

Job Creation and Innovation: Using A Social Innovation Model

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Abstract

Models of social innovation are uncommon, because they are taken for granted. When it comes to development, the focus is on technology, for most people. However, there is always the underlying element of innovation, which is social. Incidentally some organizations are developing only through social innovation. One of such organization is JCIPU. The exploits of the organization are shown by way of a descriptive study. The research is qualitative associated with the usual data collection of in-depth, semi- interviews, observations and the use of secondary data. Whilst the activities of the organization are shown in a model, the themes underlying the model which were developed through a vigorous deductive and inductive data coding system are shown as the results of the study. Theoretical underpinnings and practical implications for the research are shown at the appropriate sections of the study.

Keywords: Social innovation; qualitative descriptive studies; NGO's; Ghana

1. Introduction

When Mrs Emma appeared on one of the Ghanaian television series on social innovators, her impressive historical account of her Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) gained an automatic selection for a qualitative case study. The authors were curious to be educated on how social

Innovation could transform the lives of people. This is because for most of the time the focus is on technological innovation when thinking about improving the lives of people. Thus, the authors agree with Howaldt (2014) who posited that "Though there is widespread recognition of the need for social innovation, there is no clear understanding of how social innovation leads to social change. Phenomena of social change are often looked at in connection mainly with technological innovation, but without paying sufficient attention to elements of social innovation. In many areas (including several of those policy fields studied by the SI-DRIVE project (such as energy, mobility, health, etc.) the social and the technological dimensions of innovation are strongly inter-connected and can hardly be separated from each other in explaining social change. But there are also examples of social innovations which are largely independent from technological innovations and which can lead to social change by themselves".

One of the examples is the Job Creators and Innovators Progressive Union (JCIPU), a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) in the Akwapim district of the eastern region of Ghana. In this regard the innovation initiatives of JCIPU is seen as an example of a purely social one and thus, by projecting this unique social innovation initiative undertaken by the movement, the aim of this paper is to contribute to the literature in this research domain.

Two definitions of Social Innovation (SI) provided guidance in this work. Howaldt (2014) used SI-DRIVE¹ working definition of social innovation as "a new combination of social practices in certain areas of action or social contexts with the goal of better satisfying or answering social needs and problems than is possible on the basis of existing practices". Păunescu (2014) regards social innovations as new solutions to the needs of people, which have not been fulfilled by the existing market players or governmental bodies, which increase their life standards and welfare and, in addition, social innovation involves entering a societal group and establishing a collaborative relationship with its members to create a social vision and to formulate specific measures for acting upon it, and solving social problems. The need for social innovation comes as a result of recognizing a gap between the current reality and the desired reality within one societal group or the society as a whole (Păunescu, 2014). This paper showed how a gap in current reality and desired reality was narrowed by JCIPU.

1.1 Exploratory Instrumental Case study: The exemplar of JCIPU

The work is of an exploratory nature. Thus it is our philosophy that a qualitative descriptive (narrative) will give a clearer understanding of how JCIPU used a novelty model of social innovation to lead members of a community to a social change. Thus the basis for the type of a case study was that described as an instrumental case study (Stake, 2005). Through that method some social, psychological and organizational dimensions were built and brought to the fore for research and practice in the future. For this purpose, we looked at the following research questions:

¹ SI-DRIVE is an initiative of the EU

- 1) What is the history, organization and structure of JCIPU?
- 2) What organizational, psychological and social themes emerge from the historical account?
- 3) What impact has JCIPU made on the community?

The rest of the paper is planned as follows: the case study, method, results, discussion and conclusion

1.2 The Case Study-Job Creators and Innovation Progressive Union

1.2.1 Formation

The Job Creators and Innovators Progressive union was formed in November, 2012 by Mrs. Emma Dwirah. The founder is a retired public servant, having worked in the public service for over 28 years. She worked in the Ministry of social welfare as a counselor. Widowed at the age of 75, she has two sons and three daughters, two of whom are coordinators of the NGO.

Auntie Emma (as she prefers to be called) speaks and writes good English. She looked strong and sounded enthusiastic in a chat. She is well-known and respected in the community, because of her conspicuous contributions during community meetings.

