Editorial: Perspectives on scaling social impact

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1 Introduction

For over three decades, social entrepreneurship has been a topic of high practical and scientific relevance (Zahra et al., 2014; Dacin et al., 2010). However, despite the growing number of social entrepreneurs in light of increasingly urgent and complex social problems, such as climate change, demographic changes, or social segregation, they differ in whether the impact they create remains relatively small, often concentrated in a particular geographic area, or sustainably multiplies (Smith et al., 2016). Therefore, research on how to measure and scale social impact, in terms of "increasing the impact a social-purpose organization produces" [Dees et al., (2008), p.18], has been repeatedly highlighted as particularly important (Rawhouser et al., 2019; Weber et al., 2014; Bloom and Smith, 2010; Alvord et al., 2004).

However, while a growing number of scientists focus on strategies to scale social impact (e.g., Bloom and Skloot, 2010; Perrini et al., 2010; Smith et al., 2016; Smith and Stevens, 2010; Westley and Antadze, 2010), the concept of scaling itself is often limited to disseminating the entrepreneurial approach and the growth of existing organisations, communities, or networks. This ignores the possibility that the development and implementation of additional social innovations can also scale the impact of socially motivated organisations. Likewise, the non-self-directed dissemination of successful social entrepreneurial concepts through imitation as a way of scaling social impact has hardly been addressed in literature. Finally, scaling social entrepreneurial solutions from within existing organisations, i.e., social intrapreneurship, has almost never been explored. This indicates the several possibilities for social entrepreneurial action.

This editorial demonstrates the enormous potential involved in combining various perspectives into an integrated research framework. After presenting the different approaches to generating social impact found in literature, we will identify areas of growth that have been neglected and discuss them critically. Based on the focus of existing research, especially those in social entrepreneurship research, a distinction is made between research that focuses on previously identified correlations and those that focus on research gaps from different perspectives. The identified interdependencies will lead to various questions and research topics that still have a significant need for scientific debate.

Therefore, examples of innovative research in the field of scaling social impact will be presented in this special issue. The major aim of this issue, however, is to encourage more researchers to devote the attention this topic deserves.

2 Deriving a research framework

Within the research field of scaling social impact, the first challenge is the definition of the concept of 'social impact' (Dacin et al., 2010; Lumpkin et al., 2011; Rawhouser et al., 2019). Similar yet slightly different constructs found in literature include: social value (Moss et al., 2011; Santos, 2012), social performance (Mair and Marti, 2006; Nicholls, 2008), social returns, and social return on investment (Emerson, 2003; Hall et al., 2015). Based on Rawhouser et al.'s (2019) work, we believe that social impact can manifest in many ways. Therefore, we aim to be as inclusive as possible regarding this issue and define social impact broadly as "beneficial outcomes resulting from prosocial behavior that are enjoyed by the intended targets of that behavior and/or by the broader community of individuals, organizations, and/or environments" [Rawhouser et al., (2019), p.82].

2.1 Ways of generating social impact and the importance of scaling

Social impact can be generated in three ways: charities, social ventures, and traditional businesses, all of which have different revenue generation and distribution strategies.

2.1.1 Charities

When considering a way of generating social impact, people often think of charities. However, by definition, charities do not, or only to a small degree, generate their own income but mainly receive donations and government funding (Hyndman and McDonnell, 2009; John, 2006), and usually must report on their work, costs, and success. Regarding the allocation of financial grants, charities that can show rising impact have an advantage (Ayer et al., 2009; Strandberg, 2013). "Charities that have evidence and could be scaled up are sometimes the most compelling organizations tackling the hardest problems. (Incidentally, they are often also the organizations that engaged donors find most exciting and worth supporting)" [Brookes et al., (2010), p.4].

