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Journal of Business Research

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/jbusres

Social entrepreneurship research: A review and future research agenda

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Social entrepreneurship
Social enterprises
Entrepreneurship
Systematic review

ABSTRACT

Social Entrepreneurship (SE) is a popular area of research and practice. An analysis of the existing literature reviews on SE reveals a dearth of studies classifying the existing SE literature into multiple research themes and further presenting popular and less popular research themes. With the aim of bridging this gap, this study presents a systematic review of 188 peer reviewed SSCI journal articles published in last decade. It presents an overview of recent SE research, classifying it in five main themes while identifying the thrust areas of research in each. Based on identified research gaps, we provide future research directions, contexts and methodology.

1. Introduction

Social entrepreneurship (SE) has evolved as a research domain of great significance for firms and researchers (Kannampuzha & Hockerts, 2019; Rey-Martí et al., 2016b). Several issues such as poverty and human welfare have motivated various firms to conduct business with an embedded social drive (Huda et al., 2019; Doherty, Haugh, & Lyon, 2014). SE acts as a catalyst for social change, and social entrepreneurs do not expect direct monetary benefit from their social ventures (Barberá-Tomás, Castelló, de Bakker, & Zietsma, 2019). Bygrave and Minniti (2000) found that every entrepreneurship has a social function; however, SE differs from traditional entrepreneurship in its primary mission of creating social value rather than generating private economic gains (Bedi & Yadav, 2019; Pless, 2012; Santos, 2012; Mair et al., 2012a). Schramm (2010) opined that the economic value created by an entrepreneurial venture cannot be easily separated from the social benefits, as social and commercial activities unite and become intertwined in the “real typical” center of the continuum. Moreover, as defined within the larger system, entrepreneurship, opportunity, and philanthropy generate a sustainable cycle for social as well as economic, institutional development. Social enterprises merge the pursuit of public social goods with the market-aligned tools and techniques of for-profit organisations (Urbano, Toledano, & Soriano, 2010). Thus, social enterprises essentially function at the boundaries of the traditional philosophies of those organisations (Mamabolo & Myres, 2019; Defourny & Nyssens, 2010; Dees, 2012). Overall, SE may be considered

a novel activity that intends to create producer surplus by reducing negative externalities and/or creating positive externalities via the integration of the essence of social as well as entrepreneurship constructs (Newbert & Hill, 2014). Extant literature provides enough evidence that researchers have attempted to understand SE phenomena from the point of view of social entrepreneurs, social enterprises and social ventures (e.g. Hota, Subramanian, & Narayanamurthy, 2019; Bacq & Alt, 2018; André & Pache, 2016; Bacq, Hartog, & Hoogendoorn, 2016). Therefore, it is essential to integrate these perspectives to develop a complete and fair understanding of SE phenomena.

Several researchers have defined SE, social entrepreneurs, and social enterprises from an extensive range of perspectives (Kannampuzha & Hockerts, 2019; Short, Moss, & Lumpkin, 2009; Peredo & McLean, 2006). Lasprogata and Cotton (2003) described SE as a non-profit organisation (e.g. Tamarack—An Institute for Community Engagement, and Meal Exchange, Canadian non-profit Social organisations funded by J. W. McConnell Family Foundation), while Wallace (1999) viewed social enterprises as for-profit companies managed by non-profit organisations. Furthermore, Mair and Marti (2006) defined a social enterprise as an organisation engaged in business activities for achieving social goals (e.g. Narayana Hrudayalaya Ltd., an Indian public limited company offering affordable and highly-subsidised medical services to poor people). Certo and Miller (2008) articulated that SE relates to individuals and business entities engaged in entrepreneurial activities specifically for a social purpose (e.g. Janani Foods Private Limited, a SE venture of a marketing professional offering end-to-end agri-services to

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Received 18 October 2019; Received in revised form 20 March 2020; Accepted 22 March 2020

Available online 09 April 2020

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poor Indian farmers).

The literature provides enough evidence that the number of SE researchers and publications has been increasing over the last two decades (Hota et al., 2019; Zahra, Newey, & Li, 2014; Short et al., 2009; McQuilten, 2017). A review of the extant literature on SE confirmed the existence of a variety of already-explored research themes. Recently, there has been a substantial increase in research articles on the social impact of SE (Nguyen, Szkudlarek, & Seymour, 2015), innovations by social entrepreneurs, SE business strategies and business models (George & Reed, 2016; Roy & Karna, 2015), as well as value creation and value dissemination by SE (Sulphrey & Alkahtani, 2017; Nega & Schneider, 2014; Brandsen & Karré, 2011). Thus, SE is a mature field of research that has been thoroughly examined by scholars. An ever-growing number of articles published on SE in the last decade constitutes a large set of studies for review, offering opportunities to look back and reflect on how to move the field forward. It has been observed that while several articles cover specific SE research themes, other themes have not grabbed much of the SE researchers' attention. Thus, a rigorous and systematic review of the scattered SE domain will not only provide an overview of the existing state of recent research but will also draw SE researcher's attention to those less popular themes.

Moreover, classification of recent SE research into research themes can bring the loose ends together. It will also provide a theoretical background of the SE research domain for future researchers, outline the breadth of research on a particular topic of interest, and provide answers to practical questions by understanding the existing research on a particular matter.

Table 1 provides a summary of prior literature review studies on SE conducted in last decade. A careful examination of these studies reveals that existing review studies either focus on specific aspects of SE (Phillips, Lee, Ghobadian, O'Regan, & James, 2015; Dufays & Huybrechts, 2014; Kraus, Filser, O'Dwyer, & Shaw, 2014; Lee et al., 2014) or provide a broad overview of the SE research as an academic topic of research (Choi & Majumdar, 2014; Hota et al., 2019; Sassmannshausen & Volkman, 2018.). We have found a dearth of literature review studies classifying recent SE research into themes based on research subjects that would provide future research directions in light of the detailed analysis of each theme.

In this context, we conduct a review of articles on SE published during 2007–2018 by examining those focused on social entrepreneurial activities, clustering these articles to filter major themes and sub-themes while identifying the popular and less popular research themes. This study goes a step further by exploring the research methods used and providing an overview of research studies conducted in different geographic locations and the journals publishing them.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: Section two deals with the methodology of the Review Process. Findings and Discussion are reported in section three. Section four is dedicated for providing future research directions, followed by implications for policy makers and limitations of the study in section five.

2. Methodology

Systematic review papers can be of several types, namely – Structured review focusing on widely used methods, theories and constructs (Rosado-Serrano, Paul, & Dikova, 2018; Cannibal and White, 2008; Paul & Singh, 2017; Hao et al., 2019), Framework based (Paul & Benito, 2018), Hybrid (Kumar, Paul and Unnithan, 2019): Narrative Review (Paul, Parthasarathy, & Gupta, 2017), theory based review (Gilal et al., 2018; Paul and Rosado-Serrano, 2019), meta-analysis (Knoll & Matthes, 2017), bibliometric review (Albort-Morant and Ribeiro-Soriano, 2016; Randhawa et al., 2016), review aiming for model/framework development (Paul & Mas, 2019; Paul, 2019).

We follow the systematic literature review process suggested by authors of widely cited prior review articles (Bozhikin, Macke, & da Costa, 2019; Kitchenham, 2004; Paul et al., 2017). The process includes

a number of activities such as developing a protocol for review, selecting articles for the same, extracting data, synthesizing results from the reviewed articles and reporting the results. The purpose of these activities and the method used for performing them are described below.

2.1. Protocol development

The criterion used to identify the articles for this review is governed by the protocol development. First, we collected and read the previous literature reviews on the topic. Table 1 summarises the objectives of the recent reviews on SE to understand the concepts and phenomenon of SE, as well as to identify certain research gaps. As suggested by Low and MacMillan (1988), the following dimensions were considered for conducting an in-depth study of review articles: Objectives, Analytical Tool, Study Period, and Study Scope (see Table 1). An in-depth review of these papers revealed a dearth of literature reviews on SE that identify more and less popular research themes. Knowledge of less popular research themes can help understand where more effort should be made in the future to produce more consumable research. Conversely, highly researched themes can help practitioners and researchers to understand a phenomenon thoroughly.

The following steps illustrate the protocol used for searching the articles for this review:

- Scopus database and Google Scholar were used for searching the articles published during 2007–2018. The articles were obtained by using the advanced search option available in the Scopus database. A number of search strings or search terms were constructed based on the purpose of this study, and the search was restricted to peer-reviewed articles published between 2007 and 2018. The search terms used were “Social Entrepreneurship,” “Social Enterprise,” “Social Venture,” and “Social Entrepreneur.” The Boolean “or” operator was used for searching articles as these terms have interchangeably been used by the SE researchers. This ensures that all the articles containing the phrase related to “Social Entrepreneurship” in their text were extracted.
- Only peer-reviewed journal articles were considered, and they underwent a review process of screening for quality. This allows one to filter those articles that meet a certain level of conceptual as well as methodological rigor (David & Han, 2004).
- Lastly, out of all the articles obtained, those published only in Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) journals were considered. The rationale behind choosing the SSCI database was to ensure quality, as SSCI articles form high-quality research articles. This allowed us to search and locate a substantial proportion of high-impact peer-reviewed articles published in the ambit of SE.

2.2. Inclusion Decision based on title and keywords

The articles obtained were further screened based on their title and keywords to filter out irrelevant ones. This stage resulted in the exclusion of articles not directly focused on SE as the main research theme. Two authors excluded those articles that did not appear to be relevant to this study. The third author then went through the abstracts of excluded articles to ensure that potential papers that had not appeared relevant from their title and keywords looked promising from their abstract were not screened out. This stage led to the identification of 534 articles for further filtration.

