

## SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS' IDENTITY. A CASE STUDY OF ROMANIA

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**Abstract:** *The literature identified several factors affecting individuals' orientation in pursuing social value creation. Thus, this paper investigates past entrepreneurial experiences, economic and socio-cultural factors, and demographic characteristics that could predict individuals' entrepreneurial social orientation. Intrinsic motivation is assessed as a factor influencing social entrepreneurial decision-making. This study uses the social identity theory and self-determination theory as a base of the study. Data were collected from 143 established entrepreneurs and use a mixed methodology to analyse it. The results suggest that all factors investigated are positively affecting entrepreneurs' social orientation, aligning their profiles with others from elsewhere. Intrinsic motivation expressed by individuals' desire to create social value is the significant factor in differentiating them from commercial entrepreneurs. This study identifies some of the missing links in the Romanian social entrepreneurship research by providing new insights into the entrepreneurial process.*

**Key words:** Entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurship orientation.

**JEL Classification Codes:** M13, D92

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Little appears to be known about individuals' profile that pursues social venture creation, named social entrepreneurs (SE), especially in developing economies such as Romania. The management literature includes various theories, typically based on individuals' attributes, abilities, and knowledge, which subsequently generate specific entrepreneurial behaviour and attitude (Krueger et al., 2000). Therefore it is essential for us to fully understand - who these individuals are and why they do what they do (Light, and Wagner, 2005). Particularly, SE and their enterprises are the subjects of much debate 'involving definitional and conceptual clarity, boundaries of the field, and a struggle to arrive at a set of relevant and meaningful research questions' (Decin, et al., 2015, p.1203).

### 2. DEFINITIONS OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR

The Skoll Foundation defined SE as "the change agents for society, seizing opportunities others miss, and improving systems, inventing new approaches, and creating sustainable solutions to change society for the better." Later, many academics echoed these perspectives and added new aspects that extended the SE definition.

As early as 2000, Thompson et al., states that 'successful SE closely mirror characteristics of business entrepreneurs, but require an extra dose of visionary ideas, leadership skills, and a commitment of helping others' (p.329). Meanwhile, Bargsted, et al. (2013) states that "SE presents a particular profile related to values of benevolence and self-direction, high



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entrepreneurship orientation, ability on taking perspective (empathy), a social motive similar to altruism, and career identity based on service and entrepreneurship” (p.332).

Following the above ideas, several researchers (Mair and Marti, 2006) emphasised that SE chases new opportunities, using innovative solutions to serve their venture’s social mission and fulfilling unmet social needs. Explicitly, Dees (2001) stated that SE is a change agent in the social sector by ‘adopting a mission to create and sustain social value’ (p. 12) through unremittingly identifying new opportunities that serve their objectives within the legal framework and constraints of the resources available. This specific approach to SE’s definition embeds the importance of an individual’s personal qualities and attributes, such as persistence and determination in pursuing their social mission (Stephan and Drencheva, 2017) supported by the self-determination theory (SDT) of Deci and Ryan, (2012).

Early in 1986, Young stated that ‘social entrepreneurs are the innovators who found new organizations, develop and implement new programs and methods, organize and expand new services’ (p. 162). Social entrepreneurship is a voluntary choice; therefore, every SE ‘exhibits a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created’ (Dees, 2001, p. 16). Following the social identity theory, SE seeks to create a fit between an individual’s gain, the creation of social values, and the fulfillment of community needs (Dees, 2001). In the UK, Drencheva and Stephan (2014) defined SE as a person who adopts an entrepreneurial attitude to create social values, rather than to make a profit.

This study adopts Dees’s (2001) view that a SE is an individual who voluntarily chooses and follows an ”opportunity to serve that mission, engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, learning, and exhibiting a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created” (p.176). Although the SE concept’s definitions have shortcomings, several researchers (Short et al., 2009) encouraged scholars to use different research approaches by adopting an array of theoretical and conceptual views that will connect the socio-economic, cultural, and environmental factors into this analysis. This study responds to this call.

