

Drivers of the Performance of Members of a Social Incubator Considering the Values of Work: A Qualitative Study with Social Entrepreneurs

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Abstract : Social entrepreneurship has emerged and driven a new development perspective, and as the literature mentions, it is based on innovation, and mainly, on the creation of social value, rather than personal wealth and shareholders. In this field of study, one of the focuses of discussion refers to the distinct characteristics of the individuals responsible for socially directed initiatives, named as social entrepreneurs. To contribute to this perspective, the present study aims to identify the values related to work that guide the performance of social entrepreneurs, members of enterprises that have developed themselves within a social incubator at a federal institution of higher education in Brazil. Each person's value system is present in different facets of his life, manifesting himself in his choices and in the way he conducts the relationship with other people in society. Especially the values of work, the focus of this research, play a significant role in organizational studies, since they are considered one of the important guiding principles of the behavior of individuals in the work environment. Regarding the method of the study, a descriptive and qualitative research was carried out. In the data collection, 24 entrepreneurs, members of five different enterprises belonging to the social incubator, were interviewed. The research instrument consisted of three open questions, which could be answered with the support of a "disc of values", an artifact organized to clearly demonstrate the values of the work to the respondents. The analysis of the interviews took into account the categories defined a priori, based on the model proposed by previous authors who validated these constructs within their research contexts, contemplating the following dimensions: Self-determination and stimulation; Safety; Conformity; Universalism and benevolence; Achievement; and Power. It should be noted that, in order to provide a better understanding of the interviewees, in the "disc of values" used in the research, these dimensions were represented by the objectives that define them, being respectively: Challenge; Financial independence; Commitment; Welfare of others; Personal success; And Power. Some preliminary results show that, as guiding principles of the investigation, priority is given to work values related to Self-determination and stimulation, Conformity and Universalism and benevolence. Such findings point to the importance given by these individuals to independent thinking and acting, as well as to novelty and constant challenge. Still, they demonstrate the appreciation of commitment to their enterprise, the people who make it and the quality of their work. They also point to the relevance of the possibility of contributing to the greater social good, that is, of the search for the well-being of close people and of society, as it is implied in models of social entrepreneurship coming from literature. With a lower degree of priority, the values denominated Safety and Realization, as the financial question at work and the search for satisfaction and personal success, through the use of socially recognized skills were mentioned aspects with little emphasis by social entrepreneurs. The Power value was not considered as guiding principle of the work for the respondents.

Keywords : qualitative study, social entrepreneur, social incubator, values of work

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