2.1.2 Social ventures

Another area where social impact is generated is social entrepreneurship, or more precisely, social ventures. While social entrepreneurship is not a new phenomenon, it is gaining relevance in practice as well as research (Zahra et al., 2014; Dacin et al., 2010). As Dees (1998, p.6) states, "we need social entrepreneurs to help us find new avenues toward social improvement." Although scholars do not agree on a common definition (Nicholls, 2010; Peattie and Morley, 2008; Rummel, 2011), they mainly agree that the focus of social entrepreneurship must be generating social impact by solving societal problems (Brooks, 2009; Mair and Marti, 2006; Spiegler and Halberstadt, 2018). According to Zahra et al. (2009, p.519), "social entrepreneurship encompasses the activities and processes undertaken to discover, define, and exploit opportunities in order to enhance social wealth by creating new ventures or managing existing organizations in an innovative manner." Compared to traditional business entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurs do not intend to make profit, but use financial revenues to achieve their social goals (Halberstadt and Hölzner, 2018; Weber and Kratzer, 2013). Boschee and McClurg (2003) emphasised that social entrepreneurs' earned-income strategies should be directly tied to their social mission. "Social entrepreneurs are driven by a double bottom line, a virtual blend of financial and social returns. Profitability is still a goal, but it is not the only goal, and profits are re-invested in the mission rather than being distributed to shareholders" [Boschee and McClurg, (2003), p.3].

On one hand, there has been much discussion regarding how much income must ventures earn to label themselves as entrepreneurial. While it could be argued that any kind of action that leads to financial income can be considered an entrepreneurial action, authors seem to widely agree on the requirement that ventures' main costs should be covered by their own revenue to count as entrepreneurship. Suggestions have been made that more than 50% (Defourny and Nyssens, 2006; Momberger, 2015) or at least 75% (Achleitner et al., 2007; John, 2006) of the costs must be covered. While this discussion of social entrepreneurship definitions may seem unnecessarily in-depth, it does have a connection to the topic of scaling. It is undisputable that both charities and hybrid forms (where external funding and own revenue generation is combined) contribute to social impact generation. However, most activities require a financial basis and it can be argued that ventures' own revenue is more flexible and calculable. In other words, the more money needed from external donors, the more dependent an organisation is on them, and this can thwart sustainable growth activities.

On the other hand, there is an ongoing fear that social entrepreneurs may be 'too entrepreneurial' in that they may generate profit and distribute it to investors instead of reinvesting it. Subsequently, they might lose focus in their social mission and concentrate on maximising financial profit instead (Peris, 2015). The concept of social entrepreneurship could even be abused to reach profit goals, which would be morally reprehensible (Spiegel, 2011), leading to decreasing social impact. However, social entrepreneurs are dependent on financial resources for implementing growth strategies and suffer from limited access to capital markets. "The nondistributive restriction on surpluses generated by nonprofit organizations and the embedded social purpose of for-profit or hybrid forms of social enterprise limits social entrepreneurs from tapping into the same capital markets as commercial entrepreneurs" [Austin et al., (2012), p.371]. Moreover, investors' money can also be used for implementing reasonable scaling approaches that explicitly target growing social impact. Thus, instead of losing focus, social entrepreneurs might even be more motivated to work efficiently and develop innovative solutions (Achleitner et al., 2007; Cummings, 2012).

In 2007 the term ‘impact investing’ was coined as part of “a broader movement gaining momentum in contemporary market economies, one demanding a more ethical and socially inclusive capitalism” [Dacin et al., (2011), p.1204].

In fact, the idea of using investments to yield social outcomes has a long history. As part of “a broader movement gaining momentum in contemporary market economies, one demanding a more ethical and socially inclusive capitalism” [Dacin et al., (2011), p.1204], the term ‘impact investing’ was coined in 2007. Since then, the biggest change in social impact investments is the rise in institutional investors with the goals of achieving both financial returns and social impact. These institutions, adopting various financial tools like debt or equity, range from microfinance platforms, local development banks or loan funds, to private venture capital firms. In particular, the latter have become partners in invested socially-driven organisations, serve on their boards, and provide further value added services such as planning, marketing, or developing new metrics for measuring the performance and success of social enterprises to make them accountable (Cetindamar and Ozkazanc-Pan, 2017; Bammi and Verma, 2014).