1.2.2 Triggers of formation- Diagnosis and Inspiration

The historical background to the formation provides an interesting story. Somewhere around June, 2012, on her usual morning exercise walk, she chanced upon a group of casual workers who were engaged in an agitation meeting with their employer. The angered workers were protesting against unfair treatment by their employer for breach of the terms of payment contract. According to the founder, she used her “public relations abilities” to calm down and invite the two parties to her home for a possible amicable settlement. Though she was able to settle the dispute, the employees did not seem fully satisfied with the outcome of the meeting. Upon a careful reflection (diagnosis) of the proceedings of the meeting she realized that the casual workers worked in a rather disorganized, unprofessional manner. She philosophized that such people with certain backgrounds see themselves as part of a team only during working times; the group ceases to exist after work. Her concept of team membership is that they exist before, during and even after work. According Auntie Emma, she realized that for the manual workers, their only interest was “individual survival “(akin to short-termism). “Survival-minded people are likely to be disorganized and unprofessional” she hypothesized. Such people are disadvantaged and fall prey to all manner of unjust treatment, according to her. Motivated by a desire to help such people (the source of inspiration), she planned and established the NGO after consulting with a prominent church leader in the community. The NGO was licensed six months after formation.

1.3 Organization

-Mission

The mission of JCIPU is to bring together different minds, to create employment, and innovate for professionalism in employment.

-Values

The operation of the movement is premised on the values of Transparency, Trust and Tolerance.

-Domain of intervention- Employment

-Number of interventions: Associations -Two (2); Affiliations-Two (2)

1.3.1 Associations and Affiliations statuses

Presently there are two associations. These are the association of Manual Construction Workers and Association of head potters. Associate status is attained after going through and graduating from the counseling sessions. Associates are certified by the counselors before taking part in the innovation sessions. There are two Affiliations: Hairdressers and Market Traders. Affiliates are those members of a group who are part of the counseling sessions and are yet to graduate to the innovation sessions.

1.3.2 Membership

Number of registered Members-Thirty-three (33). It comprises fourteen (14) associates and nineteen (19) affiliates. Entry to membership has no restrictions.

1.3.3 Main activities. The main activities are shown under this section. For each, the purposes and settings and organization are described.

a) Counseling Meetings

Counseling is the pioneering function of the NGO. This activity was exemplified by the founder in the formation stage. Thus the manual construction workers were the pioneers of the set up. Fresh members must attend the counseling sessions before attaining associate status. Counselors are prominent persons in the community such as spiritual heads and communal leaders. They have the authority to graduate affiliates to associates. There is no time frame for graduation. They work voluntarily.

The purposes of the counselling meetings are:

- To communicate and indoctrinate the mission and values of the NGO
- To develop shared patterns of behavior amongst members

- To graduate affiliates to associative status.

-Settings and organization

Counseling sessions are done every fortnightly on Sunday. Meetings times are from 4 pm to 7 pm. The location of the meetings is the offices of the NGO.

As a principle, prayers and singing pave the way for the start of the main business. The ground rules for the meeting are communicated. The counselor then starts the main business by briefing members of the mission and values of the NGO. A brief history of the NGO is also communicated, where necessary. There is a moment for question time. The meeting ends with songs and a closing prayer.

b) *Adwen ntoa ntoa kuw*

The other main activity is *Adwen ntoa ntoa kuw*. It connotes “a forum for ideas knitting and creativity”. It is coordinated by the founder’s two daughters and chaired by the founder. Only associates are admitted and allowed to participate.

The purposes of the forum are:

- To create an atmosphere conducive for learning and sharing
- To offer the opportunity for associates to develop their cognitive and creativity potential
- To facilitate an innovation process.

-Settings and organization

The proceedings of the meetings are structured. The meeting starts with the traditional ritual of song ministrations and prayers. This is followed by briefing the associates of the purpose of the meeting.

Meetings times are held once in a week on the last Sunday of the month from 3pm to 6pm. The meeting place is the office of the NGO. Unlike the counseling meetings, the innovation management function operates perpetually. Presently the NGO is working to improve a process of innovation (see below) by the group.