### **3. TYPOLOGY OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS**

SEs’ taxonomy incorporates diverse concepts from a variety of academic disciplines linked to the community concept, emphasising individuals’ deeds and various attributes leading to social change. SE use their skills and abilities, in the context of the available resources, to engage in economic entities that create social value. In this regard, Zahra et al. (2009) identified the differences and commonalities between individuals and firms engaged in social entrepreneurship and identified three types of SE: social bricoleurs, social constructionists, and social engineers. They are entrepreneurs with an explicit and central social mission.

#### *Social Bricoleurs*

Entrepreneurial opportunities tend to be discovered and developed at local levels that are generally unknown to distant entrepreneurs, as they “lack the relevant facts and knowledge essential to identify, frame and evaluate opportunity” (Zahra et al., 2009, p. 520). Social bricoleurs meaning is based on the supply-side of entrepreneurship, missing on how individuals identify the changes required to satisfy community needs by creating social value. Meanwhile, Baker and Nelson (2005) understand the concept of social bricolage, defined as a collage of “whatever resources and repertoires one has to perform whatever tasks one faces” (p. 353). They stated that successful bricoleurs require inside knowledge of the local conditions and available resources. To be clear about the meaning of social bricoleurs, Zahra et al. (2009) stated that: “We call entrepreneurs who act on locally discovered opportunities with locally available resources “Social Bricoleurs” (p. 524). This particular category of entrepreneurial characteristics focuses

on the entrepreneurial process and there is no clear differentiation between individual economic and social entrepreneurs.

*Social Constructionists*

In contrast, social constructionists create social value by acting on the social status quo to introduce innovative solutions to social problems and create social ventures that contribute to constructing a better society. Entrepreneurs that fall into this taxonomy are often situated at the starting point of the change process. These entrepreneurs have the advantage of local knowledge and the ability to identify and follow opportunities that create social value. The social problems taken on board may vary from small scale to national level. The latter will cause changes in the social fabric of communities; therefore, these individuals have been labeled constructionists (Zahra, et al., 2009).

*Social Engineers*

Especially in developing countries, commercial and social entrepreneurial processes may be hindered by inadequate government institutions or deep-rooted corruption and favoritism of political elites that can thwart entrepreneurial processes. Social engineers “identify systemic problems within the social systems and structures and address them by bringing about revolutionary change” (Zahra et al., 2009, p. 526). In the case of systemic social problems, social engineers target national and global issues. Their approaches to solving social problems often conflict with the national political status quo. Commonly, SE displays a synergy of these attributes.

**4. SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS' OUTLINE**

Despite SE's increasing presence in the economy, little is known about what factors influence their choice to take on this role. Despite several researchers' investigation of SE's differences from commercial entrepreneurs (Stephan and Drencheva, 2017) the findings remain unsettled. Therefore, this study poses the following important research question: “*What factors differentiate the mainstream entrepreneurs from SE in Romanian context?*” Screening the literature the following factors were acknowledged as affecting entrepreneurs' business orientation.

Focusing on successful entrepreneurs Chaudhary (2017) identified the following factors as relevant for an individual's entrepreneurial orientation: a. past entrepreneurial experiences, b. economic factors, c. socio-cultural factors, d. demographic differences, and Deci and Ryan (2000) intrinsic motivation. For this study, we used the following clusters (Table 1).

