่วมต่อสังคมโดยการสร้างงาน ทำให้เกิดการปรับปรุงและพัฒนาต่อสังคมเป็นอย่างมาก โดยสรุปผลของงานวิจัยนี้แสดงให้เห็นว่าการพัฒนาผู้ประกอบการเชิงสังคมสามารถทำได้จริงและควรได้รับการสนับสนุนให้เข้าไปอยู่ในส่วนของการศึกษา ยังมีจำนวนผู้ประกอบการเพื่อสังคมมากเท่าใด การจัดการแก้ปัญหาสังคมก็ทำได้มากขึ้น

**คำสำคัญ :** ผู้ประกอบการเพื่อสังคม / ผู้ประกอบวิสาหกิจ / แผนปฏิบัติการเพื่อสังคม / การอบรม / การทดลอง

### ABSTRACT

Social entrepreneurship is a newly emerging field aiming to have a positive social impact. The objective of this study was to investigate the result of social entrepreneurship training development for a change in social entrepreneurship concepts. The quasi-experimental design was used to identify that the consciousness raising can positively change the attitude toward social entrepreneurship development.. The effectiveness of training was measured through pre-test/post-test comparison. The sample of this study was 30 fourth-year students of the Department of Management, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, National University of Laos, who got trained for 30 hours within 6 weeks. The results showed that the social entrepreneurship concepts had influence on a significant change of model in doing a business, business planning, marketing share and sustainable return. Understanding about social entrepreneurship, risks taking level and social involvement through creating jobs helped breed social improvement and development significantly. In conclusion, the result of this study exhibited that development of social entrepreneurship can be made and should be supported into part of education. The more social entrepreneurs exist in the society, the more social problems are to be tackled.

**Keywords :** Social Entrepreneurship / Entrepreneurship / Social Venture / Training / Experiment



## Rationale

The economic development has widened the gap between the rich and the poor in many economies; despite of overall economic situation is progressing and advancing. As a result, many social problems emerge, for example, gender inequality, homeless, less opportunity for people with disability, as well as environmental issues, fair-trade, and redevelopment of under-served communities. Although the government has put utmost efforts to solve the issues, there are rooms to improve. In many countries, there is an emergence of a group of people who take responsibility for those problems and provide social services according to the social needs. These people are called social entrepreneurs who support what the out-of-government reach issues in managing and providing social services by themselves. The argument that should take the lead in solving problems, whether it is government or the market, has been made in Economics (Economic Policy) for many years. But it is difficult to overcome the social issues. As values diversify in society, people's awareness of social issues has matured and civil society organizations have occurred even without policy or regulatory support. The occurrence of new breed organization is usually followed by the government's attention generating legal and policy framework to support and manage the situation. Thus in the Lao P.D.R, the Degree on Association establishment was enforced in 2009 and International Non-profit Organization (INGO) decree was enforced in 2010. Up to now (2013) 34 associations and 6 foundations in the form of association have been registered with the Ministry of Home Affair (MOHA) under 115/PM dated 29 April 2009.

## Research Objectives

The paper attempts to explain the changing phenomena influenced by an education program

The understanding of the phenomena will assist the policy makers and academia to plan for future intervention for social entrepreneurial development, promotion, and support.

## Research Method

This research project is a quasi-experimental research, with the objectives of experimenting the social entrepreneurship training influencing the social entrepreneurial mindset of the trainees. Quasi-experimental research is used to identify whether consciousness raising can positively change the attitude toward social entrepreneurship development.