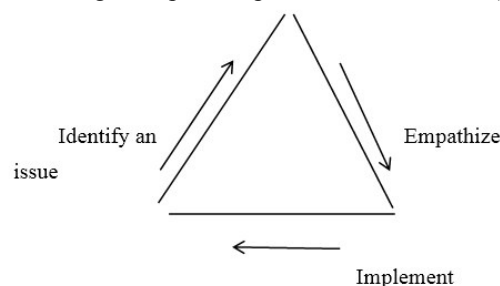


Figure 1: Product of the process of innovation

The format of the innovation process is as follows:

-Identification of a problem or issue relating to the vocation

The issue may be social, societal, and economic or any related matters in an employer-employee relationship. Participants are made to reflect on a problem or issue that might have affected their job.

- Sketch and rehearsal of empathetic position through participatory learning and action.

A sketch of the case is then prepared and presented. Participants are encouraged to empathize with the counterparty and jot down their perceptions of empathy¹. Perceptions of empathies are an attempt to address the question, *what would you have done if you were in the shoes of the counterparty?* The sketch is then rehearsed (in a form of role playing) over a number of times, incorporating the various suggestions made by the participants.

-Implementation

This is the implementation of the innovation. The implementation stage is invented in the form; *confer, share and participate*. This is the stage where the counterparty is allowed to take part in the process of innovation. The employer approaches the employer and discusses the issue (*confer* with each other), *share* each other’s quandary and *participate* in the resolution of the sticky situation.

There has been a number of successful implementation of the product of innovation. The first ever case involved the manual construction workers and their employer. The events that unfolded is used here as a case study, in a chronicle.

i. Identification of a problem or issue relating to the vocation

The issue was to negotiate for an increase in wages. The workers had approached their employer to negotiate for an increase in the rate of pay. After a failed attempt to get an agreement, the group decided to put to test the process of innovation.

ii. 1st Meeting with employer

Utilizing the model, the proceedings of the meeting with the employer were tabled for

¹ The concept of *empathy* had been brainstormed and implanted in the innovation process in a series of meetings.

discussion(*confer*). The focus of discussion was the issues raised by the employer. The employer had indicated that he was not willing to negotiate an increase due to an increase in the cost of materials. "You are not the only persons feeling the pinch of the economic crisis" he had retorted.

iii. The empathy factor

Various posture of empathy was then taken by the participants (An aspect of the Sketch of empathetic position). However, one key posture was *if I were the employer what would make me increase the welfare of the workers?* The following factors were considered¹:

Economic factors

- Decrease in the cost of materials?
- Decrease in the cost of transportation?

Political factors

- Numbers in politics?
- An avenue for vote scouting?

Social factors

- Prestige in the society?
- Social affiliation?

iv. 2nd meeting with employer

A second meeting was then arranged with the employer to *confer, share and participate* in the factors considered. One of the coordinators led the delegation. It was necessary to use one of them because they were more equipped with the skills necessary for a meeting of such sort. After a rapport had been established, the purpose of the meeting (to confer, share and participate) was tabled. Permission was granted by the employer to tape-record the proceedings. This was after a protocol agreement² had been signed, jointly by the team leader and the employer.

v. Proceedings of second meeting

The central segment of the meeting is presented here:

Team leader: *We intend to participate in the process of procurement which is likely to result in a decrease in the cost of raw materials was suggested.*

Employer: *Oh! How would you do that?*

Team leader: *We work for other employers and we have knowledge about materials in terms of their differing qualities and prices. Before you make a purchase we could provide you with the best quotes.*

Employer: *Different prices?*

Team leader: *Good question! I can assure that prices are not likely to be the same ...even if there were this is where we have the advantage of a buyer "power". We could mobilize as many buyers as possible (we work with a lot of them) for the purpose of bulk buying in order to obtain a discount for all of the buyers. In addition to this benefit we are aware that suppliers have the tendency to offer free transport for some level of purchases.*

Employer: *Ooh, that is wonderful! If that proves successful then we could improve upon our economic situations...you and me.*

Indeed, the new arrangement proved successful leading to the lowering of the cost of raw materials for the employer and an increase in the rate of pay for the manual workers. This was a classic case of innovation management resulting in an economic benefit for both parties.

c) External Activities

This is the last but not least of the main activities.

The NGO has links with external parties such as the Media. On the day of the inauguration of the NGO the media presence was great and this earned the organization some form of publicity. Other external activities are in the form of membership of social movements, like the ones involved in community welfare practices. "We are in four of such associations. We also have an affiliation with Government agencies such as the Ministry of Gender, the labor office and the ministry of manpower development and NGOs such as a research center in the capital city." It is always necessary to make our voices heard in certain situations" the founder said in a prophetic manner. There are links with other collaborators of the scheme, such as employers and clients of our members. The activities of JCIPU is encapsulated in the model below.