**Table 1 Factors influencing the entrepreneurial choice**

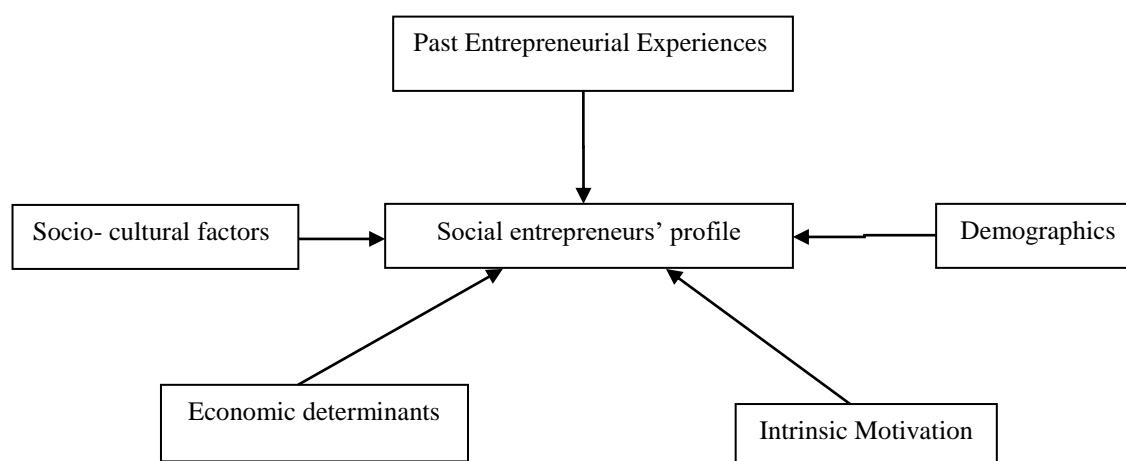
Researchers	Commercial Entrepreneurs	Social Entrepreneurs
Past Entrepreneurial Experiences		
Mair and Noboa, 2006; Presutti, et al, 2008; Schoon and Duckworth, 2012. Bacq, et all. 2016.	<p>Prior entrepreneurial experiences play a main critical role in the development of entrepreneurial skills (Presutti, et al, 2008).</p> <p>Becoming an entrepreneur was predicted by having a self-employed parent and by socio-economic resources (Schoon and Duckworth, K., 2012).</p>	<p>Alongside a priori entrepreneurial experience SE exhibit a high level of ‘empathy and moral judgment’ (Mair and Noboa, 2006).</p> <p>Bacq, et al.(2016) indicate that social value creation rules over economic value creation which indeed is what makes SE special.</p>
Economic determinants		

Researchers	Commercial Entrepreneurs	Social Entrepreneurs
Ivanescu et al., (2013). Țigu, et al., (2015). Etchart, et al., 2014. Blaga, (2020). European Commission's 2017: Specific Support to Romania—Starts-ups, Scale-ups, and Entrepreneurship in Romania.	SE displays similar economic characteristics with the commercial entrepreneurs except for their dedication, passion, and aim for fulfilling communities' unmet social needs (Țigu, et al., 2015). Romanian entrepreneurs are having limited capital; therefore, they considered business opportunities with a very low cost and were risk-averse (Ivanescu et al., 2013). Most of the program funds remain unused in government accounts. For Romanian SE making a profit is not a priority (Blaga, 2020). The European Commission 2017 Report recommended changes aimed at improving SE effectiveness by tax cuts and financial policies.	
Socio-cultural factors		
Campbell, 1950. Shapero and Sokol, 1982. Thornton, et al. 2011. Blaga, 2018. Akhter and Sumi, 2014, Méndez-Picazoa, et al., 2020.	Seem that the institutional framework is the best option for entrepreneurial analysis of socio-cultural factors that influence the decisions to create new ventures (Thornton, et al. 2011, Blaga, 2018). The influence of socio-cultural factors such as Religion, Ethnicity, Family, Physical attributes, Economic Status, Education makes an impact on the entrepreneurial development process (Akhter and Sumi, 2014). All factors used in sociological studies of entrepreneurship can be embedded into cultural attitudes that support entrepreneurship (Campbell, 1950).	If the rules of the institutions are either not clear or involve a delay in decision-making, due to excessive bureaucracy, entrepreneurial and social entrepreneurial activity will be negatively affected (Méndez-Picazoa, et al., 2020). If entrepreneurial culture is oriented towards a social outcome, the entrepreneurial activity is called social entrepreneurship, as suggested by Shapero and Sokol (1982).
G20 Young Entrepreneurs' Alliance, 2018	Entrepreneurship culture (risk tolerance and failure, preference for self-employment, innovation, and research culture, seem to be factors equally affecting commercial and social entrepreneurs.	
Demographic Determinants		
Akhter and Sumi, 2014). Institute of Entrepreneurship Development [IED](2021)	The influence of socio-cultural factors such as Religion, Ethnicity, Family, Physical attributes, Economic Status, Education makes an impact on the entrepreneurial development process (Akhter and Sumi, 2014). According to IED, 2021, there is a gender disequilibrium in the work-life relationship between men and women, especially recognized in the field of entrepreneurship. Seem that Romania has similar gender differences as the rest of the EU and the world.	
Motivation		
Deci and Ryan, 2000. Van Praag and Cramer, 2001. Jayawarna et al. 2011. Germak and Robinson, 2013. Blaga, 2021.	"Extrinsic motivations" mean to be motivated by material gain that increases personal wealth (Deci and Ryan, 2000, p. 55). Extrinsic motivations are generated by reinforcement contingencies and include several motivators, such as profit, bonuses, and supplementing an individual's income (Van Praag and Cramer, 2001; Jayawarna et al. 2011).	"Intrinsic motivations" encompass motivations for doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable (Deci and Ryan, 2000, p. 55), which are understood to be activated by personal affective feelings. This research includes specific motivational variables that influence individuals' social orientation. These variables were previously used in entrepreneurial research by several scholars (Germak and Robinson, 2013; Blaga, 2021).