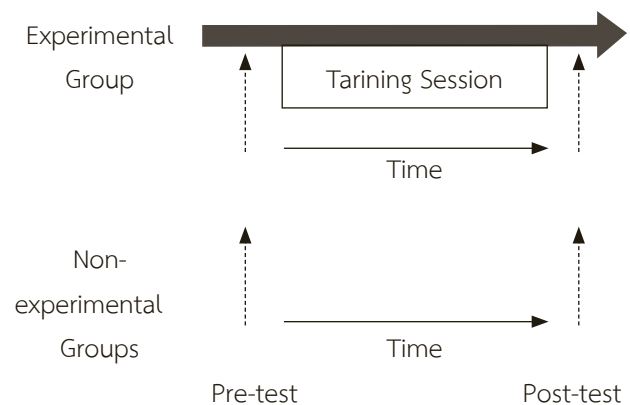


Figure 1 Quasi Experimental Research Model

Quasi-experimental research is used to measure the impact of the training session. This research is based on the principle of Quasi-experimental Design. The objective is to measure the effect of the training session over time. This is done through "pre-test/post-test comparison". Both experimental group and non-experimental group were given a set of questionnaires; pre-training questionnaires prior to the training session and post-training questionnaires to evaluate the impact of the program at the end of the training. The design shown in Figure 1 corresponds to the research methodology in this paper.



## Research Result

This section analyzes all the 60 samples, half of whom were in the training programme while the other half never has any intervention during the experimental period. The overall findings shows that there was a marginal increases in post-test score in understanding about social entrepreneur's life, ability level in assisting local entrepreneurs, and confidence level to become social entrepreneurs.

### Overview of Controlled Group Respondents

The total number of sampling was 30. The portion of female was equal, 50 % each. These subjects were studying in year 4, business administration major at the Faculty of Economics and Business Management, the National University of Laos, Academic Year 2012-2013.

### Knowledge and Skills

The analysis of the training program effectiveness has shown that significant positive changes in entrepreneurial skills have been found in understanding social responsibility, business model generation, business planning, market segmentation, and sustainable return. Other positive changes, but not very significant were understanding the entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurship, working in teams, non profit enterprises, non-governmental organization, milestone planning, market analysis, information age, brainstorming, leadership, social benefits, and risk management. The negative changes, but not significant, were found in community business, return on assets, and product life cycle. (See table 1).

**Table 1** Knowledge and Skills

Description	Mean		change	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Pre-test	Post-test		
Social responsibility	3.10	3.33	0.23	0.050
Entrepreneur	3.10	3.27	0.17	0.393
Social entrepreneurship	3.30	3.33	0.03	0.865
Work in group	3.77	3.83	0.06	0.690
Non profit enterprise	3.03	3.37	0.34	0.125
Non Government Organization	2.77	3.20	0.43	0.073
Milestone Plan	3.10	3.13	0.03	0.884
Community business	2.97	2.90	-0.07	0.778
Business model	2.67	3.00	0.33	0.048
Market analysis	3.17	3.37	0.20	0.184
Return on asset	3.10	2.90	-0.20	0.339
Business plan	3.23	3.67	0.44	0.025
Information age	3.47	3.67	0.20	0.136
Product life cycle	3.23	3.13	-0.10	0.586
Market segmentation	3.13	3.50	0.37	0.025
Brain Storming	3.33	3.46	0.13	0.442
Leadership	3.16	3.43	0.27	0.245
Social benefit	3.46	3.53	0.07	0.758
Sustainable return	2.93	3.46	0.53	0.024
Risk management	2.83	3.10	0.27	0.103

Source : Author's Analysis

The gap of changes between non-experimental groups and experimental group is believed to exhibit the influence of the training program. The analysis shows that the skills or knowledge that the experimental groups increases more than the non-experimental groups are in the area of social responsibility, entrepreneur, non-government



organization, milestone planning, business model generation, business planning, information age, market segmentation, leadership, social benefit, sustainable return, and risk management. The changes in non-experimental groups are slightly higher in the area of brain storming, work in group, non-profit enterprise, community business, market analyze, return on asset, product life cycle, social entrepreneurship. (See table 2).