¹ The antecedent needs of the employer determined the areas for consideration.

² The protocol agreement included a condition that the proceedings and also that the identity of the employer would not be divulged to any third party except with the consent of the employer

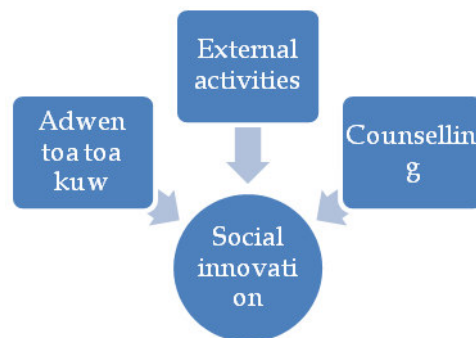


Figure 2 Model of social innovation- JCIPU

2. Method

The aim of this method section is to address the research questions, particularly the second and third questions.

2.1 Philosophical assumptions:

Qualitative research designs are based on certain philosophical assumptions. Creswell (p.17, 2007) posits that the implication for practice, based on the ontological assumption, is that the researcher uses quotes and themes in words of participants and provides evidence of different perspectives. Based on the assumption of epistemology the researcher collaborates, spends time with the participants and becomes an 'insider' Creswell (p.17, 2007). On the bases on the axiological assumption the researcher worked closely with the participants in shaping and interpreting the results of the research. This kind of relationship enabled us to use inductive logic in the process of our research work.

The research strategy was a case study. We thought it was appropriate to use this because we had identified the case study in a bounded system (Creswell, 2007) of a social innovation context, located in a community in the Akwapim Municipality in the eastern region of Ghana. There were three (3) arms of social innovation functionality, namely counseling, *Adwen toa toa kuw* (innovation management) and external activities (see figure 2). The case site was proximate to our places of work. Thus we could capitalize on the opportunity of access (at any point in time) to the location and also the opportunities in accessing data from diverse sources. The study was bounded by a time frame of six months.

2.2 Field work

Field work is the 'worksite' of the qualitative researcher. This is in line with the philosophies explained above. The office of the NGO was the site for the research activities. Field work lasted for about six months. There were some off site informal visits to some of the collaborators such as the employees of the manual construction workers, and market visits to observe the head potters and also gather some information from some collaborators.

2.2.1 Access to the fields and data

The study was designed for multi-site visits. The sites were the offices of the community -based NGO, the offices of the network partners, governmental agencies and the counselors. In all cases a research protocol was prepared and agreed upon with the heads of the institutions. There were no restrictions in terms of access to data from the NGO and the counselor's offices. The cooperative effort from the founder was great.

2.3 Emerging and imposing themes

Some themes were inducted from the data whilst the others were deductive. Through a deductive approach we used some theoretical frameworks to help identify some themes and also understand the behavioral tendencies of the instances of activities.

2.4 Literature review techniques

Priori themes were derived from literature review. The use of literature review though is not common in qualitative research. Creswell (p. 42, 2007) suggests that full literature review may be used in qualitative studies to inform the questions actually asked or to solely help document the importance for the research problem. We adopted the latter approach. We did only a review of the main concept. Thus there is scanty presentation of a review in the study.

2.5 Multiple sources of data collection

Sources of data of collection based on qualitative studies are multidimensional. Typically, we collected data through interviews from the main participant and the others members of the NGO. The other source of primary data was through observations of the proceedings of meetings. There were also secondary source of data including inspection of minutes of meetings, background of the founder, minutes of meetings, correspondent

letters to and from partners and financial documents and other internal documents such as the NGO's constitution and registration forms. All the data were transcribed. We also observed (participants' observer) and took notes on some semantic and behavioral symbols (artifacts) during the brainstorming and counseling sessions. The objective of the observation was to study and understand the social structure of the counseling meetings and the brainstorming sessions of the innovation management function and also to provide clues and pointers to other layers of reality (Bryman, 1988).