Researchers	Commercial Entrepreneurs	Social Entrepreneurs
OECD/European Union, 2016. Blaga, 2020; 2021.	One may conclude that there is a range of motivational factors from purely social to purely economic motivation (Austin et al., 2006). Even at the extreme level, there are elements of both typologies of entrepreneurship motivations (Austin et al., 2006; Blaga, 2020; 2021) that are elements of SDT. The specific factors substantially differentiating these entrepreneurs' motivations rest on their position toward utility maximisation, which may be used for personal consumption or focusing on solving community concerns and creating social value (OECD //European Union, 2013).	

Sources: Created for this study

As presented in Table 1, the entrepreneurial orientation may emerge from an individual's early life experiences and that makes them indeed rare. They may have different demographics and socio-economic characteristics, based on age, gender, education, religion, and race, covering all social and cultural groups, and showing different personalities. The above views (Table 1) leads us to put forward the following research framework.



**Figure 1. Research framework**

Source: Created for this research

If the differences between the two types of entrepreneurs come from motivations and behaviors, that can be identified, encouraged, and supported by offering grants and tax releases. If the differences emerge from a socio-economic background, supportive legislation is needed alongside adequate business education.

## 5. IDENTIFYING ROMANIAN SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS

Specific researches dedicated to identifying and assessing SE's profile in Romania are scarce. Recently, several researchers (Iancu, et al., 2021; Țigu, et al, 2015) consider that usually, the new social venture created operates in the field of their owners' qualifications as they have the expertise required to do so. Moreover, Țigu (2015) deem that Romanian "SE tend to be social bricoleurs, social constructionists or a combination of the two" (p27) and they display similar characteristics with the commercial entrepreneurs except for their dedication, passion, and aim for fulfilling communities' unmet social needs. The emergent idea of this new researches states that Romanian SE business actions are driven also by their intrinsic motivation (Țigu (2015)).

Despite its satisfactory research process, Iancu, et al. (2021) findings, or some of it, could be on err as their research participants are exclusive students with limited or no business experience in navigating the Romanian legal, social and economic environment. Meanwhile, Țigu, (2015) study is based on a very small sample that, according to the author's self-declaration, becomes "a non-representative sample" (p.40). It is highly credible that in the market context most of these noble intentions, highlighted in the study, will fade out.

## 6. METHODOLOGY

This study responds to the call for more research into Romanian SE identity, answering the following research question (RQ): *What is the profile of the Romanian SE?* Research data draws from a sample of 143 Romania established entrepreneurs, covering the entire geographical and administrative areas of the country, identifies differences and similarities between mainstream economic entrepreneurs and SE. The participation rate was 66%.