2.3. Inclusion Decision based on Abstract

This stage involved an in-depth reading of the abstracts of the articles by two authors simultaneously to filter out irrelevant ones. Although the above-mentioned search terms were present in the text of the excluded articles, they were not specifically focusing on social

Table 1
Summary of Prior Reviews on SE.

| Author | Analytical Tool | Objective of the Study | Study Period | Study Scope |
|---|---|---|---------------|---------------|
| Hota et al. (2019) | Bibliometric Analysis | To examine the integration of ethics into social entrepreneurship literature | 1996–2017 | 1296 |
| Szijarto et al. (2018) | Systematic review | To evaluate different social innovation contexts | Not mentioned | 41 |
| Sassamshausen and Volkmann (2018) | Scientometric methods | To provide an overview of the SE research and the establish this topic in the academic world | Not mentioned | Not mentioned |
| Hossain, Saleh, and Drennan (2017) | Content analysis and citation analysis | To draw inferences from all major studies undertaken previously to distill the measurement constructs of various phenomena. | 1991–2016 | 310 |
| Gonçalves, Carrara, and Schmitttel (2016) | Content analysis | To analyse the world scientific literature on social enterprises. | 2005–15 | 111 |
| Sassamshausen and Volkmann (2018) | Content analysis | To measure the maturity of SE research. | 1954–2013 | Not mentioned |
| Rey-Marrí et al. (2016b) | Bibliometric analysis | To guide new researchers | 2003–2015 | 2984 |
| Burga and Rezaia (2015) | Scoping review | To provide an overview of the type, extent, and quantity of research papers available on current accountability literature related to SE. | 2001–2014 | 27 |
| Phillips et al. (2015) | Thematic analysis | To conduct systematic literature review of Social Innovation and SE | 1987–2012 | 122 |
| Choi and Majumdar (2014) | Content analysis | To shed light on the ongoing contestation of SE and to offer a novel conceptual understanding of SE that can facilitate the development of systematic and structured future research. | 1991–2012 | Not mentioned |
| Dufays and Huybrechts (2014) | Snowball method and content analysis | To conduct Review on Social Networks and SE. | 1973–2012 | 18 |
| Gras, Moss, and Lumpkin (2014) | Content analysis | To assess the current prevalence of empirical research in the field of SE. | 2009–2013 | 116 |
| Kraus et al. (2014) | Citation analysis | To explore definitions of SE, illustrate empirical insights, and identify the most influential publications. | 1934–2013 | 129 |
| Lee, Battilana, and Wang (2014) | Content analysis | To review empirical research on social enterprises. | 1991–2013 | 53 |
| McKenny (2014) | Review analysis | To provide a one-stop reference to scholars interested in conducting SE research. | Not mentioned | 43 |
| Newbert and Hill (2014) | Content analysis and citation analysis | To set the stage for paradigm development in SE. | 1973–2012 | Not mentioned |
| Nicolopoulou (2014) | Content analysis | To identify cross-currents that currently characterize the field of SE in the process of its maturation. | 1883–2014 | Not mentioned |
| Turner, Crook, and Miller (2014) | Content analysis | To assess current construct measurement in SE. | 1998–2013 | 23 |
| Lehner and Kansikas (2013) | Systematic literature review and coding process | To present the literature as a field of action in a pre-paradigmatic state, a field that lacks an established epistemology. | 2005–2011 | 300 |
| Lehner and Kansikas (2012) | Meta Analysis | To identify, codify, and analyse relevant articles on SE. | 2005–2010 | 77 |
| Santos (2012) | Review Analysis | To propose theory aimed at advancing scholarly research in social entrepreneurship. | Not mentioned | Not mentioned |

entrepreneurial activities. Subsequently, the independent opinion of the third author of this study was taken to further validate the exclusion of articles. Later, all four authors discussed the reasons for excluding some articles and reached a consensus on those passing to the next step. As a result of this stage, 267 articles were left for further filtration.

2.4. Final Selection

This stage involved the reading of the full text of all 267 articles by three authors to further filter out irrelevant articles. Although the abstracts of all filtered articles at stage two were carefully read, a full text reading was done to ensure that only those articles were reviewed that centrally focused on SE as their core research theme and not as ancillary one. The following criteria were used for shortlisting the articles at this stage:

- The paper should discuss “Social Entrepreneurship” or “Social Enterprise” or “Social Venture” or “Social Entrepreneur” as its core research theme.
- The research objective of the paper should be related to “Social Entrepreneurship” or “Social Enterprise” or “Social Venture” or “Social Entrepreneur.”

Subsequently, the fourth author reviewed the excluded articles to achieve an even consensus. The output of this stage resulted in the identification of 188 articles to constitute the study sample. The sample confirms the growing interest of researchers in SE in the recent past (refer Table 2). A majority of SE research in last decade was conducted in developed economies. Around 34% of the total studies came from North America, followed by Europe and Asia contributing 28% and 19%, respectively (refer Table 3). It is clear that most recent SE research is based on the data collected from developed economies. Table 4 mentions popular research methods used by SE researchers. Qualitative methods, such as single and multiple case studies, and observations and interviews have been the most popular methods among SE researchers. While a good number of studies have applied quantitative methods like *t*-test, structural equation modelling, linear regression, logistic regression and multiple regression, we observed that only a few adopted mixed methods. Table 5 lists the journals in which SE research has been published in last decade. This list informs us that SE research has found its place in a variety of journals from entrepreneurship to business ethics (Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice and Journal of business ethics), general management (Journal of business research), small business (Journal of Small Business Management, Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development), policy (Journal of Public Policy & Marketing), economics (Journal of Economic Review), and not for profit (Journal of Non-profit & Public Sector Marketing). However, more than 80% of the research was published in entrepreneurship and general management journals. It implies that SE is considered to be a

Table 2
Distribution of SE Studies Across Years.

| Year | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------|-----------|----------------|
| 2007 | 9 | 5 |
| 2008 | 5 | 3 |
| 2009 | 9 | 5 |
| 2010 | 14 | 7 |
| 2011 | 8 | 4 |
| 2012 | 10 | 5 |
| 2013 | 9 | 5 |
| 2014 | 17 | 9 |
| 2015 | 16 | 9 |
| 2016 | 27 | 14 |
| 2017 | 16 | 9 |
| 2018 | 48 | 26 |
| Total | 188 | 100 |

Table 3
Distribution of Sample Studies Across Continents.

| Continent | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|-----------|----------------|
| North America | 64 | 34 |
| Europe | 53 | 28 |
| Asia | 35 | 19 |
| Multi-continental | 17 | 9 |
| Africa | 10 | 5 |
| Australia | 7 | 4 |
| South America | 2 | 1 |
| Total | 188 | 100 |

management discipline and not a not-for-profit or economics subject of study.

2.5. Data extraction and synthesis

A data extraction form, supplied in the Appendix A, was produced to mine the data from the selected articles to make sure that each research paper was thoroughly analysed. Two authors mined the data from these articles independently. Subsequently, the mined data was compared and mismatches were sorted out by the third author to reach a consensus. Further, a “bottom-up” approach suggested in the grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was used to classify the SE literature and to identify more popular and less popular research themes. Wolfswinkel et al. (2011) recommended this approach as a rigorous way of reviewing literature. Specific sub-sub-themes were assigned to each research paper and then synthesised into a more generic theme using following three-step process:

- Each paper was thoroughly reviewed to understand the objectives, research problems, conclusions, and results. Through this process of open coding, 188 articles were categorised into a total of 81 research subjects or sub-sub-themes (open codes). Multiple articles shared the same sub-sub-theme and, therefore, the total number of sub-sub-themes was less than the total number of articles examined. For example, out of 188 articles, 7 discussed the contribution of SE in addressing social problems (e.g., Katunga & Lombard, 2016, Hervieux & Voltan, 2018, Manetti, 2014) and thus shared the same sub-sub-theme, namely “Social Problems.”
- Following the process of axial coding, identified sub-sub-themes were grouped on the basis of their close similarity. Thus, 81 sub-sub-themes (open codes) were further reduced to 34 sub-themes (axial codes). For example, sub-sub-themes, namely “Social Capital,” “Social Transformation,” “Social Problems,” and “Social Entrepreneurship Identity Work” were grouped to form a sub-theme called “Social Change.” In most of the cases, the sub-sub-themes pointed to a clear research subject. Thus, it found a place in the group of similar sub-sub-themes. However, some hybrid sub-sub-themes were also found that could be a part of more than one group at the same time (e.g., “Social Entrepreneurship Identity Work,” a sub-sub-theme could be a part of “Entrepreneurial Orientation of Social Entrepreneurs” and “The ‘Social’ Element in SE” themes). To identify the most appropriate group for such hybrid sub-sub-themes, the content of the related articles was reread in greater detail to obtain deeper insights in order to choose the most appropriate theme.
- To perform the final step of the classification process, an affinity analysis was carried out. Sub-themes (axial codes) were compared on the basis of their similarities and differences. For example, the sub-themes labelled, “Social Change,” “Corporate Social Responsibility,” and “Social Impact” were found to be similar, as they highlighted the social element in SE; thus, they formed a theme labeled, “The ‘Social’ Element in SE.” Finally, this resulted in a total of five main themes. Fig. 1 presents the process of the extraction of themes.

Table 4
Methods Used by SE Studies.

| Research Methodology | Techniques used | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|----------------------------|---|------------|----------------|
| Qualitative | Multiple case studies, Single case study, Unstructured interviews, Semi-structured interviews, Observations, Ethnography, Narrative inquiry, Discourse analysis, Redistributive approach, Content analysis, Fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis, Thematic analysis | 89 | 47 |
| Quantitative | t-test, Structural Equation Modeling, Linear regression, Logistic regression, Multiple regression, Probit regression, OLS regression, Factor analysis, Descriptive statistics, Correlation, Experiment, ANOVA, Chi square test, Q-factor analysis, Mann-Whitney U Test | 47 | 25 |
| Mixed Methodology | Qualitative: Case study, Qualitative data analysis of expert comments, Semi-structured interviews, Structured Interviews, Open ended questions Quantitative: Regression, Dephi statistics, Descriptive statistics, Factor analysis, Normality tests, Two-stage least squares regression, Correlation | 7 | 4 |
| Theoretical and Conceptual | Examples, Theoretical model development or testing, Framework or model development, Concept review | 45 | 24 |
| Total | | 188 | 100 |

Table 5
Journals Publishing SE Research.

| Journal | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--|------------|----------------|
| Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice | 19 | 10 |
| Journal of Business Ethics | 15 | 8 |
| International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research | 11 | 6 |
| Entrepreneurship & Regional Development | 11 | 6 |
| Journal of Business Venturing | 10 | 5 |
| Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations | 8 | 4 |
| Journal of Business Research | 8 | 4 |
| Business & Society | 4 | 2 |
| Journal of Social Entrepreneurship | 4 | 2 |
| Technological forecasting and social change | 4 | 2 |
| Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal | 4 | 2 |
| Management Decision | 3 | 2 |
| Journal of Small Business Management | 2 | 1 |
| International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management | 2 | 1 |
| Journal of World Business | 2 | 1 |
| International Journal of Management Reviews | 2 | 1 |
| Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development | 2 | 1 |
| Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly | 2 | 1 |
| Entrepreneurship Research Journal | 2 | 1 |
| International Journal of Public Administration | 2 | 1 |
| Annals of Tourism Research | 2 | 1 |
| Long Range Planning | 2 | 1 |
| Journal of Organizational Change Management | 2 | 1 |
| Journal of Public Policy & Marketing | 2 | 1 |
| Journal of Management Inquiry | 2 | 1 |
| Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing | 2 | 1 |
| Academy of Management Journal | 2 | 1 |
| Journal of Economic Issues | 2 | 1 |
| Others | 55 | 29 |
| Total | 188 | 100 |

Reliability and validity are the fundamental aspects of research. In qualitative research, validity is a sufficient condition for reliability, i.e., reliability is the result of validity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To establish the validity of this study, a peer debriefing process was followed. In this process, data and the research process are assessed by someone acquainted with the phenomenon being explored (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Therefore, while performing the above-mentioned steps such as Inclusion Decision based on Abstract, Final Selection, and Data Extraction and Synthesis, the opinion of the third author was taken into considerations to validate the exclusion of articles and achieve a consensus with the other two authors.