2.6 Data analysis

A holistic approach to analysis was chosen. The approach involves examining the entire case (including the history, religion and environment) to get a complete picture of it (Yin, 2007) and presenting descriptions, themes and interpretations or assertions related to the whole case (Creswell, 2007). Our procedural research approach was based on the identification and the employment of themes for the study. Thus, we applied the techniques of identifying themes in the approach to analyzing the data (Maxwell, 1996). Themes come from many sources. They may come from the literature, local common sense constructs, researcher's values, theoretical orientations, and personal experiences with the subject matter (Ryan and Bernard, 2003). We add that these may also come from the participants' views.

2.6.1 Techniques used to identify themes for data analysis and interpretation

We employed techniques such as key word in context, word repetitions, social science queries and the exploration of metaphors and analogies. (Ryan and Bernard, 2003).

2.6.1.1 Key words in context

The key concept was social innovation. We looked at how the concept was used by other authors in the literature. We read extensively on the concept, taking notes of its sub-concepts and related ones. We then related the concepts, sub-concepts and related concepts to the transcripts and coded them as such. Out of these, some themes were derived.

2.6.1.2 Word repetitions

Word repetitions were obvious choice for coding of perceptions and opinions. Opinions and perceptions that occur frequently in a text underlie the cultural make up of a group of people. We noted such trends and also noted and queried activities that occurred frequently.

2.6.1.3 Social science queries

Spradley (1979) suggested searching interviews for evidence of social conflict, cultural contradictions, informal methods of social control, things that people do in managing impersonal social relationships, methods by which people acquire and maintain achieved and ascribed status, and information about how people solve problems, for themes identification. We used this strategy especially during the counseling and innovation practices meetings. On many occasions we queried the significance of the cultural practices that were difficult to interpret.

2.6.1.4 Metaphor and analogy

The use of metaphors and analogies were targets for themes identification. Analogies used by participants were further queried for in depth analysis.

2.7 Research rhetoric

The language of qualitative research is in a form of a literal, informal style using the personal voice, qualitative terms and limited definitions (Creswell, p.17, 2007). The personal voices include that of the researchers and participants. Thus the use of "we" is commonly found in the study.

2.8 Participants

The main participant (voice) of the study was the founder of the NGO.

However, other interviews, though on a smaller scale were conducted with the two coordinators and some members of the group. Participants were all registered members., representatives of the NGO's networks, counselors (collaborators) and the governmental agencies associated with the external activities function.

Much of the areas of the study were views of the main respondent: however, they were corroborated by the coordinators and the members.

2.9 Investigative research questions

1. Addressed by founder
 - i. *Tell us about yourself, please.*
 - ii. *How and when did you establish the NGO?*
 - iii. *What was your motivation for establishing it? Please, describe.*
 - iv. *Describe the activities of the NGO, please.*
 - v. *Please, describe the impact of the intervention.*

2. Addressed by other members and other collaborators
 - i. ***What association do you have with the NGO?***
 - ii. ***Describe the nature of the association, please.***
 - iii. ***Describe your role, please.***
 - iv. ***Please, describe the impact of the intervention***

2.10 Validation strategies

The following strategies were used to ensure data validation:

- a) The prolonged engagement (for almost six months) with the founder and other participants and the immersion of the researchers into the social settings of the NGO built up trust and commitment, resulting in the trustworthiness of the data that were provided.
- b) Details of the settings in which the NGO operates and the activities involved were fully described. According to Erlanson (1993) this is necessary so that so other readers can transfer the findings to other settings that share similar characteristics.
- c) We triangulated the sources of the data by using multiple sources, including the application of the theories in order to provide corroborating evidence (Miles and Huberman, 1994).
- d) In order to ensure credibility of data, we solicited the participant's views (Member checking) of the findings and interpretations. We also asked them to appraise the "fitness" of the resultant model.
- e) Akin to inter-rater reliability in quantitative studies, we asked two experienced research staff to review the methods used in the coding of the themes and interpretations used in the study. This was to ensure that methods could be replicated by any other persons. Coder reliability was judged at 80 percent.

3 Results –Emerging themes

Themes that emerged from the study were:

3.1 Traits of communal management

This theme was induced from the study. The founder showed a lot of traits that signified her concern for society. The initial social impulse that pushed her to resolve the disagreement between the manual workers and their employer testified to this. This pattern of behavior was also evident in her regular meetings at community meetings where her views are respected. She showed that as well in the very significant statement "I am aware of the *kayayoo* (head potters) case of unfair treatment which has attracted publicity for the past decade. Such people are disadvantaged and fall prey to all manner of unjust treatment" in response to a question as to her motivation for establishing the NGO.