As recommended by Bandura (2002) to particularise SE's profiles this study used as a research paradigm the social identity theory (SIT) and Deci and Ryan's (2012) self-determination theory (SDT) in investigating the Romanian SEs. Thus, this study uses a mixt research methodology due to the nature of the data collected and the research objective. The primary research data was collected using a validated questionnaire (Appendix 2), which was presented in person, e-mailed to responding participants, or was read over the telephone or on Skype. For triangulation purposes, research secondary data were collected from various government agencies.

Intrinsic motivation was measured by using a five-point Likert scale (Appendix 2, B) and was defined as an individual's actions that are interesting or enjoyable (Deci and Ryan, 2000). Intrinsic motivation was operationalized by the following items: concern for community welfare, unemployment, environmental pollution, medical services, satisfying community expectations, and volunteering. These factors have been mentioned as motivational stimulus by several researchers (Jordaan, 2014; Blaga 2021).

Start-up capital (Appendix 2, C) was operationalised as the amount of savings available in the bank or income from different sources. This measurement methodology has been used in previous studies by Hurst and Lusardi (2003), and Kim (2006). As this research employed multiple independent predictors the Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) statistics were used (Appendix 6), as recommended by Coakes (2013). MLR is designed to develop predictions between multiple variables (Hair et al. 2014) and a single dependent variable – individuals' social entrepreneurial orientation.

## 7. RESEARCH FINDINGS

This study aims to establish the main factors that will differentiate the individual's choice of the new ventures' orientation: commercial or social. This study investigates all generic clusters as presented in Table 2.

### A. Past Entrepreneurial Experiences - Question A1.2

Several researchers (Presutti, et al, 2008) underlined the desirability of past entrepreneurial experience during venture creation by stating that "...prior entrepreneurial experiences of an [potential] entrepreneur play a main critical role in the development of successful entrepreneurial skills useful to a new venture". Meanwhile, Bacq, et all.(2016) indicate that above all skills and knowledge of a commercial entrepreneur, in the case of a SE, social value creation rules over economic value creation which indeed is what makes them unique.

In this study, data shows that the number of people continuing a family entrepreneurial tradition is only 7%. (Appendix 2, B). In Romania, past entrepreneurial experience is limited as the communist welfare state has forbidden all entrepreneurial initiatives and inhibited Romanian's social responsibility. Therefore, analysis of the past entrepreneurial experience is limited just to the post-communist era, which is not so significant in comparison to the western world. Despite these constrain, past entrepreneurial experience is an important skill that facilitates SE's work activity (Pirvu, 2015; Blaga 2020).

*B. Economic determinants- Questions C1- C9*

Empirical data reveal that Romanian SE used their savings to financing new ventures creation and seem of having limited capital. Hence, they consider business opportunities with a low cost and are risk-averse as stated by Ivanescu et al., (2013). Their ability to access EU and government grants remains small, therefore is considered to be a significant issue to social entrepreneurship (Pirvu, 2015). However, Romanian SE fits into the category of “constrained entrepreneurs” described in liquidity constraint theory (Deaton, 1991).

The Romanian government and EU are aware of these issues and allocated funds and implemented policies to support entrepreneurial activities, such as the European Commission's 2017 policy/program: “Specific Support to Romania—Starts-ups, Scale-ups and Entrepreneurship in Romania” (pp. 41-69). The perception of grants distribution is considered as incorrect, corrupt, inefficient, and bureaucratic, and therefore, the economic results and efficiency of the funds are poor. According to the research participants' statements, only 25% of applicants for funding received government or EU grants. The rest of the program's funds remain mostly unused in government accounts. Therefore, The European Commission 2017 Report recommended changes aiming at improving SE effectiveness, such as tax cuts (Cace, 2010).