**Table 2** Knowledge and Skills Comparison

Description	Non control		Control	
	change	Sig. (2-tailed)	change	Sig. (2-tailed)
Social responsibility	0.00	1.000	0.23	0.050
Entrepreneur	-0.10	0.522	0.17	0.393
Social entrepreneurship	0.27	0.174	0.03	0.865
Work in group	0.20	0.184	0.06	0.690
Non profit enterprise	0.40	0.070	0.34	0.125
Non Government	0.10	0.669	0.43	0.073
Organization				
Milestone Plan	0.00	1.000	0.03	0.884
Community business	0.40	0.050	-0.07	0.778
Business model	0.27	0.265	0.33	0.048
Market analyze	0.30	0.231	0.20	0.184
Return on asset	0.47	0.037	-0.20	0.339
Business plan	0.23	0.199	0.44	0.025
Information age	0.13	0.459	0.20	0.136
Product life cycle	0.26	0.265	-0.10	0.586
Market segmentation	-0.23	0.305	0.37	0.025
Brain Storming	0.20	0.385	0.13	0.442
Leadership	-0.07	0.778	0.27	0.245
Social benefit	-0.07	0.752	0.07	0.758
Sustainable return	0.00	1.000	0.53	0.024
Risk management	0.00	1.000	0.27	0.103

Source : Author's Analysis

### Awareness and Ambition to Become Social Entrepreneurs

**Table 3** Awareness and Ambition to become social entrepreneurs (Controlled group)

Description	Mean		Change	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Pre-test	Post-test		
Understanding level about social entrepreneur's life	4.27	5.03	0.76	0.004
Ability level in assisting local entrepreneur	4.70	4.70	0.00	1.000
Confidence level to become social entrepreneur	4.47	4.90	0.43	0.125
Risk taking level of yourself	3.90	4.97	1.07	0.002
Different kinds of jobs	2.67	3.03	0.37	0.039
Starting your own business	3.93	4.70	0.77	0.012
Years in the future will start your own business	3.00	5.00	2.00	0.000

Source : Author's Analysis

The gap between the non-experimental and experimental group shows that the level of understanding social entrepreneurs' life has increased much higher in the experimental groups while in the non experimental groups, ability level in assisting local entrepreneurs and confidence level to become social entrepreneur increases slightly higher during the same period (See table 4).



**Table 4** Changes in Awareness and Ambition to Become Social Entrepreneurs

Description	Non control		control	
	Change	Sig.(2-tailed)	Change	Sig.(2-tailed)
Understanding level about social entrepreneur's life	0.17	0.475	0.76	0.004
Ability level in assisting local entrepreneur	0.20	0.483	0.00	1.000
Confidence level to become social entrepreneur	0.56	0.022	0.43	0.125

Source : Author's Analysis

The attitudes towards being social entrepreneurs have shown a distinctive result. For the experimental groups, the big changes are found in years in the future to start own business and risk taking level have increased much higher than those in the non-controlled groups, while the preference of starting own business and wanting different kinds of job also shows relatively higher in the experimental groups. This shows that the training program is very effective in changing the sampling's mindset. (See table 5).

**Table 5** Changes in Attitudes towards being Social Entrepreneurs

Description	Non control		control	
	Change	Sig. (2-tailed)	Change	Sig. (2-tailed)
Risk taking level of yourself	0.04	0.899	1.07	0.002
Different kinds of jobs	0.06	0.712	0.37	0.039
Starting your own business	-0.10	0.792	0.77	0.012
Years in the future will start your own business	-0.70	0.141	2.00	0.000

Source : Author's Analysis

The reasons for starting businesses mostly show marginal change. Except wanting to contribute to the community by creating jobs, products, and services, which have significant change, others have marginal positive change, namely I will be independent / create my own environment, having better income prospects, avoiding uncertainties related to employment, fulfilling a goal/have personal accomplishment, being highly respected by the society/good social status, having power/controlling, enjoying being challenged, standard of living and lifestyle will be improved. Owning a business is my family tradition has a marginal negative change (See table 6).