3.2 Values of spirituality, transparency, trust and tolerance

The structure of the NGO evidently shows elements of some values. The values identified were spirituality, transparency, trust and tolerance. The culture of spirituality was exhibited at the very initial stages of formation in the words of the founder "I needed God's guidance to start and run a successful organization.". The word "spirit" also appeared in a statement "They were not together in spirit though physically they worked as a team. They saw themselves as individuals in a group and not team members "and also at the initial stages when commenting about the way of life of the manual workers who were engaged in the agitation with their employer. Yet in all meetings organized by the groups prayers were said as a prelude to the initial proceedings. The other values were *transparency* and *trust* in the values statement as shown in the constitution, the meeting proceedings and in the words of the founder Emma "I have learnt to be transparent in whatever I do and wherever I find myself. When a hidden intention is exposed, it increases tension. There is security in mind when everyone is transparent. Transparency then results in trustworthiness" in a response based on a social query as to the rationale for the values of the NGO.

3.3 Adwen ntoa ntoa kuw

This concept was inductively derived from the texts. The metaphoric phrase is similar in meaning to the process of creativity and innovation. It is the fulcrum of the NGO. Innovation projects have no end for JCIPU. In the words of the founder "There is always a better way of doing things. Innovation has no ending. Even after implementation, we go back to the whole process. Our associates as professionals must achieve the best out of the best way of doing things". "At this forum the mentality of everyone is that knowledge comes from members. At the end of the day we have a solid outcome of results" was another statement which came from one of the members.

3.4 Networking and coalitions

This theme was inferred from the external activities of the NGO. This JCIPU worked with some partners in its

operations. This was evidenced in the frequency of participation in public forums and also with the links with other government and non-governmental agencies. The participation in social forums gave the NGO an opportunity to express its opinions targeted at municipal authorities, especially. Whilst the networking and coalition bothered on the issues of legal, economic and health, the goal was social. For example, the NGO has links with the Labor department of the government for legal and economic issues, the ministry of health for national health insurance issued and the Gender ministry for gender issues. However, for the most part of its internal and external activities, the main focus was a social one.

3.5 Impact of JCIPU on community

The impact of the NGO is presented “in vivo” (in the voices of the participants) under social and economic factors as follows:

“Auntie Emma is a social gift from God. The NGO has changed my whole way of thinking and behaving”. “This is not the type of organization that is claimed by one person. It is communally based. It has affected the community positively”. “This is a model for national development. Social development brings about economic development”. These three significant statements came from the members of the NGO. The views of the founder were in a few words “personally, this is what I call spiritual fulfillment in life”. External parties showed their views:” JCIPU is a model for government serious consideration”. “A timely intervention! It has reduced my cost of operations”. This NGO must be rewarded nationally for this exemplary leadership.”

4 Discussions

4.1 Theoretical underpinnings.

The themes identified in the results are supported by some theoretical underpinnings. Under this section, we relate the themes identified with some theoretical constructs. Apart from supporting the themes, the theoretical frameworks also helped in getting an understanding of the main phenomena and the sub-phenomenon.

4.2 Traits of communal management and social entrepreneurship (S.E)

The Global Social Entrepreneurship Network defines S.E as Individuals with entrepreneurial solutions to social and economic problems which cover a range from starting small community organizations, building social capital and cohesion, right through the scale to major ventures delivering social and economic impact, and including people with breakthrough innovation models.

The EU Guide to social innovation (2013) defines S.E as behaviors and attitudes of individuals involved in creating new ventures for social purposes, including the willingness to take risks and find creative ways of using underused assets. Abu-Saifan (2012) described a social entrepreneur as someone who is emotionally charged, change agent, opinion leader, value creator, socially alert, manager, and highly accountable. These two definitions from authoritative sources fit the workings of the NGO as shown in earlier chapters. The founder’s characteristics almost meet those posited by Abu-Saifan (2012)