3. Findings and discussion

This section provides an overview of the research themes and the types of articles available on SE. It further reveals the popular research themes while presenting research gaps. Arksey and O'Malley (2005) suggested that while identifying research gaps, it is not necessary to comment on the quality of the paper, and therefore this section explains the research themes and sub-themes of each cluster but doesn't comment on the quality of the reviewed articles. Table 6 presents the research themes, sub-themes, sub-sub-themes, and the total number of articles associated with them. The next section explains the research themes and provides an overview of research work produced under each theme.

3.1. The "Social" element in SE

Several researchers have focused on the "social" element in the SE research domain. This theme broadly represents the critical role played by social factors in SE phenomenon and the entrepreneurial orientation of social entrepreneurs. This theme had many hybrid sub-themes with an overlap of the "social" element. Upon further exploration, we found two sub-themes under the main theme, titled as SE phenomenon and

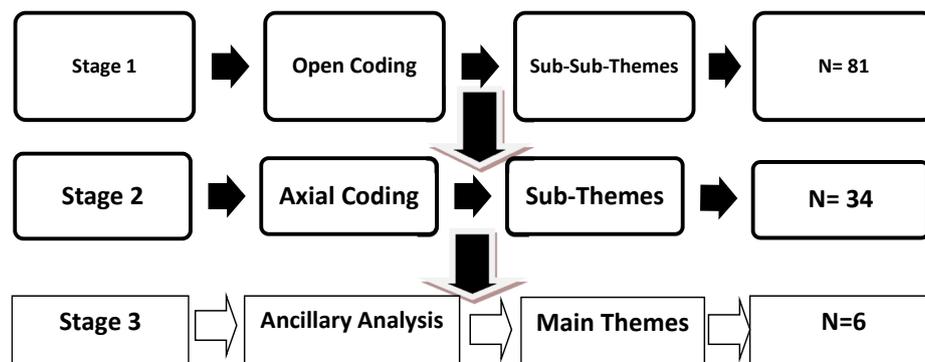


Fig. 1. Extraction of Main Research Themes.

Table 6
Research Themes, Sub-Themes, and Sub-Sub-Themes.

| Theme | Sub Themes | Sub-sub Themes | Frequency | % of Studies |
|--|---|--|-----------|--------------|
| 1. “The Social” Element in SE | | | | |
| 1.1 SE Phenomenon | Social Change Corporate Social Responsibility Social Impact | Social capital Social transformation Social problems Social entrepreneurship identity work Employment generation Sustainable community development Relation with local community Scaling up Growth | 30 | 16 |
| 1.2 Entrepreneurial Orientation | SE and Commercial Entrepreneurship SE and Social Enterprise SE and Intrapreneurship Motives of SE Social Mission Dual Objectives of SE | SE intentions Mission and objectives Attitude of social entrepreneur Behaviour of social entrepreneur Social movement Social exclusion Social engagement and empowerment Social goals Commercial goals Process of innovation in SE Interacting influences for innovation Technical discourse Social context Creativity | 28 | 15 |
| 2. Innovation and SE | Social innovation Technical innovation Barriers to Social Innovation | Ways of engagement Socio - demographic Teamwork Attitude and behaviours Communication and negotiations skills Leadership skills Delegation Bricolage capabilities Nascent entrepreneurs Opportunity identification Public Management by social entrepreneurs Active listening Identity capital Social entrepreneur’s identity Construct of gender in SE Gender difference in SE General human capital Specific human capital Employee commitment Communication and information Technical skills Experiential learning SE courses Education programmes in SE Training social entrepreneurs Promotion of SE programmes SE pedagogy | 18 | 10 |
| 3. Human Resources in SE | Personality Traits of Social Entrepreneurs Women Social Entrepreneurs Human Capital Motivation and Drivers of Social Entrepreneurs Organisational Learning by Social Entrepreneurs Training in SE SE Teaching Role of Universities in SE Education | SE process and SE Models Sustainable orientation SE typology SE competition Consumer response Social marketing Social franchising Challenges of internationalization of SE Motivation for internationalization Employment generation SE Competence / Self Efficacy Scaling up of SE growth and development Impact of ownership SE resilience Social alliances, networking and collaborations Value capture Value alignment Value distribution and delivery | 45 | 24 |
| 4. Business Strategy and Value Creation | SE Business Models Marketing by SE Internationalization by SE SE Performance and Effectiveness Value Allocation Value Capture | SE process and SE Models Sustainable orientation SE typology SE competition Consumer response Social marketing Social franchising Challenges of internationalization of SE Motivation for internationalization Employment generation SE Competence / Self Efficacy Scaling up of SE growth and development Impact of ownership SE resilience Social alliances, networking and collaborations Value capture Value alignment Value distribution and delivery | 33 | 18 |
| 5. Challenges Faced by Social Entrepreneurs | Financial Resource Constraints Leadership Challenges Role of Government | Crowd funding Finance and venture capital Financial capacity of SE Foreign Direct Investment | 34 | 18 |

(continued on next page)

Table 6 (continued)

| Theme | Sub Themes | Sub-sub Themes | Frequency | % of Studies |
|-------|---|---|-----------|--------------|
| | Institutional Environment of SE Other Challenges | Greenfield operations Employee engagement and commitment Impact assessment and ethics in SE Dynamic socio-economic environment, Resource mobilization and scalability dilemma Government support Government policy Public policy Government regulations | | |

Entrepreneurial orientation.

3.1.1. SE phenomenon

This sub-theme largely comprises of qualitative and theoretical studies using data from developed countries. However, few recent studies have collected data from developing countries (e.g. Katunga & Lombard, 2016). The majority of researchers have used qualitative methods like single or multiple case studies, content analysis, and structured interviews (Andersson & Ford, 2015; Zhang & Swanson, 2013). We also found unique qualitative methods like corpus linguistic discourse (Agarwal, Chakrabarti, Brem, & Bocken, 2018). A handful of quantitative studies used regression and intraclass correlation methods (e.g. Bacq et al., 2016; Pathak & Muralidharan, 2016). As presented in Table 7, this aspect predominantly covered social change, social impact, and corporate social responsibility. Some scholars make mention

of Resource Based View (RBV) and social movement and paradox theory (Thorgren & Omoredede, 2018). Agarwal et al. (2018) suggesting that the SE phenomenon should not be limited to its expressed contents or an excessively strict legal or economic definition. An emerging initiative co-constitutes new social realities needing to be actualised urgently (Daskalaki, Hjorth, & Mair, 2015). Social movements and SE are not two separate phenomena but may be viewed as different ways of approaching the same thing (Ladstaetter, Plank, & Hemetsberger, 2018). Research stands by the argument that one of the distinctive features of SE in congregational settings is the value of social capital (Werber, Mendel, & Derose, 2014). Social problems are viewed as potential opportunities that can be grabbed by developing products and services, thereby generating social value (Zaefarian, Tasavori, & Ghauri, 2015; Zahra, Rawhouser, Bhawe, Neubaum, & Hayton, 2008). However, the social problems that social enterprises seek to address,

Table 7
Mapping Research Themes with Their Contributors.

| Main Theme | Contributors |
|---|--|
| 1. “The Social” Element in SE | |
| 1.1 SE Phenomenon | Agarwal et al. (2018), Ladstaetter et al. (2018), McMullen (2018), Pasricha and Rao (2018), Pathak and Muralidharan (2018), Ramus et al. (2018), Thorgren and Omoredede (2018), Chandra (2017), McQuilten (2017), Bacq et al. (2016), Bacq and Eddleston (2016), Montesano Montessori (2016), Hervieux and Voltan (2016), Rey-Martí et al. (2016a), Haugh and Talwar (2016), Katunga and Lombard (2016), Nguyen et al. (2015), Zaefarian et al. (2015), Andersson and Ford (2015), Daskalaki et al. (2015), Galvin and Iannotti (2015), Manetti (2014), Parker Harris et al. (2014), Werber et al. (2014), Anderson et al. (2014), Renko (2013), Ruebottom (2013), Zhang and Swanson (2013), Nga and Shamuganathan (2010), Zahra et al. (2008). |
| 1.2 Entrepreneurial Orientation | André et al. (2018), Bacq and Alt (2018), Cherrier et al. (2018), Dwivedi and Weerawardena (2018), Kibler et al. (2018), Littlewood and Holt (2018), Muñoz and Kimmitt (2018), Sharma et al. (2018), Lamy (2017), Hockerts (2017), Pathak and Muralidharan (2016), Mendoza-Abarca et al. (2015), Stevens et al. (2015), Smith et al. (2012), Gawell (2013), Estrin et al. (2013), Mair et al. (2012b), Haynes (2011), Lawrence et al. (2011), McMullen (2011), Moss et al. (2011), Dacin et al. (2010), Di Domenico et al. (2009), Gupta et al. (2009), Zahra et al. (2009), Haugh (2007), Van de Ven et al. (2007). |
| 2. Innovation and SE | Bojica et al. (2018), Johannisson (2018), Kickul et al. (2018), Mottiar et al. (2018), Rao-Nicholson et al. (2017), Chavez et al. (2017), Grohs et al. (2017), Newth (2016), Calic and Mosakowski (2016), Ramani et al. (2016), Miremadi (2014), Bhatt and Altinay (2013), Ratten (2013), Montgomery et al. (2012), Weerawardena and Mort (2012), Bacq and Janssen (2011), Bloom and Chatterji (2009), Mosek et al. (2007). |
| 3. Human Resources in SE | Bull (2018), Glaveli and Geomas (2018), Henderson et al. (2018), Margiono et al. (2018), Rossignoli et al. (2018), Lortie and Cox (2018), Servantie and Rispal (2018), Szijarto et al. (2018), Tasavori et al. (2018), Krstić et al. (2017), Lortie et al. (2017), Dey and Lehner (2017), González et al. (2017), Dey and Steyaert (2016), Kimbu and Ngoasong (2016), Sunduramurthy, Zheng, Musteen, Francis, and Rhyne (2016), Estrin et al. (2016), Mottiar and Mottiar (2016), Raith and Starke (2017), Lewis (2016), Scheiber (2016), Yitshaki and Kropp (2016), Mody et al. (2016), Cohen and Peachey (2015), Konakll (2015), Tshikovhi and Shambare (2015), Chang and Benamraoui, & Rieple (2014), Costanzo et al. (2014), Doherty et al. (2014), Chang and Benamraoui, & Rieple (2014), Yiu et al. (2014), Desa and Basu (2013), Datta and Gailey (2012), Elmes et al. (2012), Maak and Stoetter (2012), Makhlof (2011), Butler et al. (2010), Di Domenico et al. (2010), Defourny and Nyssens (2010), Kickul et al. (2010), Van Ryzin et al. (2009), Calás et al. (2009), Williams (2007), DeTienne and Chandler (2007), Mair and Schoen (2007). |
| 4. Business Strategy and Value Creation | Clark et al. (2018), Gordon et al. (2018), Granados and Rivera (2018), Hlady-Rispal and Servantie (2018), Kachlami et al. (2018), Molina et al. (2018), Petrovskaya and Mirakyan (2018), Gibbons and Hazy (2017), André and Pache (2016), Robb and Gandhi (2016), George and Reed (2016), Engelke, Mauksch, Darkow, and von der Gracht (2016), Lanteri (2015), Roy and Karna (2015), Engelke, Mauksch, Darkow, and Heiko (2015), Agafonow (2014), Chant (2014), Facca-Miess and Santos (2014), Lan et al. (2014), Ziegler et al. (2014), Lepoutre, Justo, Terjesen, and Bosma (2013), Liu et al. (2015), Mair et al. (2012a), Sakarya et al. (2012), Doz and Kosonen (2010), Meyskens et al. (2010), Nicholls (2010), Smith et al. (2010), Yunus et al. (2010), Short et al. (2009), Dann (2008), Tracey and Jarvis (2007). |
| 5. Challenges Faced by Social Entrepreneurs - | Aquino et al. (2018), Biddulph (2018), Bontis et al. (2018), Calò et al. (2018), Eti-Tofinga et al. (2018), Grimes et al. (2018), Ip et al. (2018), Krejčí and Šebestová (2018), Ozeren et al. (2018), Sepulveda et al. (2018), Warnecke (2018), Wry and Zhao (2018), Bhatt et al. (2019), Sulphay and Alkahtani (2017), Urban and Kujinga (2017), Frank and Shockley (2016), Jung et al. (2016), Muñoz and Kibler (2016), Arasti et al. (2015), Grohs et al. (2015), Chand (2014), Nega and Schneider (2014), Brandsen and Karré (2011), Desa (2012), Battilana and Dorado (2010), Irwin and Scott (2010), Urbano et al. (2010), Sud et al. (2009), Schiffer and Lessem (2009), Bowen and De Clercq (2008), Chertok et al. (2008), Townsend and Hart (2008), Mason et al. (2007), Shaw and Carter (2007). |