Thus, we need to consider profit distribution concepts that allow for social investments. Several suggestions have already been made to combine the protection of social impacts and their beneficiaries with the opportunities provided by access to capital markets. Recommended solutions include restrictions on the profit allowed to be distributed to investors and/or that investors accept lesser return rates than they would receive in other settings in favour of social impact (Galera and Borzaga, 2009; Spiegel, 2011).

2.1.3 Established businesses

Companies are also considered as sources for generating and scaling social impact. Businesses are an active part of society and thus, have societal responsibility (Khan et al., 2012). Consequently, they are increasingly pressured and willing to meet sustainability requirements. Social and environmental issues should be considered within companies’ own business activities and in correlation with their stakeholders (Boulouta and Pitelis, 2014; Mohr et al., 2001). Corporate engagement with society can have important effects on different sustainability issues, e.g., economic wealth connected to employment and poverty eradication, social stability due to improved education or reduced discrimination, and environmental and health issues. This concept is referred to as corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Matten and Moon, 2008; McWilliams, 2000; Schaltegger, 2016). When companies genuinely pay attention to sustainability issues and successfully create and implement innovative solutions, they can contribute tremendously to social impact and its growth. Although their focus is on financial outcomes, for-profit organisations might even have the potential to exceed the social impact of non-profit organisations (Achleitner et al., 2007).

Now that we have defined the main ways of generating social impact and discussed their general potential in scaling social impact, we will elaborate on how social impact can be scaled.

2.2 Ways of scaling social impact through social entrepreneurial activity

In recent years, the scaling of social impact has received considerable scholarly attention. Most previous works explore social entrepreneurial approaches used to raise social value (e.g., Bloom and Skloot, 2010; Perrini et al., 2010; Smith et al., 2016; Smith and Stevens, 2010; Westley and Antadze, 2010). This might be attributed to the fact that social entrepreneurship itself counts as a growing research area. It can also be explained by the tremendous potential that social entrepreneurial approaches have in practice. However, when focusing on social impact generation from a non-organisational perspective, it can be argued that it always needs some form of entrepreneurial activity to ensure sustainable growth. To successfully develop and implement growth strategies, solutions must be entrepreneurial in that they must be based on opportunities (identified and taken) and resource mobilisation, and must be innovative, risky and lead to change (see Bygrave and Hofer, 1992; Gartner, 1990 for entrepreneurship definitions).

2.2.1 Strategic expansion into new markets and product areas

One way of generating social impact is strategic expansion by generating and implementing additional social entrepreneurial approaches (Weber et al., 2015). This usually leads to some form of social enterprise, which might explain why literature mainly focuses on the social start-ups and their entrepreneurial activities leading to social impact. Thus, when looking at scaling social impact, it is not surprising that developing new social solutions is often related to social entrepreneurship in a narrower sense. However, corporate approaches should also be considered. Social entrepreneurs acting from within existing organisations is referred to as social intrapreneurship (Mair and Marti, 2006; Nandan et al., 2015). Intrapreneurial actions are underemphasised in business entrepreneurship research. “There is a vast neglect of social entrepreneurship activities and innovativeness within entrenched organizations” [Schmitz and Scheuerle, (2012), p.14]. This is astonishing since social intrapreneurship has huge potential for generating and scaling social impact. Stereotypical views regarding companies and charities might lead to preconceptions such as incumbent organisations being unresponsive and inflexible. Existing structures and experiences in routine business activities can also be drivers of innovation, and additionally, existing human as well as physical and financial resources can be used to further develop social entrepreneurial ideas and implement them (Braunerhjelm et al., 2018; Gauthier et al., 2018). Thus, scaling social impact by generating new or additional social entrepreneurial approaches can be highlighted as a promising research field that is yet to be fully tapped.