**Table 6** Reasons for Starting Businesses of Control Group

Description	Mean		Change	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Pre-test	Post-test		
I will be independent/ create my own environment.	4.50	5.07	0.57	0.165
I will have better income prospects.	4.67	4.80	0.13	0.710
Owning a business is my family tradition.	3.60	3.23	-0.37	0.415
I can avoid uncertainties related to employment.	4.03	4.67	0.63	0.076
I will fulfil a goal / have personal omplishment.	4.73	5.07	0.33	0.305
I will be highly spected by the society / good social status.	5.13	5.67	0.53	0.084
I want to contribute to the community by creating jobs, products, and services.	5.13	5.93	0.80	0.011
I like having power / controlling.	4.40	4.70	0.30	0.461
I enjoy being allenged.	5.07	5.53	0.47	0.065
Standard of living and lifestyle will be improved.	5.33	5.70	0.37	0.300

Source : Author's Analysis



The reason for starting social ventures, comparing the changes of experimental and non experimental pre and post tests, exhibits a mixed result. The once that the experimental groups show bigger changes are in the area of being independent/ creating own environment, avoid uncertainties related to unemployment, fulfilling a goal or having personal accomplishment, being highly respected by community by creating jobs, products, and services, and enjoy being challenged. One score of non-experimental groups showing larger gap than the experimental ones are having better income prospects, owning a business is family's tradition, having power/ controlling, and standard of living and lifestyle will be improved (See table 7).

**Table 7** Reasons for Starting Businesses of Non-control and Control Group

Description	Non control		Control	
	Change	Sig. (2-tailed)	Change	Sig. (2-tailed)
I will be independent / create my own environment.	-0.20	0.506	0.57	0.165
I will have better income prospects.	0.93	0.019	0.13	0.710
Owning a business is my family tradition.	0.64	0.076	-0.37	0.145
I can avoid uncertainties related to employment.	-0.03	0.923	0.63	0.076
I will fulfil a goal / have personal accomplishment.	0.10	0.759	0.33	0.305
I will be highly respected by the society / good social status.	0.17	0.624	0.53	0.084
I want to contribute to the community by reating jobs, products, and services.	-0.03	0.907	0.80	0.011
I like having power / controlling.	1.03	0.005	0.30	0.461
I enjoy being challenged.	-0.63	0.055	0.47	0.065
Standard of living and lifestyle will be improved.	0.64	0.044	0.37	0.300

Source : Author's Analysis

### Obstacles of Social Enterprise Establishment

In relation to the obstacles of starting businesses the variables investigated include lack of money/ finances/ capital, no time, looking for right business opportunity, still in school, afraid of failure, health reasons, need more information, need more training/education, already have a job, current economic situation is not good, financial risk is too high, identifying markets for products or services is too difficult, difficulty finding qualified employees/ staff, government regulations/ bureaucracy are too complicated, social environments are too complicated, lack of interest/have no desire/don't want to do business, and too young. Among these variables, only difficulty finding qualified employees/ staff was significantly changes and all others, except no time, still in school, and afraid of failure, have marginally positive changes (See table 8)

**Table 8** Obstacles of Social Enterprise Establishment  
Source : Author's Analysis

Description	Mean		Change	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Pre-test	Post-test		
Lack of money/ finances/ capital.	4.70	5.17	0.47	0.363
No time.	4.27	4.17	-0.10	0.762
Looking for right business opportunity.	4.83	5.17	0.33	0.344
Still in school.	6.03	5.33	-0.70	0.063
Afraid of failure.	4.40	4.37	-0.03	0.948
Health reasons.	2.27	2.67	0.40	0.403
Need more information.	5.03	5.47	0.43	0.284
Need more training/ education.	5.90	5.90	0.00	1.000
Already have a job.	2.03	2.60	0.57	0.152
Current economic situation is not good.	3.70	4.47	0.77	0.073
Financial risk is too high.	4.60	4.90	0.30	0.354
Identifying markets for products or services is too difficult.	4.67	5.07	0.40	0.167
Difficulty finding qualified employees/staff	4.67	5.57	0.90	0.031



**Table 8** Obstacles of Social Enterprise Establishment  
Source : Author’s Analysis (Continuous)

Description	Mean		Change	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Pre-test	Post-test		
Government regulations/ bureaucracy are too complicated.	4.87	4.97	0.10	0.771
Social environments are too complicated.	4.80	4.90	0.10	0.762
Lack of interest/I have no desire/ I don’t want to do business.	2.67	3.20	0.53	0.199
Too young	3.63	4.00	0.37	0.370