identify, and define have not been thoroughly studied (Hervieux & Voltan, 2018; Pathak & Muralidharan, 2018). It is also noted that SEs operating in developing countries transform social problems into manageable problems by adopting innovative and creative strategies (Seelos & Mair, 2005). However, one of the major problems here is to win the trust of the communities (Kummitha, 2016).

Social entrepreneurs are driven by the sense of commitment and ethical responsibility to help others (Pless, 2012; Zahra, Gedajlovic, Neubaum, & Shulman, 2009; Renko, 2013). Hence, they take transformative and innovative actions to bring social change and tackle social problems such as unemployment, poverty, and gender differences (Barendsen & Gardner, 2004; Dees, 1998; Nga & Shamuganathan, 2010; Zhang & Swanson, 2013). Moreover, SE empowers women and contributes to altering the social order in which they are embedded (Haugh and Talwar, 2016; Spencer, Brueckner, Wise, & Marika, 2016). To discover the potential of SE for disabled people, political-economic and socio-cultural factors should be considered (Parker Harris, Renko, & Caldwell, 2014). Social enterprises generating employment are likely to receive financial support and have an experienced founder (Rey-Martí et al., 2016a).

Social enterprises gain legitimacy for enacting social change by using a rhetorical strategy, according to which the organisation is presented as the protagonist, and those who challenge the change are cast as antagonists (Ruebottom, 2013). Regulative, normative and cognitive legitimacies are invoked by the market, driving them to the bottom of the pyramid (Ramus, La Cara, Vaccaro, & Brusoni, 2018). While studying the role of tourism and social entrepreneurship in sustainable community development, Pasricha and Rao (2018) found that local communities are often at the foreground of innovative tourism entrepreneurship and development strategies.

Social entrepreneurs create viable and sustainable organisations by developing capabilities and arranging valuable resources that enable them to maximise their resources' utility (Renko, 2013; Zhang & Swanson, 2013). Generating earned income, engaging stakeholders, creating awareness about the social problems in their community, and attracting government support are decisive factors in scaling up the social impact of a social enterprise (Anderson, Coffey, & Dixon-Fowler, 2014; Bacq & Eddleston, 2016; Thorgren & Omoredede, 2018). It is very important to understand the social impact measurement behaviour of these enterprises. Manetti (2014) recommended using a theoretic construct called "Blended Value Accounting" for this purpose. Additionally, it is crucial to understand the interdependence of the parties involved instead of focusing only on the technical issue of measurement (Nguyen et al., 2015). If the element of "social movements" is added to the definition of SE, as suggested by Mair and Marti (2006), the impact of social entrepreneurial movements can be studied in a useful manner using transition theory (Montesano Montessori, 2016). The other useful way to capture and comprehend the impact of SE is the notion of destructive, unproductive, and productive SE (Andersson & Ford, 2015). However, the scholarly knowledge on social performance reference points remains limited (McMullen and Bergman, 2018).

3.1.2. Entrepreneurial orientation

Researchers in the SE domain have studied the entrepreneurial orientation of SE, which includes the similarities and differences between SE and commercial entrepreneurship, objectives and missions perused by social entrepreneurs, SE and intrapreneurship, and SE and social enterprises. An important element of SE is the "entrepreneurial spirit" that inculcates the entrepreneurial nature among social entrepreneurs (Mair & Marti, 2006). This theme comprises a balanced mix of qualitative and quantitative studies. Researchers have used various quantitative methods to record entrepreneurial orientation of social entrepreneurs including factor analysis, OLS regression, correlation, and hierarchical linear modelling (e.g. André, Cho, & Laine, 2018; Hockerts, 2017; Pathak & Muralidharan, 2016). While the case study method was found to be the most popular qualitative method (e.g. Sharma,

Beveridge, & Haigh, 2018; McMullen, 2011), this theme dominated by studies conducted in developed countries with only a handful of their counterparts (e.g. Dwivedi & Weerawardena, 2018). The literature reveals that informal entrepreneurs vary from those who purely pursue commercial goals to those who solely pursue social logics, with the majority placed somewhere in between, integrating both social and commercial objectives (Estrin, Mickiewicz, & Stephan, 2013). A number of researchers have adopted a resource-based view and hybridity model to explain the hybrid nature of objectives and missions of SE (e.g. Bacq & Alt, 2018; Dwivedi & Weerawardena, 2018). Hybrids are defined as the offspring of two different species (OED, 2010). The social sciences literature usually explains hybridity as a blend of features on a scale between two opposite poles (Brozek, 2009), while hybridity in the context of SEs in management literature has been employed to describe the evolution of new institutional forms that pursue social goals and economic goals side by side (Mair and Marti, 2006), challenging conventional conceptions of economic organizing (Wilson & Post, 2013). Hybridity is thus featured in the dual mission of SEs that at the macroeconomic level adopt some type of commercial activity to earn profit. On the other hand, they pursue a project to address specific social needs at microeconomic level (Grassl, 2012). However, SEs tend to prioritise social objectives over commercial ones (Murphy and Coombes, 2008). SE emerges during an economic crisis, either as a self-employment alternative to unemployment or as a commercial venture started by not-for-profit organisations as a reaction to the reduction in public expense in that sector (McMullen, 2018).

Di Domenico et al. (2010) proposed an extended theoretical framework for SE, suggesting three further constructs: social value creation, stakeholder participation, and persuasion. SE is a precarious activity that must always strike a delicate balance between commercial principles and social concerns (Bacq & Alt, 2018; Lamy, 2019). With their social business ventures, SE entrepreneurs also play the vital role of being breadwinners for their families. The theories grounded in entrepreneurship literature tend to focus on the ability of entrepreneurial ventures to recognise, explore, and/or exploit opportunities (Cherrier, Goswami, & Ray, 2018; Mair & Marti, 2006; Carter et al., 2003). Just like commercial entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurs possess specific behavioural characteristics such as willingness to innovate (Katre and Salipante, 2012; Austin, Stevenson, & Wei-Skillern, 2006; Mair & Marti, 2006; Dees, 1998), the drive to bear risk (Zahra et al., 2009; Peredo & McLean, 2006), and proactive behaviour toward growth, survival, and serving the market (Weerawardena & Mort, 2006). Dwivedi and Weerawardena (2018) offered five dimensions of SE orientation: innovativeness, risk management, proactiveness, effectual orientation, and social mission orientation.

While social entrepreneurs are considered a "sub-species" of the entrepreneurial family (Dees, 1998), researchers also believe that the factors characterizing general entrepreneurship in a society may or may not contribute to SE (Mendoza-Abarca, Anokhin, & Zamudio, 2015). Supporting the same view, research reveals that the level of formal institutions (such as social values, norms, and traditions stemming from cultural heritage) has a significant negative effect on traditional entrepreneurship but no significant effect on SE (Puumalainen, Sjögrén, Syrjä, & Barraket, 2015). But social enterprises can effectively implement cultural change by exploiting robust entrepreneurial capability and optimizing strategic, financial, and adaptive capabilities (André et al., 2018).

A major difference between traditional entrepreneurship and SE lies in the business priority. SE places a higher priority on promoting social value in lieu of merely capturing pecuniary value (Zahra et al., 2009; Mair & Marti, 2006). At the same time, some researchers have argued that commercial entrepreneurs too are increasingly recognizing social responsibilities as their ethical obligation (Van de Ven, Sapienza, & Villanueva, 2007; Garriga and Melé, 2004). Another difference worth noting between the two are the intended outcomes (Mair & Marti, 2006). Social entrepreneurs, unlike their counterparts, are driven by

their intentions and motivation for benefiting society, in comparison to striving hard for personal gains (Dacin, Dacin, & Matear, 2010; Zahra et al., 2009). While comparing two forms of human capital as drivers of commercial and social entry, Sakarya, Bodur, Yildirim-Öktem, and Selekler-Göksen (2012) found that commercial organisations give more importance to specific entrepreneurial human capital, whereas SE regards general human capital to be significantly important. Nascent entrepreneurs seeking to create for-profit social ventures have higher levels of entrepreneurial self-efficacy and more ambitious goals than their commercial counterparts (Littlewood & Holt, 2018). Furthermore, societal trust has a positive and stronger impact on SE than commercial entrepreneurship (Pathak & Muralidharan, 2016). Unlike commercial enterprises, social enterprises deal with activities not yet planned by markets. They unfold these activities for commercial exploitation once new business solutions and organisational forms are established (Mair et al., 2012b; McMullen, 2011).

Gawell (2013) states that social entrepreneurial intentions and entrepreneurial intentions, in general, are not shaped precisely by the same factors (e.g., by the composition of demographics). Interventions establishing direct contact between individual and social problems are likely to increase social entrepreneurial intentions (Hockerts, 2017). Social entrepreneurs showcase specific characteristics, such as a tendency to exhibit a higher level of empathy in understanding the social needs of others, as well as a higher intrinsic drive to address these social needs (Kibler, Salmivaara, Stenholm, & Terjesen, 2018; Gawell, 2013). In a collaborative environment, they can achieve enhanced outcomes, such as connectedness, well-being, and self-confidence (Sharma et al., 2018).