4.3 Values foundation, empathy and performance

The case study structure stimulated values based on trustworthiness, transparency, tolerance and spirituality (religiosity). These values influenced the phenomena of empathy which resulted in the amicable agreement between the manual construct workers and their employer as shown in the dialogues. In that scenario the incorporation of the element of empathy resulted in social gains and economic gains (increase in wages) for both parties. Also the phenomenon of empathy was exhibited in the innovation process (figure 1). However, whilst some authors had found some relationship between empathy and religion in other works (see Batson et al 1995)) we did not find any support for the relationship between religion (spirituality), empathy and performance in the sense exhibited by the case study. We define performance based on the social impact of JCIPU on the community, as improvements in the socio-economic lives of people or organizations. Typical of a qualitative study, we place a hypothesis at this portion of article, therefore, that:

There will relationship between religion (spirituality) empathy and performance (as operationalized in the study)

4.4 Adwen ntoa ntoa kuw and social innovation

There is a strong resemblance between the concept of *Adwen ntoa ntoa kuw* and social innovation based on the definitions given by Howaldt (2014) and Păunescu (2014). The founder exemplifies a character of a social innovator as defined by Dawson and Daniel, (2010), whilst the concepts in the case study as a whole draw a parallel with conceptual frameworks such as that of Lubelcová (2012), European Commission (2013), and Cajaiba-Santana (2014). Others such as Tanimoto (2010) link social innovation to other concepts such as social entrepreneurship. S.E has already been identified as a correlate of communal management in this article.

4.5 Counselling as an element of social innovation

We find something unique about our paper as compared to others based on the concept of social innovation. Particularly we find that the incorporation of the counseling sessions in the model is unique. The sessions were supposed to communicate and indoctrinate the mission and values of the NGO and also to develop shared patterns of behavior amongst members. We see the counseling sessions as an important part of social innovation, as a deliberately organized innovation (Fedotova, 2010) that is used in introducing the changes that were meant to be.

4.6 Practical implications

We offer some suggestions for practice.

4.6.1 For governments

Socio-economic patterns such as rural-urban migration which results in slums such as ‘Ghettos’ could be curbed if the practice of social innovation especially that exhibited by JCIPU is supported and well implemented. As a first step it is important to identify social innovators, both actual and potential, especially in the rural areas. Invitations for proposal must then be made in order to identify the potentially good ones. Organizing and implementing of proposals must then follow based on a firm commitment to the plan, of both partners.

The EU’s Guide to social innovation (2013) as well offers the benefits of social innovation which may be of particular interest to governments as follows:

- 1) It can provide new, more efficient answers to meet growing social needs;
- 2) It can provide local answers to complex social and societal challenges, mobilizing local actors;
- 3) It is capable of integrating various stakeholders to tackle this jointly, through new ways of working together and involving users;
- 4) If applied well, it can deliver using fewer resources, particularly important at a time of reduced public finances and shrinking private funds.

4.6.2 For non- government organizations

For NGOs this model provides an example worthy of emulation. Especially for those operating at the grassroots level, issues such as social movements can be aligned to the networking and coalition aspect of the SI model as produced by JCIPU.

4.6.3 For society as a whole

The JCIPU success story pointed to some factors that seemed to benefit the society as a whole. Referring to the manual workers’ case with their employees (as shown in the dialogue) it was clear that both parties benefited from the implementation of the idea to arrange for the purchases in bulk in order to obtain discount as well as free transportation of purchased items (on the part of the employer), whilst the manual workers themselves benefited from an increase in wages. We associate ourselves with the position taken by Umberto (2015) then, that social innovation fits different contexts. The case depicted SI in different contexts of social, cultural, economic and environmental. The same arrangement resulted in new relationships and roles. The manual workers, through their social innovation efforts, were able to bring in the suppliers of the materials into a more mutually beneficial relationship. Their role as procurement officers was evident in the statement “*We work for other employers and we have knowledge about materials in terms of their differing qualities and prices. Before you make a purchase we could provide you with the best quotes* “. For the suppliers the benefits were the opportunity to make bulk sales, and achieving economies of scale.

5 Conclusions

JCIPU has provided us with an opportunity to showcase their innovative exploits in creating jobs. Led by a social entrepreneur, a social innovation model resting on some social pillars provided an example worthy of emulation and practice. We have been able to reveal this interesting story via a descriptive qualitative study. At the tip of it all we provided some theoretical insights, a suggestion for future research, embedded in a form of a hypothesis and suggestions for practice.

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