2.2.2 Capacity building within successful approaches

Another way to generate social impact is scaling successful approaches. To date, research regarding scaling social impact has been focused mainly on expands existing social entrepreneurial approaches (Weber et al., 2015; Smith et al., 2016). When an organisation wants their own activities to generate more impact, they can make investments in several ways, e.g., increasing the efficiency of procurement or production, or advanced marketing. Investments in marketing strategies are particularly interesting since marketing activities focus on specific target groups (Kotler and Levy, 1969; Schmengler and Kraus, 2010) and in the area of social entrepreneurship, we often find at least two different target groups: those paying money for a service or a product (referred to as social customers) and those benefiting from the money earned (the beneficiaries). Distribution channels can also be critical for reaching more people and thus generating additional social impact. Branch expansion is one of the most obvious forms of spreading a successful concept and can be defined as the implementation of local sites, which can be compared to company-owned offices or stores, by an organisation. Thus, it can create social impact in new areas while the central organisation retains full control of business decisions and activities (Dees et al., 2004; Smith et al., 2016). "Branch structures are particularly attractive when successful implementation of the innovation depends on tight quality control, specific practices, knowledge that is not explicitly documented or readily communicated, and strong organizational cultures" [Dees et al., (2004), p.29]. Smith et al. (2016) correlated branching to the theoretical perspective of knowledge transfer, wherein knowledge is viewed as interlinked bundles of routines and processes that produce results (Winter and Szulanski, 2001). Thus, branching is a concept that encourages strict adherence to the template, through which social impact can be scaled.

Another option for capacity building often suggested in literature is social franchising (Beckmann and Zeyen, 2014; Volkmann et al., 2012). As an adaptation of commercial franchising, it is a system of contractual relationships that regulates how a social entrepreneur with a successful concept (the franchiser) enables others (the franchisees) to replicate the tested approach while using prescribed formats, joined marketing strategies, the brand name, etc. In turn, the franchisees agree on quality standards and reports, and might pay franchising fees (Montagu, 2002; Volery and Hackl, 2010). Compared to branching, franchising addresses the resource scarcity that social ventures often deal with, without losing much management control by sharing responsibilities (Ahlert et al., 2008; Mair and Martí, 2009; Tracey and Jarvis, 2007). Ahlert et al. (2008) also stated that franchising is cheaper than branching because the franchisee also invests money and other resources in implementing social impact. Moreover, if a franchise fee is charged, it can be invested in further development of the concept, thereby scaling the social impact.

Growth by affiliation and building strategic partnerships offers the broadest variety of possibilities (Dees et al., 2004; Franzel et al., 2004; Montgomery et al., 2012). Alliances, such as coalitions, joint ventures, or other forms of partnership, have been highlighted as essential ingredients for successful scaling (Bloom and Chatterji, 2009; Sagawa and Segal, 2000). The affiliation approach draws theoretical inspiration from organisation theory literature regarding adapting innovations and is based on the agreement and ongoing relationship between parties within an identifiable network (Dees et al., 2004; Kostova and Roth, 2002; Smith et al., 2016). Affiliates can range from private people donating time and resources to increase social value to other organisations or companies that might help by providing certain physical assets that are needed or assisting with intangible resources in crucial areas, e.g., with marketing or IT-related competences. Existing networks can be used and broadened, leading to increasing (media) attention and a growing availability of potential partners and resources.

While charities and companies might have limited options, at least regarding their non-entrepreneurial activities for social impact, they might also consider further developing, supporting, and spreading certain concepts that they have developed. This requires both financial and human resource investments and leads to additional research in areas such as self-controlled expansion strategies for successful charity approaches as well as CSR-related concepts and activities. To date, existing literature has not covered these fields, including the different requirements and challenges faced by all organisations generating social impact, i.e., overcoming financial barriers or geographical hurdles.

Despite these differences, charities, traditional businesses, and social entrepreneurs have one thing in common: if they want to scale social impact by expanding existing approaches, they must be able to determine which approaches are successful. This leads to the challenge of measuring impact. Although research has recognised the importance and the challenges of properly measuring social impact, and has suggested methods and tools for analysing social value creation (Ebrahim and Rangan, 2010; Mulgan, 2010; Smith, 2001), no reliable social impact indicators have been developed (Rawhouser et al., 2019).

Therefore, investment in scaling successful approaches seems to be a rewarding strategy for charities, social entrepreneurs, and businesses aiming at sustained social impact. So far, previous research has already built a promising basis that leaves room for further scholarly attention.