One of the areas of interest of researchers in this domain has been the objectives and missions pursued by social entrepreneurs. As discussed, due to the numerous organisational forms and approaches, researchers have not agreed on any particular definition for SE. Dees (1998) proposed that the creative use of resources to generate economic as well as social values is embedded in the process of SE. Unlike commercial entrepreneurial ventures, SE ventures primarily focus on social objectives and refrain from operating on the maximisation of shareholders' interests (Haynes, 2011; Mair & Marti, 2006). However, this argument does not support the notion that social entrepreneurs cannot follow economic objectives. As SE is a heterogeneous field, decision makers are likely to pursue blended financial as well as social objectives, although with varying intensities (Bacq et al., 2016). Thus, SE ventures pursue a “blended value approach,” i.e., the intention to simultaneously generate “value” that balances social as well as economic value (Emerson, 2003).

In fact, many researchers have claimed that social enterprises must strive to be profitable to maximise their social benefits (e.g., Haugh, 2007; Dees, 2012). Therefore, one should manage a “double bottom line,” balancing commercial as well as social objectives to be successful (Lawrence, Suddaby, & Leca, 2011). However, research has established a significant negative relationship between the economic and social mission of social enterprises. These dual missions compete for scarce resources in the organisation and lead to a strong inverse relationship between them (Gupta, Turban, Wasti, & Sikdar, 2009). However, maintaining a social objective and managing a financially viable business are mutually beneficial and complementary activities for a social enterprise (Zhang & Swanson, 2013).

From the above discussion, it is clear that hybridity in a mission poses unique challenges in attaining the mission of the social enterprise. Stevens, Moray, and Bruneel (2015) proposed an approach to dual-mission management ranging from the dimension of high compartmentalisation to the dimension of high integration. It is further added that high integration of social enterprises' dual missions could be achieved by adopting integration approaches. These may include customised production processes, blended strategic planning, and blended governance and management structures.

While studying the strategic management of the dual mission of

social enterprises, a number of researchers have found that same-sector and cross-sector partnerships have evolved as a significant theme in this research domain (Sakarya et al., 2012; Moss, Short, Payner, & Lumpkin, 2011; Di Domenico, Tracey, & Haugh, 2009). Keeping in view the intended outcome of both partners benefiting from the partnership, Sakarya et al. (2012) recommended that SE should build on the resource complementarities of the partners. These enterprises should use their social mission as a force for strategic direction (Lumpkin, Moss, Gras, Kato, & Amezcua, 2013) and find the optimal conditions in which commercial revenue generation can be related effectively to social value creation (Doherty et al., 2014). If the social enterprise is perceived as a consistent and competent mission, it attracts individual donations as well (Smith, Cronley, & Barr, 2012).

3.2. Innovation and SE

SE is the process of integrating resources in an innovative way, as demonstrated in new programs, initiatives, organisations, products, or services launched by the social enterprise (Mair & Marti, 2006). According to Kickul et al. (2018), social innovation is an umbrella concept that embraces different innovation-related concepts (Kickul, Griffiths, Bacq, & Garud, 2018). Studies under this theme have used mixed methods. There are several qualitative as well as quantitative studies. Here popular qualitative methods include multiple case study methods, with a few studies using single case study method (Grohs, Schneiders, & Heinze, 2017; Ramani, Sadreghazi, & Gupta, 2016). Hierarchical linear modelling, OLS regression and correlation are some of the most preferred quantitative techniques used by studies under this theme (Bojica, Ruiz Jiménez, Ruiz Nava, & Fuentes-Fuentes, 2018; Calic & Mosakowski, 2016). It is important to note that except for a few, (Johannisson, 2018) most of the studies collected data from social enterprises operating from developed countries where an infrastructure for social innovation is adequately available. Since SE is a collective activity, it is even more important to understand how collective inputs are pursued by these enterprises for designing innovations (Montgomery, Dacin, & Dacin, 2012). In recent years, scholars have not only used micro institutional factors but have also emphasised macro-institutional factors affecting social innovation process in SEs. (Bojica et al., 2018; Johannisson, 2018). Collaboration among similar and diverse actors applies business principles to solving social problems. Many interacting influences have an impact on innovations in SE, which can be understood as enabling or constraining contextual forces. These forces may include the expectations of immediate stakeholders, the vision and actions of the founder, the impact of the current sentiment, the influence of a large non-government organisation, conditional measures of the institutional infrastructure, policy and regulation around donations, and taxation (Newth, 2016). External stakeholders are more influential in social enterprises because unlike traditional business organisation, social enterprise heavily depend on them not only for donations and grants, but also for achieving their social mission. For example, the cooperation of multiple group of external stakeholders like customers, volunteers, government agencies and clients are non-negotiable for the attainment of its social objective (Lyons, 2001). Thus, in the turbulent times of SE, when it struggles to achieve its social mission, board members and external stakeholders significantly influence innovation strategy instead of the administrative leaders (Johannisson, 2018). González, Husted, and Aigner (2017) found that radical innovation and information searches help social enterprises to identify opportunities. Macro-institutional factors influence the various types of innovation (product, process, and marketing) differently (Bojica et al., 2018). At the same time, non-profit social enterprises accomplish their social value through innovation-based competitive strategies (Weerawardena and Mort, 2012).

Research reveals that an assortment of capabilities is required to enhance the social impact of innovative SE activities (Bloom & Chatterji, 2009). Chavez, Stinnett, Tierney, and Walsh (2017)

demonstrated the far-reaching effects of technologically enabled social innovations on the social impact created by SE. Social innovations are mostly determined by employees and “employee-oriented” social innovation can solve predominantly social issues in a company (Servantie & Rispal, 2018). Ethical leadership has both a direct and indirect effect on the social innovation tendency of employees (Mottiar, Boluk, & Kline, 2018). Their efforts can be directed towards introducing new technology to create new value that can resolve problems and bring new opportunities to their communities and organisations (Corner & Ho, 2010). Thus, they deal with social problems in a novel way (Mosek, Gillin, & Katzenstein, 2007). But one must remember that social innovations are developed in resource-constrained environments lacking access to human and financial resources (Bhatt & Altinay, 2013; Austin et al., 2006). This shortage may result in the lack of path-breaking innovations that can transform the institutional landscape of welfare provision (Grohs et al., 2017). However, a project becomes creative when its orientation shifts to society, and funders seem to support this creativity as well as social orientation (Calic & Mosakowski, 2016). Although social enterprises can act as innovation catalysers, they cannot guarantee social impact (Ramani et al., 2016). The complex nature of social problems requires partnership among multiple stakeholders so that resources are pooled to address social problems (Rao-Nicholson, Vorley, & Khan, 2017). On the other hand, Bacq and Janssen (2011) emphasise that individual entrepreneurs make a significant contribution to social innovation.

3.3. Human resources in SE

The aspect related to human resources in SE predominantly covers personality traits of social entrepreneurs, women social entrepreneurs, motivational factors, human capital, education and training, and organisational leanings. In last decade, SE researchers have thoroughly examined HR aspects of SE using a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods. However, studies conducted in the recent past show evidences of the increasing popularity of quantitative tools such as correlation, regression, and factor analysis (e.g. Bull, 2018; Margiono, Zolin, & Chang, 2018; Lortie & Cox, 2018). We also found a variety of frequently-used quantitative methods such as narrative enquiry process, a single and multiple case study method, semi-structured interviews (e.g. Costanzo, Vurro, Foster, Servato, & Perrini, 2014; Dey & Steyaert, 2016), and some rarely-used techniques such as Fuzzy Set Theoretical Techniques (fsQCA) (Rossignoli, Ricciardi, & Bonomi, 2018). It is worth mentioning here that unlike other themes, this group is a good mix of studies conducted in developing and developed countries. In the past, a significant number of articles have focused on the personality traits of social entrepreneurs (Johnson, 2003; Dees, 1998). The existing literature adds insight to the potential dispositions, providing motivations for SE, social and human capital indicators, and demographic variables (Van Ryzin, Grossman, DiPadova-Stocks, & Bergrud, 2009). Researchers have referred to various popular theories in their work, including servant leadership theory and Bandura’s social learning and self-efficacy theory (Lortie & Cox, 2018; Glaveli & Geormas, 2018). Social entrepreneurs are capable of creating opportunity, networking, recognition, and innovation at the social as well as the individual level (Sserwanga, Isabella Kiconco, Nystrand, & Mindra, 2014). However, they face difficulties because of the transition between the roles of the social and commercial entrepreneur.

Tshikovhi and Shambare (2015) claim that although SE intentions are significantly influenced by the altruistic orientation of an entrepreneur, entrepreneurial knowledge and personal attitudes, personal attitude is an even stronger influencer (Fowler, 2000; Dees, 1998). SE intentions are explained by empathy through two complementary mechanisms: self-efficacy and social orientation (Glaveli & Geormas, 2018). However, their role in affecting the phenomenon of social entrepreneurship has largely been under-recognised (Mody, Day, Sydnor, & Lehto, 2016). The majority of social entrepreneurs are driven

primarily by social goals, and entrepreneurial culture varies across population groups and areas. Rural and marginalised populations demonstrate a higher propensity to become engaged in a social rather than for-profit entrepreneurship (Williams, 2007).

Although social entrepreneurs are equipped with a massive stock of existing identity capital assets (Dey & Steyaert, 2016; Lewis, 2016), like any entrepreneur, they too need to practice different personal entrepreneurial competences such as initiative, commitment, persuasion, networking, and persistence (McClelland, 1961). One of the most important skills for them is the ability to build and manage teams (Makhlouf, 2011). Margiono et al. (2018) argue that there exists a positive association between intellectual capital sub-components such as human capital, structural capital and relational capital, and the economic and mission-based performance of social enterprises. The SE literature also provides evidence of the importance of international entrepreneurship; in general, it has increased (Butler, Doktor, & Lins, 2010). By creating inspiration and vision, social entrepreneurs generate support from internal as well as external stakeholders (Estrin, Mickiewicz, & Stephan, 2016). The role of leader passion is a key element for gaining people’s trust in a social mission (Szejarto, Milley, Svensson, & Cousins, 2018). The energy for both “crisis causes” and the ongoing commitment to social mission is associated with public attitude (Tasavori, Kwong, & Pruthi, 2018). Mottiar and Mottiar (2016) highlight the role of external motivating factors, stating that the framework provided by a national project drives a high level of motivation in social entrepreneurs. It is observed that many social entrepreneurs have been the victims of social problems (Méndez-Picazo, Ribeiro-Soriano, & Galindo-Martín, 2015) and restrained by resource limitations, often at almost every stage (Di Domenico, Haugh, & Tracey, 2010). In contrast to this, some authors did not find it to be so much a matter of struggle, perseverance, and hardship, but rather a matter of fun for them (Dey & Lehner, 2017). Research also reveals that SE passion is driven by a sense of excitement, energy, and enthusiasm for addressing social issues through meaningful activities that create social value (Yitshaki & Kropp, 2016). The values of leaders of for-profit enterprises and social enterprises are in many ways aligned, but there are notable statistical differences (Henderson, Reilly, Moyes, & Whittam, 2018). Social entrepreneurs, indeed, differ from traditional ones in four of the perceived servant leadership attributes: altruism, integrity, trust in others, and empathy (Lortie & Cox, 2018).

