# Chapter 4
# The Individual and Behavioral Factors of Social Entrepreneurs

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## ABSTRACT

*This chapter introduces the concept of social entrepreneurs and claims that some individual and behavioral factors contribute to social entrepreneurship. In this point of view, the purpose of this study is to highlight the leading individual and behavioral factors of the social entrepreneur. While exploring the theoretical framework, the theoretical foundations of social entrepreneurship and leading personality and behavioral characteristics have been investigated. The research is based on in-depth interviews with four participants to get a better understanding of the individual and behavioral factors of social entrepreneurs. As a result, the in-depth interviews showed that the social entrepreneurial potential encompass entrepreneurial motivations and psychological, social, managerial competencies. These dimensions contain self-motivation, self-efficacy, risk-taking, purposeful and success-oriented, strategic planning capacity, innovation capacity, social capital capacity, leadership capacity, resilience, resistance to uncertainty, conflict management capacity, and political maneuver capacity.*

## INTRODUCTION

Corporate Social entrepreneurs are those who can *hear the voice of the society* in which they live, identify the needs of the society appropriately and create meaningful values in the solution of social problems that concern the society (Thompson, 2002). Social entrepreneurs are defined as the producers of social value (Groot & Dankbaar, 2014). From this point of view, it seems that social entrepreneurs use their organizations - either for profit or non-profit - to provide social change and/or social value (Ferrel, Hirt, & Ferrel, 2016).

It is stated that the entrepreneurship, as a process, includes six main stages: 1) realization of an opportunity; 2) decision to initiate a venture; 3) assembling the resources; 4) actual launch an initiative; 5) building a successful business, and 6) harvesting the rewards (Curral, Santos, & Caetano, 2013). Considering this process definition, we could deduce that to create and sustain the social values, the successful social entrepreneurship may also start by realization of a need of the society and follow this process.

However, the only reason behind the success of social entrepreneurs is not only to be inclined to create social values by listening to *the voice of the society* but also to have the common qualities and values that successful entrepreneurs should bear.

Based on this point of view, the main purpose of this study was to highlight the individual and behavioral factors of the social entrepreneur. The result of the in-depth interview with four social entrepreneurs showed and confirmed that the entrepreneurial potential includes; entrepreneurial motivations and psychological, social, managerial competencies (ex: Curral, Santos, & Caetano, 2013). These dimensions contain; self-motivation, self- efficacy, visionary and strategic planning capacity, social innovation capacity, social capital capacity, leadership capacity, resilience, conflict management capacity and political maneuvers capacity.

## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### Social Entrepreneurship and the Concept of Social Entrepreneur

The common view of research conducted on entrepreneurship and its role in economic development is that entrepreneurship is the source of the structural change and the improvement in productivity in capitalist economies (Er, 2013), and the locomotive of economic growth. Considering the definitions for the concept; entrepreneurship is understood to embrace all the processes of exploration, identification, evaluation and utilization of opportunities (Sahasranamam & Sud, 2016).

In this framework, the entrepreneur is regarded as the person who organizes and manages the factors of production as well as the person who takes risk and makes innovations and develops the tried-and-tested technologies. The person who can hear the *voice of the society* by accurately predicting the needs of the society in which he lives, and creating meaningful values in solving social problems that are of interest to the society is called a social entrepreneur (Thompson, 2002). Within this perspective, it is understood that social entrepreneurship has the competence to perform innovations by considering opportunities to solve social problems. This concept, which is also called as social innovation, is recognized as *new ideas (products, services, and models) that simultaneously meet social needs (more effectively than alternatives) and create new social relationships or collaborations* (European Commission, 2010; Dro et al., 2011). Considering the four different types of social responsibility - economic, legal, moral and philanthropic (voluntary) - in Carroll's (1979) social responsibility pyramid, although voluntary responsibilities bear more meaning in recent times (Jackson & Jackson, 2014), it is argued that social entrepreneurship can be created in every sector. In the context of this information, when describing social entrepreneurship, it is not only one person that is in question. It is stated that this concept also applies to non-governmental organizations, public enterprises that fulfill voluntary social responsibilities, commercial enterprises that emphasize social responsibility projects, and to hybrid organizations as well (Light, 2006; Abdou, 2010; Groot & Dankbaar, 2014, Phipps & Prieto, 2015).

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