2.2.3 Dissemination of concepts and knowledge

A third method of scaling social impact is knowledge dissemination and the diffusion of successful social entrepreneurial concepts by extra-organisational multipliers (Weber et al., 2015). To grow social impact, it is important that not only do individual approaches grow, but also that the knowledge of successful approaches and how to implement them is spread so that others can utilise them and multiply their positive effects on society. This way of scaling impact has not yet received much scholarly attention. This could be due to the overall negative connotation of imitation. In traditional entrepreneurial literature, facing as well as building market entry barriers to prevent entrepreneurial ideas from being copied is a central topic (Acs, 1999; Porter, 1980; Robinson, 2006). This also applies to social entrepreneurs since they must meet both social and entrepreneurial needs, although it is challenging. Smith et al. (2012), p.463f) stated that "f social enterprises are to succeed, their leaders must be able to manage the conflicting demands that emerge from both the social and commercial focus." According to the entrepreneurial perspective, information about successful solutions, especially revenue models, should be kept secret and must focus on internal growth.

However, most definitions state that social entrepreneurial action should mainly focus on maximising social impact using money as a facilitator. Thus, social entrepreneurs must also be interested in the diffusion of a successful approach by imitation. As Wie-Skillern et al. (2007, p.263) stated, the social entrepreneur must "[…] spread the social innovation as efficiently, effectively, and sustainably as possible." Dees et al. (2004) refer to the rapid and wide-scale diffusion of knowledge outside the scope of a social entrepreneur's organisation. Particularly, in times of highly developed and still growing information and communication technologies, information regarding successful methods and social businesses can easily be spread. Against this background, the question arises: why do we not see almost limitless scaling in social entrepreneurial practice? Smith et al. (2016) raise this question referring to research suggesting that social entrepreneurs tend to favour more closed scaling strategies, such as branching, even when perceiving high moral intensity.

Similar questions come up regarding the diffusion of concepts derived within charities or companies. To the best of our knowledge, these thoughts have not yet been transferred to social intrapreneurial work, e.g., being based on imitation. Only few studies elaborately tackle the diffusion of CSR concepts (e.g., Testa et al., 2012). However, this area can be highly relevant for scaling social impact, which leads to interesting and relevant fields of further research, e.g., strategic imitation for social benefit.

Therefore, extensive research potential can be identified in the three areas of scaling social impact that can be applied to the four ways of generating social impact. Within these fields, research questions can be raised with various foci, which we describe in the following section.

2.3 Research directions

In traditional as well as social entrepreneurship research, several directions can be identified. Several authors have elaborated on clustering research areas and have delivered useful research frameworks (Saebi et al., 2019; Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). Based on the main paths of research identified, we suggest the following three directions as a basis for potential research regarding scaling social impact.

2.3.1 Approach/organisation

To date, social impact research has been focused in the area of analysing the approach itself and the question of how social impact can be generated and scaled. It covers the complex process of generating and implementing social innovations and growth strategies for social impact (Desa and Koch, 2014; Vickers and Lyon, 2014; Westley and Antadze, 2010). Some studies have focused on the social business model (Baden-Fuller and Morgan, 2010), on resource management (Bloom and Smith, 2010), on financing growth (Moore et al., 2012), or on success factors (Nasruddin and Misaridin, 2014). Others deal with forms of improving or expanding their work, e.g., via diversification, differentiation, or increased market penetration strategies (Doherty et al., 2009; Grossman and Rangan, 2001; Nicholls, 2006). Additionally, the organisation itself and its characteristics play an important role. Although there has already been some academic work regarding scaling social impact with a focus on the approach and the organisation, we still see some potential for further investigation, especially when applied to intrapreneurial growth strategies.