At the time of establishment, usually the number of stakeholders associated with a social venture is much more than a commercially oriented startup (Raith & Starke, 2017). Social ventures pay employees a lower wage than the market rate due to financial resource constraints (Zahra et al., 2009). This limits their access to skillful employees. Moreover, the social mission of such enterprises is not pecuniary for volunteers, employees, and other stakeholders (Battilana & Dorado, 2010). Thus, it is a complex matter to understand the motivation factors of the people involved in SE. The “hybridity,” that is, the pursuit of the dual mission of social purpose and financial sustainability, provides a crucial direction in which to advance the knowledge of Human Resource Management (HRM) in SE (Doherty et al., 2014). Management literature uses the term “SE” for the offspring of two different species that span their institutional boundaries and operate in several functional domains (Brandson & Karré, 2011; Pache & Santos, 2010). While the success and achievements of a social enterprise result from team effort, its noteworthy development can essentially be attributed to its leader (Maak & Stoetter, 2012). The impact of SE leaders on addressing social problems has been widely recognised, and research on this topic presents an evolving trend (Mair & Marti, 2006; Doherty et al., 2014). A top management team with differing levels of previous experience in for-profit organisations may exert a negative impact on a social enterprise’s growth (Rossignoli et al., 2018). Their ability to mobilise critical resources has been the key to the success of a social enterprise. Although how social entrepreneurs accomplish the knowledge and skills required to take a leadership role is not certain, some researchers

believe that education plays an important role in motivating individuals to pursue SE (Krstić, Mirić, & Rakić, 2017). A majority of successful social entrepreneurs have leveraged the knowledge of business planning and development. Leaders have relied on learning skills, gaining motivation, and gathering the knowledge required to perform the role of a social entrepreneur (Scheiber, 2016).

There is a scarcity of research on the relevance of gender in the SE field despite claims that social enterprises can effectively contribute to addressing gender-related social issues such as the empowerment of women in society (Ortbal, Frazzette, & Mehta, 2016; DeTienne & Chandler, 2007). National legislation on enterprise ownership/creation that provides equal status to women and men has helped women operating in the informal sector to overcome the feeling of gender discrimination (Kimbu & Ngoasong, 2016). Social and cultural contexts play a significant role in women's entrepreneurship (Calás, Smircich, & Bourne, 2009). Datta and Gailey (2012) supported claims made by other researchers (e.g., Mair & Schoen, 2007; Santos, 2012) that the elements of empowerment are an essential component of the business models of for-profit social enterprises. Social entrepreneurial activities in developing nations usually result from programs launched for women's economic development, such as microfinance and microcredit (Chant, 2014). Lortie, Castrogiovanni, and Cox (2017) provided important evidence of the benefit femininity provides in an economic and societal ecosystem. Further, woman-owned social businesses are twice as likely to qualify for certification and more than three times as likely to certify (Bull, 2018).

Another important subject explored under this theme is SE education and training. SE researchers talk extensively about SE courses, education and training programs conducted by universities and institutions, and their teaching pedagogy. Various organisations and institutions such as Ashoka (www.ashoka.org), Harvard Business School, the Center for Advancement of SE in Fuqua School of Business at Duke University, Yale School of Management, Babson College, Sterling College, and Hass School of Business are promoting and nurturing SE as an area of social development (Mars & Garrison, 2009). In addition, regional research institutions and universities have also contributed significantly to this area by developing research and training programs. These include the EMES European Research Network, the Social Enterprise Knowledge Network formed by Latin American Business School, and the Harvard Business School, which have guided the growth of SE education and research in the regions where they operate (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010).

Regarding the SE curricula offered by most business schools, professional instructors are predominantly from a management background (organisation, human resources, and strategy). Other professional instructors come from finance, accounting, and business ethics backgrounds (Wu, Kuo, & Shen, 2013). By providing practice and experience for entrepreneurship and encouraging SE, these educational institutes play an indispensable role, and social entrepreneur-featured teachers become a valuable factor for educational institutes performing it. Previous studies have concluded that teachers' self-efficacy and identity development are positively impacted by pre-service teacher training (Pendergast, Garvis, & Keogh, 2011). These domains should be included in teacher training programs as such practices may aid teachers in enabling their students to develop the skillsets they require to be successful social entrepreneurs (Konakil, 2015).

In a study on sentimental drivers of SE, it was observed that a number of factors might motivate private entrepreneurs to participate in SE education and training programs. These can include having undergone limited educational opportunities, distressing experiences, unemployment experience, startup location hardships, and rural poverty experience in the past. The perceived social status of social entrepreneurs further reinforces these relationships (Yiu, Wan, Ng, Chen, & Su, 2014). Another important observation is that the conventional perception of social context is insufficient to prepare students for the dynamic, complex, evolving, and boundary-less places where they will

arrive as innovators and social entrepreneurs (Elmes, Jiusto, Whiteman, Hersh, & Guthey, 2012). Many social entrepreneurs and educators strongly advocate interdisciplinary training with a broad base and research that reflects the complex and dynamic characteristics of a range of communities, as well as projects their social problems (Dacin et al., 2010; Mair & Marti, 2006). Experiential learning, learning-by-doing, and active learning are some of the most effective approaches to SE that enable students to enhance their knowledge of social businesses (Chang, Benamraoui, & Rieple, 2014; Kickul, Griffiths, & Bacq, 2010). Table 7 provides information about the contributors of each theme.

3.4. Business strategy and value creation

Researchers in the domain of business strategy and value creation have mainly focused on performance and effectiveness, marketing, internationalisation, business models of social enterprises, along with value creation and dissemination by them. Research methods used by the studies of this theme primarily are qualitative tools; only a few studies used mixed or quantitative methods such as regression and Pearson correlation (Hlady-Rispal & Servantie, 2018). We found an encouraging number of studies conducted in developing countries such as India, Africa, and China (e.g. Petrovskaya & Mirakyan, 2018; Roy & Karna, 2015). The studies in this group frequently referred to resource dependency theory while explaining SE business strategies and value creation (e.g. Clark, Newbert, & Quigley, 2018; Gordon, Wilson, Tonner, & Shaw, 2018). Conventional multinational businesses direct their business strategies towards maximizing shareholder value. On the other hand, social enterprises incorporate such purposes as part of their legal structures, and their actions are dictated by the context (De Bruin & Lewis, 2015). These enterprises have often been brought up within the local context, helping them develop a superior understanding of social entrepreneurial opportunities (Lanteri, 2015).

Researchers suggest that the business model of social enterprises must pursue the social mission, generate positive externalities for society, recognise the centrality of entrepreneurial functions, and strive to achieve competitiveness in markets through planning and management in an effective manner (Grassl, 2012; Clark et al., 2018). These enterprises address social issues more effectively and efficiently than the majority of other organisations by implementing their tools, methods, and plans (Mair et al., 2012a; Kachlami, Yazdanfar, & Öhman, 2018). They need leaders with a personal commitment to a cause for attaining their social mission (Grassl, 2012). These enterprises contribute significantly to community development as well as nation-building and common prosperity (Lan, Zhu, Ness, Xing, & Schneider, 2014). According to Smith, Knapp, Barr, Stevens, and Cannatelli (2010), different strategies and approaches are used to manage their identity and market their social enterprise. A point of distinction between social enterprises and other enterprises lies in the value proposition itself (Grassl, 2012). Social business models are conceptualised to include welfare-enhancing outcomes along with a performance equation and financial returns (Angeli & Jaiswal, 2016).

SE today has occupied a place in the non-profit sector (Nicholls, 2010). However, some researchers view SE as a field of entrepreneurship that applies mechanisms similar to for-profit industries (Bacq & Janssen, 2011; Dees, 1998; Mair & Marti, 2006). Thus, SE is dissolving the boundaries between for-profit and non-profit sectors by creating another form of organisation that possesses the characteristics of both. This third form of enterprise has a recognizable hybrid model (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Mair et al., 2012a). By following social as well as financial objectives, social enterprises become classic instance of hybrid organisations (Molina, Valenzuela-García, Lubbers, Escribano, & Lobato, 2018; Billis, 2010; Defourny & Nyssens, 2010; Tracey & Jarvis, 2007), possessing a combination of properties related to non-profit, private, and public organisations. This is how they span the boundaries of non-profit, private, and public sectors, face conflicting institutional logics, and bridge institutional fields (Tracey, Phillips, & Jarvis, 2011).

While presenting the enterprise templates for three different enterprises (public, private and non-profit), [Billis \(2010\)](#) stated that market forces guide private sector organisations to maximise financial return, while public-sector organisations are directed by principles of collective choice and public benefit. By contrast, non-profit organisations achieve environmental and social goals by collecting revenue in the form of membership fees, legacies, and donations. Further, [George and Reed \(2016\)](#) studied the feasibility of integrating SE into governance models and concluded that it is possible to develop hybrid governance models possessing the benefits of SE.

The literature on SE has revealed various strategies that may help in maximizing the social impact of social enterprises ([Dees, Emerson, & Economy, 2002](#)). One such way is to follow the general systemic risk management approach ([Robb & Gandhi, 2016](#)). [Ziegler, Schulz, Richter, and Schreck \(2014\)](#) found evidence of one strand of social entrepreneurship applying the Gandhian approach in creating new ways as their strategy in the communication of sustainability challenges. For growth and development purposes, these enterprises can benefit from some unique and invaluable resources such as rich social networks ([Facca-Miess & Santos, 2014](#)). Social enterprises relying on both internal and network bricolage are able to expand into new markets utilising newly developed products ([Gordon et al., 2018](#)). However, pricing new products at other than market prices may be a dangerous mechanism as they pursue dual objectives ([Petrovskaya & Mirakyan, 2018](#)). [Bacq and Eddleston \(2016\)](#) found that social enterprise networks are still sporadic, denoting an immature stage of network lifecycle development.

Unlike other market-driven organisations, not all marketing capabilities are positively associated with social enterprise performance ([Liu, Teck-Yong, & Sachiko, 2015](#)). According to [André and Pache \(2016\)](#), the growth strategy of these enterprises broadly follows four approaches: diversification, scaling across, scaling deep, and scaling up. Diversification is a strategy targeted at broadening the range of products or services offered, while in the scaling across approach, the major focus is on disseminating and exchanging social innovation with other actors. The scaling deep approach pushes the social enterprise to improve and enrich existing processes to enhance the impact on beneficiaries. During a scale-up phase, these enterprises develop the organisational care to cope with mobilizing resources, optimise the process, and assess social impact without compromising the core caring goals and caring processes of a social enterprise ([André & Pache, 2016](#)). They can leverage the ICT-enabled activity system to inject transparency and traceability into a previously opaque system ([Granados & Rivera, 2018](#)).