*C. Social factors- Questions B2.1 – B2.6*

Research data of this study shows that the social factors affecting entrepreneurs' behavior are as presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Social factors affecting entrepreneurial orientation**

Social factors	Social Entrepreneurs	Purpose	% of Agree and Strongly Agree
Community welfare	√	Social deeds	56
Unemployment	√	Social deeds	57
Medical services	√	Social deeds	34
Environment	√	Social deeds	27
Community expectations	√	Social deeds	36
Volunteering	√	Social deeds	48

Sources: Created for this research

The findings presented in Table 2, show the aggregated value of ‘agree’ and ‘strongly agree’ statements, indicating that community welfare and unemployment were two of the most important factors (over 50%) for entrepreneurs' social orientation. Seem that medical services are delivered at a non-satisfactory level (34%) in various geographical areas.

Environmental issues were considered to be less important than the other factors as these issues are considered to be “under control”. In some specific geographical areas, it is considered a major issue, requiring attention which justifies the 27% indicated in Table 2.

Furthermore, Romanian entrepreneurs participating in this research wished to satisfy some of their community's expectations (38%), thereby demonstrating that they viewed themselves as

part of the community and they cared about their social issues. However, 48% of the participants considered volunteering if this would be useful to the community to which they belonged, being “an expression of a participative culture” as stated by Voicu (2009).

These findings are somewhat different from other empirical studies (Drencheva and Stephan, 2014), as the social contexts of Romania differ from other countries. Hence, one set of policies does not have the same effect everywhere. Fine-tuning is needed if sustainable social entrepreneurship is aimed. This analysis shows that social factors are positively related to entrepreneurs’ social orientation.

#### *D. Gender – Question C13*

Although women are actively involved in many Romanian economic sectors, they are under-represented as entrepreneurs. Western countries are facing a similar problem, as generally, women are more concerned about family issues and raising children. In this study, the research data indicated that 66% of the participants were male and 34% were female entrepreneurs.

According to the Institute of Entrepreneurship Development (2021), the working environment is still dominated by gender disequilibrium. Even there has been important progress over the last decades, there still be a significant gap in the work-life relationship between men and women. In this regard, the Institute of Entrepreneurship Development (2021) stated that “In Europe, women constitute 52% of the total European population, but only 34.4% of the European Union self-employed and 30% of start-up entrepreneurs are women. This study shows that Romania has similar gender differences as the rest of the EU and the world.

#### *E. Age – Question C14*

In Romania, the majority of research participants were aged between 31 and 50 years old, which represented a cumulative percentage of 80.3%. Almost half of all participants (49%) fell in the 31 to 40 age group. In this sample, the average participant aged was 43.4 years.

According to Entrepreneurship, Statistical Indicators – European Commission, (2021) the age distribution of startup founders in different European countries for 2016 varies. In Austria, 14.9 percent of startup founders have aged under 24, the highest proportion of any country. In contrast, 17.4 percent of the startup ventures in the Netherlands were founded by people aged over 55. In Romania, the average age of entrepreneurs is higher than the rest of the EU due to a lack of entrepreneurial culture, entrepreneurial education, financial constraints, and fear of bankruptcy.

#### *F. Education – Question C11*

Romanian entrepreneurs are well educated, with 33% having a high school education and the 65% have completed a university degree. This investigation found that in Romania is a significant deficiency in business and managerial education which leads to numerous bankruptcies. However, in the last decade or so most universities offer business and managerial education.

#### *G. Religious and ethnic groups – Question C12*

Analysing religious and ethnic groups’ entrepreneurial activities is difficult as in Romania statistical information in this field is scarce, not reliable, and not fully comparable to other countries. There are some common elements and estimations, but there are no comprehensive official statistics that are fully validated, and therefore is hard to make a SE profile based on these characteristics.