2.3.2 People

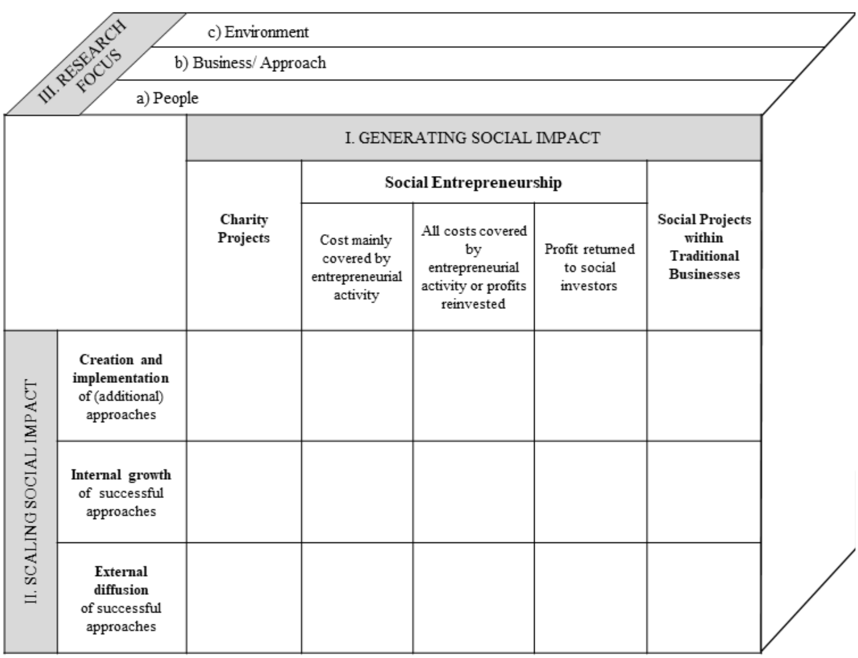
Focusing on the role and the characteristics of the entrepreneur to explain differences in successful and unsuccessful venturing has been a long standing tradition in entrepreneurial research, dating back to Schumpeter (1912). In this tradition, the impact of specific competences, motives, or networks have been highlighted in literature (Kraus et al., 2017; Mitchelmore and Rowley, 2010). Related research areas focus on opportunity recognition as well as the management practices and success of companies (Harms et al., 2009; Man et al., 2008). Similar importance has been given to the analysis of individuals when it comes to the research of incumbent companies, ranging from the specifics of the management of employees to that of customers and other stakeholders (Berry and Kato, 2018; Martínez et al., 2016)

However, in terms of scaling impact, little is known about the role of the individual. “Research on scaling has generally focused on organizational characteristics often overlooking factors at the individual level that may affect scaling decisions” [Smith et al., (2016), p.677]. Future research should focus on the people directly involved, such as managers or social entrepreneurs, and should question if certain characteristics might enable, push, or improve scaling. While several studies have focused on the motivation behind becoming a (social) entrepreneur (Germak and Robinson, 2014; Tegtmeier et al., 2016), or on factors influencing entrepreneurial idea generation (Davidsson and Honig, 2003; Halberstadt and Spiegler, 2018), these questions do not specifically deal with scaling, but can be easily applied to it. Furthermore, other stakeholders that might facilitate growth or that have positive and negative influence on the success of scaling approaches should be considered. These stakeholders can be volunteers, employees, or beneficiaries in their role as multipliers.

2.3.3 Environment

Social entrepreneurship research also considers the external factors that may influence the entrepreneurial outcome. Entrepreneurial success as well as societal change has always depended on the specific circumstances. The environment creates social needs and hence, influences social entrepreneurship opportunities. Thus, environmental factors can be considered as the basis for entrepreneurial opportunities affecting the idea generation process (Santos, 2012). They can also influence the development of a (social) business model and plan as well as the strategic decisions involved in running a company or project. Some studies show that the effectiveness of governmental decisions and infrastructure quality can be a challenge for social entrepreneurial activities (Partzsch and Ziegler, 2011; Santos, 2012). Additionally, the environment and its legal, political, or cultural characteristics are critical for the emergence, design, and long-term success of social projects or ventures (Montgomery et al. 2012; Rivera-Santos et al., 2015).