Like conventional entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurs are also advised to first ascertain their competition before formulating strategies to compete effectively. For SEs, competition is not just limited to social-oriented or non-profit enterprises ([Dees, 1998](#)); rather it spans beyond. The popularity of SE competitions has increased in last decade. However, there is little peer-reviewed literature about their impact ([Kwong, Thompson, & Cheung, 2012](#)). Like other organisations, SE ventures should accomplish competitive advantages on the basis of available resources such as managerial experience, the network and reputation of the founder, and other corporate resources ([Roy & Karna, 2015](#)). [Sakarya et al. \(2012\)](#) highlighted that social alliances contribute incrementally to social transformation in subsistence marketplaces. To initiate social change, collaboration between social and business enterprise can be used as an instrumental business strategy ([Roberts & Bradley, 1991](#)). Social marketing has widened its applications ([Dann, 2008](#)) from reducing or ending poverty ([Kotler & Lee, 2009](#)) to related fields such as nutrition and healthcare ([Goldberg, 1995](#)). The customer orientation dimension of strategic/market orientation enhances commercial effectiveness and subsequently profitability ([Hlady-Rispal & Servantie, 2018](#)).

Deliberating on value creation and dissemination by SE, researchers have imparted knowledge about value allocation, value capture, and

value distribution by social entrepreneurs. Over the last decade, some researchers have found that SE business models are aimed at creating and capturing value for the focal organisation and the society ([Wilson & Post, 2013](#); [Yunus, Moingeon, & Lehmann-Ortega, 2010](#)). According to Austin and his colleagues (2006), SE is an innovative and value-creating activity that occurs within or across non-profit organisations, businesses, or government sectors. Its long-term sustainability depends on its ability to be profitable and bring value to society ([Agafonow, 2014](#); [Yunus et al., 2010](#)). By using statistical techniques in the SE domain, some studies have measured the resources utilised by social entrepreneurs for social value creation ([Meyskens, Robb-Post, Stamp, Carsrud, & Reynolds, 2010](#)). However, it is worth noting here that most of the past studies on SE have collected samples only from certain countries such as the UK and the United States ([Nicholls, 2010](#); [Short et al., 2009](#)). Hence, less information exists on how social entrepreneurs from developing and emerging economies generate social value. Additionally, the majority of the research in this theme focuses only on single cases of social enterprises located in developing economies ([Torri, 2009](#)).

[Santos \(2012\)](#) deduced that the focus of social entrepreneurs is on creating value and enhancing the effectiveness of the entire value system of partners and activities. The primary feature that distinguishes a successful social enterprise from others is that it creates value and remains close to and relevant within the communities it serves ([Gibbons & Hazy, 2017](#)). It is further observed that for a profit business model, the value proposition is defined at the firm level for the customer. On the other hand, social business models define the same for their diverse stakeholders ([Doz & Kosonen, 2010](#)).

3.5. Challenges faced by social entrepreneurs

Social entrepreneurs face multi-dimensional challenges during the entire life cycle of the organisation ([Bhatt, Qureshi, & Riaz, 2019](#); [Goyal, Sergi, & Jaiswal, 2016](#)). Some prominent challenges highlighted by researchers in the last decade are related to the scarcity of financial resources for SE, leadership challenges, institutional and regulatory environment, and other challenges such as impact assessment, a changing socio-cultural environment, and resource mobility. ([Biddulph, 2018](#); [Sulphey & Alkahtani, 2017](#); [Jung, Jang, & Seo, 2016](#)). Others include unavailability of financial resources, dynamic business environment, scalability dilemma, hybridity, and the characteristics of offerings ([Mair & Marti, 2006](#); [Weerawardena & Mort, 2006](#); [Mason, Kirkbride, & Bryde, 2007](#); [Calò, Teasdale, Donaldson, Roy, & Baglioni, 2018](#); [Ip, Liang, & Feng, 2018](#); [Krejčí & Šebestová, 2018](#); [Wry & Zhao, 2018](#)). To study the challenges of social entrepreneurs, a majority of researchers used only qualitative tools such as case study, theoretical analysis, content analysis, and conceptual analysis (e.g. [Aquino, Lück, & Schänzel, 2018](#); [Grohs, Schneiders, & Heinze, 2015](#); [Nega & Schneider, 2014](#)); however, the case study method was the mostly used in studies of this theme (e.g. [Bhatt et al., 2019](#)). Very few studies used quantitative methods like regression and gravity equation to examine institutional complexities SE (e.g. [Muñoz & Kibler, 2016](#)). Some studies have referred to institutional complexities theory, and social movement theory and paradox theory to explain these challenges in greater detail (e.g. [Bontis, Ciambotti, Palazzi, & Sgro, 2018](#); [Calò et al., 2018](#)).

A complex set of challenges for social entrepreneurs is to arrange funding and financing for social projects; this must be treated as one of the idiosyncrasies of social ventures ([Shaw & Carter, 2007](#)). Adding to these idiosyncratic hurdles for social entrepreneurs, other known problems for startups pose challenges to SEs ([Irwin & Scott, 2010](#); [Berger & Udell, 2006](#)). Moreover, the social impact of a social enterprise is tacit and hard to measure ([Sulphey & Alkahtani, 2017](#)). Every stage of a social business faces specific challenges related to value offerings, value creation, value delivery, and value capturing ([Goyal et al., 2016](#)). These enterprises face difficulties in reaching the target segment for both financial and socio-cultural reasons ([Jung et al., 2016](#)). Continued social

benefits remain contingent on commercial success in a sector that is highly competitive and volatile (Sepulveda, Lyon, & Vickers, 2018).

Research further argues that the hybridity of SE business models impacts the acquisition and mobilisation of financial resources (Doherty et al., 2014). Social enterprises offer flexibility and leverage multiple sources of legitimacy by spanning institutional boundaries (Pontikes, 2012; Chertok, Hamaoui, & Jamison, 2008). However, as social enterprises produce less profit than others, they are found to be less attractive to venture capital organisations and mainstream banks (Sud, VanSandt, & Baugous, 2009). Additionally, hybridity in the mission of social enterprises (social mission being primary and economic mission being secondary) complicates the situation for financiers. In fact, these enterprises are poorly understood by the typical sources of finance (André & Pache, 2016; Brandsen & Karré, 2011). Doherty et al. (2014) suggested that social enterprises should generate social returns at the cost of financial return on investment and dual pricing strategies. As discussed, financial sustainability for SE is as important as achieving a social mission, but the pursuit of financial sustainability intrinsically limits the nature and scope of SE; and the financial results tend to absorb the social mission (Sud et al., 2009). Thus, the emphasis on financial sustainability usually exerts pressure on SEs that leads to undermining them (Nega & Schneider, 2014).

Quantifying and standardizing the performance assessment of an SE is another very challenging aspect of this business (Mair & Marti, 2006), especially when there is a scarcity of social impact assessment framework. It further presents a challenge for social entrepreneurs to find a good fit between investor values and community needs (Dees, 2012). One of the key challenges for them is linked to the scarcity of a social impact assessment framework. The strategic focus of a social enterprise is missed out in the absence of such framework (Goyal et al., 2016). Bhatt et al. (2019) identified the following four institutional challenges that social entrepreneurs perceive: a wrongly understood or unknown role for social enterprises, unfavorable rules and regulations, a shortage of socio-cultural beliefs and values supporting social goals and a lack of norms of a strong role for government.

Other prominent set of challenges to SE have been posed by institutional and regulatory environments. As concept deeply and firmly embedded in its context, the emergence, as well as the implementation of SE, mainly depends on the socioeconomic, regulatory, and cultural environment (Aquino et al., 2018; Ozeren, Saatcioglu, & Aydin, 2018; Mair & Marti, 2006). For a full understanding of the emergence and growth of SE, one needs to understand the influence of the surrounding environment on SE and SE's impact on its environment (Grimes, Gehman, & Cao, 2018; Urban, 2013; Welter & Smallbone, 2011). Social entrepreneurs are found to be quite sensitive to the changing political, economic, and social context of non-profit organisations within a country (Eti-Tofinga, Singh, & Douglas, 2018; Grohs et al., 2015). However, the influence of the external environment on SE activities has not received much attention from researchers (Bacq & Janssen, 2011). To establish SE as a concept, the institutional environment plays an important role (Bowen & De Clercq, 2008). According to Frank and Shockley (2016), the main weakness of SE is its lack of institutional safeguards. Furthermore, sociological approaches must be employed to investigate the intersection between institutions and SE (Jennings & Brush, 2013). According to Desa (2012), to reconfigure existing resources at hand, social entrepreneurs confronted with institutional constraints engage in bricolage. Amid a scarcity of resources, an effective mobilisation of resources is particularly critical for social enterprises (Desa & Basu, 2013). Like traditional entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurs initially finance social ventures out of their own savings; but in most cases, they may not have adequate funds, or the expertise and material for optimal utilisation of available entrepreneurial opportunities (Shane, 2003). Therefore, with the depletion of resources at their disposal, social entrepreneurs confronted with institutional constraints engage in "social bricolage" to reconfigure resources at hand (Desa, 2012). "Social bricolage" refers to social networking activity as

part of spontaneous collective action (Johannisson & Olaison, 2007). The perceptions of the founder of an ambiguous institutional environment lead to variance in the choice of organisational forms for social ventures (Townsend & Hart, 2008). In developing countries like India, institutional complexity emerges in the form of overlapping and/or contradictory institutional logics (Bontis et al., 2018). Kerlin (2009) explained that the models of social enterprises are the result of historical macro-institutional processes influenced by mediating impacts of the stage of economic development, civil society, and the type of government in a country.

According to Warnecke (2018), country-level income inequality increases the likelihood of engagement in social entrepreneurship, while income mobility adversely affects the same. Regulatory environment may serve as either an inhibitor or enabler in the growth and development of entrepreneurship (Herrington & Kew, 2014). It significantly impacts the feasibility and desirability of SE, which in turn affects SE intentions in a positive manner (Urban & Kujinga, 2017). Some researchers believe that regulatory policies for the development of SE may facilitate value creation and social welfare (Schiffer & Lessem, 2009; Urbano et al., 2010; Zahra et al., 2009; Austin et al., 2006). Arasti, Zarei, and Didehvar (2015) proposed that the indicators of SE regulatory policies are a reduction of social inequalities, social welfare value regarding growth and sublimation, the economic prosperity of the community, the promotion of cultural values, people satisfaction, national solidarity, and the building of a platform for social growth.

Jung et al. (2016) argued that government support for non-profit organisations benefits them in two ways: first, by enabling them to serve communities and second, by helping them overcome financial difficulties. However, SE in its strict form does not have much to offer to the mix of non-governmental organisations with political goals such as empowerment and social justice (Chand, 2014). Local government plays an important role in setting up a standard model of SE by launching standard educational programs and content for all businesses and local autonomous entities (Kim, Yoon, & Kim, 2014). At the same time, some researchers believe that local government support based on municipal ordinances coerces SE initiatives (Valero, Jung, & Andrew, 2015).

4. Directions for future research

4.1. Future directions – Thrust areas in SE research themes

Our literature survey provides five broad research themes yielding an understanding of various theoretical aspects of SE. While the extant literature offers deeper theoretical insights of these themes, we feel that the field has not been completely probed, and there exists some unexplored research themes for future research. In this section of our article, we suggest the scope of future SE research for each theme.