Source : Author’s Analysis

The comparison of pre training and post training between the experimental and non-experimental groups shows a distinctive pattern. In the obstacles of starting businesses, higher changes in the experimental groups are found in the lack of money/finances/capital, afraid of failure, health reasons, financial risk is too high, current economic situation is not good, identifying markets for products or services is too difficult, difficulty finding qualified employees/staff, government regulations/ bureaucracy are too complicated, lack of interest/no desire/don’t want to do business, and need more information. In contrast, the changes that non-experimental groups are higher include no time, looking for right business opportunity, still in school, already have a job, need more training/education, social environments are too complicated, and too young (See table 9)

**Table 9** Obstacles of Social Enterprise Establishment of Non-control and Control Group

Description	Non control		control	
	Change	Sig. (2-tailed)	Change	Sig. (2-tailed)
Lack of money/finances/ capital.	0.20	0.645	0.47	0.363
No time.	0.70	0.063	-0.10	0.762
Looking for right business opportunity.	1.13	0.002	0.33	0.344

**Table 9** Obstacles of Social Enterprise Establishment of Non-control and Control Group (Continuous)

Description	Non control		control	
	Change	Sig. (2-tailed)	Change	Sig. (2-tailed)
Still in school.	0.93	0.014	-0.70	0.063
Afraid of failure.	-0.23	0.512	-0.03	0.948
Health reasons.	-0.24	0.523	0.40	0.403
Need more information.	-0.43	0.340	0.43	0.284
Need more training/ education.	0.20	0.565	0.00	1.000
Already have a job.	0.67	0.226	0.57	0.152
Current economic situation is not good.	-0.56	0.131	0.77	0.073
Financial risk is too high.	0.26	0.433	0.30	0.354
Identifying markets for products or services is too difficult.	0.20	0.522	0.40	0.167
Difficulty finding qualified employees/staff	0.23	0.530	0.90	0.031
Government regulations/ bureaucracy are too complicated.	-0.17	0.624	0.10	0.771
Social environments are too complicated.	0.50	0.198	0.10	0.762
Lack of interest/I have no desire/ I don’t want to do business.	0.04	0.926	0.53	0.199
Too young	0.40	0.339	0.37	0.370

Source : Author’s Analysis

## Conclusion

Significant changes are found in variety of variables. In knowledge and skills for social entrepreneurship, the significant positive changes are found in creating business model, business planning, market segmentation, sustainable return. In the area of attitudes towards social entrepreneurship, the significant positive increases are in understanding about social entrepreneur’s life, risk taking level, starting own business, and number of years to start



own business. For obstacles preventing the starting of social ventures, significant positive changes are found in the difficulty finding qualified employees/staff. Helpful sources changes are found in having the guidance of a mentor or a social business owner (or business person/entrepreneur, consulting companies), going on a student internship with a social business, attending courses or seminars about starting a social business, job shadowing at a social business, being helped in identifying a good idea for a social business. The ambition of wanting to engage in social entrepreneurship is significantly changed in wanting to contribute to the community by creating jobs, products, and services. Help needed are in providing financial assistance, providing business counselling and information, promoting business ownership as a career, providing business skills training, providing courses about business ownership in the education system.

The significant changes found in this experimentation are a good indication that social entrepreneurs can be trained. The adoption of social entrepreneurship training or education program into a formal education curriculum or informal form of training will help creating social entrepreneur. The discussion in the literature review section has shown the importance of social entrepreneurship for the society. The finding in this experimentation, in other form of entrepreneurships, is in line with the experimentation conducted by Chanhming 2008 for the business oriented entrepreneurs.

### References

- Chanhming, P. (2008). **The Contribution of Entrepreneurship Education for Regional Development in the Lao P.D.R. : Course Development and Its Effects**. Doctoral Thesis. Japan : Waseda University.