Figure 1 Different perspectives on scaling social impact



Environmental characteristics are also crucial when scaling social impact. First, the social problems that can be tackled vary depending on different surroundings. This influences the urgency and relevance of additional social ventures in certain areas. Second, the environment influences the prospects of developing and implementing successful scaling strategies. This influence can be direct, e.g., when rules and law foster or hinder the growth or diffusion of social entrepreneurial concepts, or indirect, e.g., when cultural norms specifically support or impede sustainability-oriented and/or entrepreneurial behaviour, or knowledge needed is missing due to inadequate school systems or other priorities given in education systems, or when legal requirements do not allow certain forms of raising capital (see discussion regarding social investments above).

Thus, the identified research areas can all be promising fields of research regarding scaling social impact with interesting interrelations to each other. Figure 1 summarises the different perspectives on scaling social impact.

3 Exemplary research

In this editorial, we developed a framework comprising three different perspectives on scaling social impact that can be combined with new research paths that focus on social entrepreneurial activities. Although the framework offers a structure for associated existing work, it should mainly be used as a basis for deriving future research questions. We want to motivate authors to contribute to closing the research gaps that we have identified, especially the area of intrapreneurial ways of generating and scaling social impact. We also call for a focus on the people and environmental factors that influence social innovations and growth. Our framework may inspire and motivate the development of new growth strategies. In addition, the framework can have practical applications, e.g. when used for idea workshops in existing organisations. Finally, the framework can be implemented in social entrepreneurship education. It can help to understand and discuss the processes, relationships, challenges, and opportunities in social entrepreneurship. In experience-based learning settings, such as service learning environments, students can generate their own suggestions for social scaling strategies based on the combined perspectives.

As a starting point for future research, in this special issue, we introduce five articles that address new perspectives for scaling social impact, thus underlining the variety of perspectives.

Bergfeld et al. investigated the factors influencing organisational growth in social entrepreneurial organisations in the social franchising context. The authors examined whether and how the amount of franchise fees and the degree of standardisation will enhance or hinder organisational growth. The study utilised an exploratory qualitative research approach, based on semi-structured interviews with social franchisors and social franchisees combined with an analysis of written social franchise agreements. Their results indicate that social franchising is only a transitional solution for the organisational growth of social entrepreneurial organisations. Social franchisees will most likely continue to pursue their own interests and objectives to achieve the desired social impact.

Giones et al. focused on social ventures as hybrid organisations, aiming to achieve economic sustainability while addressing social or environmental issues. The study examined how issue-goal incongruence may lead to new social ventures and developed the hypothesis that social, sustainable, and environmental impact goals in new hybrid organisations come at the cost of financial impact goals. This hypothesis was tested using a dataset of 4,125 early-stage ventures and a logit analysis that studies the relationship between financial and other potential blended values was conducted. The findings suggest new hybrid organisations might have to sacrifice financial impact to achieve social impact, but not when they aim to generate environmental or sustainable impact.

Lin-Hi et al. conducted an experimental study regarding external perceptions and consumer intentions for social versus traditional enterprises. The study aimed to analyse the competitive environment that social enterprises face compared to their traditional counterparts. An experimental survey was conducted with 222 participants and a multivariate analysis of variance was performed. The results indicate that it is difficult for social enterprises to successfully compete with their traditional counterparts in the market sustainably. While social enterprises are perceived as more socially responsible and face higher expectations in terms of sustainable behaviour, consumers are not willing to buy and pay more for their sustainable products.

Sinha et al. focused on the growth processes of social ventures by examining the combination and sequence of different growth modes of a case study. Their findings reveal a growth process involving resource management to overcome contextual challenges. 'Gearing up for growth' is research regarding capacity building. The study demonstrates how new ventures may successfully scale up via resource management in a resource-poor environment and how this can influence their individual growth paths.

Pakura presented a study that interlinked the development of green-tech start-ups with open innovation. The results show that while green-tech start-ups use both common types of innovation processes, inbound and outbound, in the open innovation context, key partners with a special impact on the success of the social innovation can be identified. The authors derived their findings from ten semi-structured expert interviews providing more insights on the opportunities and partner-specific risks involved in the open innovation process.

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