Among the most prominent challenges faced by the social entrepreneur are recruiting, motivating, retaining and training skill-based trustees, employees and volunteers (Doherty et al., 2014). It is not surprising to know that human resources in SE has surfaced as the most explored theme, within which researchers have studied issues related to the personality traits of social entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurs' identity, women social entrepreneurs, and the human capital of SE. Another small group of studies has focused on the education and training of social entrepreneurs. An in-depth analysis of articles grouped under this theme has revealed some research gaps; for example, not many studies have focused their work on the motivational drivers and organisational learning of social entrepreneurs. To bridge the research gaps in this theme, future research can explore the issues related to employee maintenance and retention, performance appraisal, training and development of human resources in SE, and the role of the participative HRM and diversity climate in reducing relational conflicts in SEs.

The distinguishing feature of SE is that it creates social enterprises that apply business models that address social issues and make a social

impact (Selsky & Parker, 2010; Mair & Marti, 2006; Dees, 1998). Motivated by the “social element” in SE, numerous studies have focused on the efforts of social entrepreneurs to scale up social impact, social transformation lead by SE, the social mission of SE, and social capital generated by social entrepreneurs. Social problems picked up by researchers mainly include poverty, health, education, and unemployment. But there are some less explored areas under this theme; for example, engagement of SE in prominent social problems relating to gender difference, gender discrimination, women and children rights and safety and women’s empowerment. Since business strategy and value creation by social enterprise are guided by the social mission, the success of business strategy therefore depends on factors that are quite different from commercial enterprise. Researchers have been showing a keen interest in studying the business models of SE, SE business performance, SE marketing strategies, values creation and dissemination and the internationalisation of SE. This area of SE research could be further enriched by examining business strategies to manage competitors, resources and product/services. In addition, it could seek the adoption of IT in SE business models and pursue strategies to enhance the value proposition offered by SE.

The entrepreneurial orientation of social entrepreneurs is to innovate and take risks while acting as change agents in the social sector (Dees, 1998). They identify problems requiring solutions and attempt to resolve them (Sullivan, 2007). The entrepreneurial orientation emerged as another main theme in our review comparing of the SE studies with entrepreneurship, commercial entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship, SE intentions and the antecedents of SE. As per our analysis, while conducting comparative studies, researchers have focused mainly on the parameters of comparison such as attitude and behaviour, gender gaps, and objectives. Future research possibilities include additional parameters, such as the business models used, marketing strategies, and entrepreneurial challenges that have been largely missing in the existing articles. Another useful research objective can be to study the alignment of social and financial objectives of SE, and their efforts and strategies to achieve this end.

It is a widely accepted that the key tenet of SE is innovation in creating social value and performing an economic activity within a society (Ratten, 2013). However, we could find only a few studies exploring areas related to social innovations and technical innovations by a social enterprise (Pasricha & Rao, 2018; Katunga & Lombard, 2016; Phillips et al., 2015). The focus of these studies has been predominantly limited to social innovations. There is a large scope of future research to study and examine innovation adoption models, innovation in product management, and creativity in communication. Furthermore, we have found that some sub-research themes that offer a promising scope of future research were not picked up by many studies in the recent past. These themes include challenges perceived by social entrepreneurs, the role of regulatory policies, value creation by SE and the objectives and mission of SE. To enrich the SE literature, future studies could specifically focus on these sub-research themes. Another potential research area is hybridity in SE business models. Although some articles in last decade have been centrally focused on SE hybridity (e.g., Doherty et al., 2014; Wilson & Post, 2013), we feel that research in this dimension of SE has not yet achieved its full potential. Social entrepreneurs aim to attain their social and commercial objectives simultaneously and hence face a number of challenges (Al Taji and Bengo, 2019; Doherty et al., 2014). Social entrepreneurs also encounter unique ethical dilemmas (André & Pache, 2016). Future studies may wish to explore the above-mentioned challenges in light of the hybridity of SE business models.

4.2. Future directions – Contexts

Social entrepreneurial activities are highly influenced by contextual settings and therefore we suggest future researchers to consider different contextual settings while deploying their theoretical lenses. We see these contexts as being at the social enterprise level and outside the

enterprise. The context within the enterprise could be defined by enterprise-level factors (the social element in SE, business strategy and business models, innovation and SE, and HR in SE).

One way to consider contexts outside the enterprise would be to study SE activities based on the country of origin (i.e., developed countries, developing countries). An important dimension is determining the contextual settings regarding institutional and regulatory environments and other country-specific features either facilitating or inhibiting SE activities. There are possibilities of carrying out more studies based on the process and pattern of SE from developing countries as our analysis has revealed that the majority of previous studies were conducted in the context of developed countries (refer Table 3). This would highlight specific challenges coming from socio-cultural differences, domestic competitors and underdeveloped institutional frameworks in developing countries.

Another contextual setting that can be considered by future studies is industry. In our opinion, SE activities are also affected by the industry with which they are affiliated. Many studies have looked at micro-finance, education and health industry. There is good potential for comparative studies on social enterprise within a given industry from developed and developing countries. Studies exploring the process and challenges of SE in different industries would be very insightful. Such comparative studies could possibly reveal the differences in pace, opportunities and barriers of SE activities within a given industry. It may also be useful to study SE business models and strategies in specific industry and country settings, or a homogenous set of the two.

4.3. Future directions – Methodology

We found four types of studies in our sample: conceptual, theoretical, qualitative, and quantitative (see Appendix B); but approximately 48% of the total articles reviewed in our study were qualitative (refer table 4). Only a very small number of sample studies employed quantitative methods. It was not surprising as scholars argue that qualitative methodology is the most appropriate for exploratory studies (Creswell & Miller, 2000) seeking the answer to the “why?” and “how?” questions (Shavelson et al., 2002). Most of the qualitative studies in our sample used a case study method followed by structured interviews. While studying SE activities, researchers interviewed the principal actors within the phenomenon (entrepreneur-managers) to establish themes. Such themes were analysed in terms of their recurrence in narratives by many actors. The study intends to verify only a few studies mapped on these themes to extant theories. We suggest that future studies use customised software for the above-mentioned techniques and also for analysing the content of interviews to ensure the reliability of their themes and for further mapping the themes to the extant theory they supported. Other promising techniques in qualitative research are content analysis, thematic coding analysis, and inductive content analysis. These techniques were rarely used in the past; therefore, we encourage future studies to employ these methods with the help of specialised software such as QSR NVivo, R- RQDA, ATLAS.ti etc. To improve robustness, we suggest SE researchers use mixed methods that involve both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Creswell & Miller, 2000) because quantitative methods help improve the validity of a study.

5. Implications for policy makers and limitations

From the perspective of theoretical implications, this study offers an overview of existing scholarly research, and research themes of greater and lesser popularity in the SE domain along with the research gaps in each. Thus, the study provides a quick snapshot of research conducted in the field of SE with the thrust areas in each theme. In addition to providing an overview of recent high-impact SE research, this study also discusses contextual settings and research methods used by SE researchers in the recent past. The present study further provides

important implications from a practical perspective. The most-reported challenges faced by social entrepreneurs include difficulty in accessing funds, the absence of a legal framework, a shortage of suitable support structures for social enterprises, and a lack of training programs. As discussed, the social objective of the SEs creates greater challenges in measuring firm performance as opposed to the commercial entrepreneur who relies on quantifiable measures like financial indicators, market share, customer satisfaction, and quality (Hynes, 2009). Hence, the measurement of impact, essential for attracting impact investors, becomes an issue. Between for-profit and not-for profit SEs, not-for profit SEs stand a better chance than for-profit SEs to raise investments because they serve a very large market through offering a broader social good at their core (Estrin et al., 2016). On the other hand, for their counterparts (for-profit SEs), impact investment becomes a crucial source of funding. The government can promote impact investment by providing legal protection for these funds, most of which are based outside domestic markets (GIIN & Dalberg, 2015). Unfortunately, SEs, especially those operating from developing countries, do not get any institutional and legal safeguards (Frank & Shockey, 2016). There are three prominent challenges for social enterprises: access to resources, establishing the legitimacy of their operations, and organisational effectiveness. Social networks are likely to influence each of the above-mentioned challenges because they broadly affect the economy in three ways: controlling the quality and flow of information, building trust among the actors and acting as a source of rewards and punishments (Granovetter, 2005). Therefore, SEs leverage their social networks when faced with a resource or technology constraint. This has direct implications for innovation because such tie ups with network partners provide cost-effective solutions to SEs (Dufays & Huybrechts, 2014). Because of a lack of awareness, private business firms usually do not recognise the existence or impact of social enterprises as legitimate partners. This is where institutional support can be instrumental in connecting SEs with competent partners in domestic and foreign markets. One such initiative taken by the European Commission called for proposals to establish a “Challenge Platform” to mobilise SEs and SMEs

to jointly address topical societal challenges (Galitopoulou & Noy, 2018). For-profit SEs generate part of their income by operating in the market to scale up social impact and making their social operations sustainable. Many such SEs who wish to scale from qualifying for and participating in the public procurement process face major challenges in terms of specific pre-qualification requirements. To lift this barrier, policy makers may learn from an initiative taken by European Union (EU) that introduced social clauses within the existing regulation and encouraged local authorities to use them (EC Directive 2014/24/EU). Therefore, policymakers must develop a holistic institutional and regulatory environment for SEs to smooth the process of social innovation to achieve sustainable and relevant outcomes for society and organisations. Government bodies and policymakers may also find this study useful in identifying the thrust areas of government involvement to encourage SE activities in a particular destination.

Although a rigorous methodology was employed to conduct the systematic literature review, there are certain limitations of this study. Researchers and policymakers should consider the following limitations while using its results. First, a protocol was developed to extract samples of articles from the relevant online databases. A set of keywords was used in the protocol for this purpose. However, potential articles may not have been filtered as they might not have the search key terms in their text. Moreover, other relevant articles published in those journals (not SSCI indexed journals) might have been overlooked. Second, books, book chapters, and conference proceedings were not included in the sample used in this study, as it only considered peer-reviewed articles published in high impact factor journals to ensure quality. Lastly, although the classification of SE research themes was the result of a systematic step-by-step process, all extracted themes may not be mutually exclusive. This is because of the presence of some hybrid sub-themes and the interrelation among various other sub-themes. Despite these limitations, this review study provides a picture of more popular and less popular research themes in the SE research domain.

Appendix A. Data extraction form

- Year of publication of the research paper;
- Name of the Journal in which the research paper was published;
- Bibliographic reference including title, year, author, and source of the research paper;
- Main objective of the research paper;
- Theme and sub-theme of the research paper;
- Research methodology used; and
- Major Findings of the research paper.

Appendix B. Type of research paper

| Type | Explanation |
|---------------------|---|
| Theoretical | A theoretical research paper offers a new theoretical position or questions the fundamental structure of an existing theory (Whetten, 1989). |
| Conceptual | A conceptual paper explains the main points to be studied—the key factors, concepts or variables, and presumes relationships among them (Miles & Huberman, 1994). |
| Qualitative | Qualitative paper does not use the data indicating the ordinal values and generally focuses on non-numeric data including texts, images, and behavioural patterns (Nkwi, Nyamongo, & Ryan, 2001). |
| Quantitative | Quantitative paper explains a phenomenon by using numerical data and analyses the same with mathematical methods (Aliaga & Gunderson, 2002). |

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