Religious diversity is often associated with various ethnic groups (Sepulveda, et al. 2013). Yet, there is indistinguishable evidence of how far the Romanian government policy goes in supporting new venture creation for minority groups, or how far these policies are going to curve the past exclusion propensity. Religion has a strong link with entrepreneurial activities (Spear, 2010.). Much religious faith played an important role in shaping congregations’ entrepreneurial



actions, promoting their social mission, supported by empathy, and philanthropy. The success of their social entrepreneurial activities is based on trust (honesty) in business dealings that sustain their social mission (Sepulveda, et al., 2013). Moreover, their leadership discourse fulfilled the trust deficiency that inherently follows the creation of a new venture (Roundy, et al. 2015).

Consequently, this study found out that 18.2% of participants belonged to a religious group which is in line with the EU data (Spears, 2010), while 9.8% declared that they belonged to an ethnic minority group and 72% did not consider themselves to belong to any ethnic or religious group. The demographic profile aligns with the Romanian National SME Council's Report, White Paper on Romanian SMEs (2016).

#### *H. Intrinsic Motivation – Question B2.1 – B2.6*

Thus, this research put forward an individual's intrinsic motivation as a defining element for their social orientation, significantly differentiating them from commercial entrepreneurs (Blaga 2021). Factors considered important for Romanian SEs participating in this study shows that they are driven by concerns about community welfare (49.7%) and therefore they are volunteering (53.1%), aiming to solve social issues that confront the community (53.1%), and fulfilling some of the community's expectations (49.7%). Consensus is reached that social entrepreneurs' intrinsic motivations are expressed by the desire to create social value, and that appears to be the primary motivation for entrepreneurs' social orientation (Minniti and Leveaque, 2010). All these elements are embedded into the generic construct of intrinsic motivation defined by Deci and Ryan, (2002) as activities that are performed by people who do not expect any material reward or power and are emotionally loaded such as pleasure, satisfaction, recognition (Blaga, 2020). Therefore, this study tested the following hypothesis:

*Intrinsic motivations influence social entrepreneurs' orientation.*

The hypothesis tested if intrinsic motivations influence entrepreneurs' social orientation. The regression results for this hypothesis show a positive relationship between intrinsic motivations ( $\beta = .177, p = .040$ ) and social entrepreneurs' orientation. Therefore, the hypothesis was supported (Appendix 5)

The assumption that social entrepreneurs stand apart from typical entrepreneurs was also reflected in this Romanian sample. An overwhelming majority of the entrepreneurs surveyed declared that they wished to be a good example for their children, the rest of the community (96.5%), and have a good reputation (95.8%).

## **8. CONCLUSIONS**

This study aims to contribute to the social entrepreneurship literature by providing new insights into SE's profile, differentiating them from mainstream entrepreneurs. We revealed that SE and social entrepreneurship concepts do not suffer anymore from a lack of definition as most narratives suggested (Light, and Wagner, 2005; Mair and Marty, 2006). Instead, there continues to exist disagreement over its characteristics' importance in the entrepreneurial process, highlighting different aspects that fit various points of view. This underlines the complexity of the social entrepreneurship concept and the economic and political contexts in which SE's carries out their business. As a novelty, the research identified intrinsic motivation as a priory condition for entrepreneurs' social orientation. In this study, SE presents the following characteristics that contribute to their entrepreneurial behavior.

A priory entrepreneurial experience is desirable, but very few individuals will have it. Meanwhile, financing a new venture is difficult and Romanian individuals prefer to use their savings as they are risk avert. In Romanian society is a cultural deficit for any entrepreneurial activity as a consequence of the communist past and lack of funds. The research participants' age

distribution covered all groups between 20 and 60 plus, with the majority of participants falling into the age range of 30 to 50, which generally offers a wealth of life experience.

The participants held a good education, with the majority having a university degree. This is a premise of a good understanding of the political, social, and economic environment, thereby helping create the opportunity for better informed entrepreneurial decision-making. The religious and ethnic diversity of the participants reflected the national demographic structure. The religious beliefs compensate for the lack of trust in the new venture created and contribute to social venture sustainability. Intrinsic motivation is the main drive for individuals' social orientation. Further conceptual and empirical research is required to highlight possible changes in Romanian socio-cultural, economic and political context that may imply behavioral adaptation.

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