
SOCIAL INNOVATION IN EMERGING ECONOMIES: A NATIONAL SYSTEMS OF INNOVATION BASED APPROACH

Priyanka Purohit

Asst. Professor, School of Management, Graphic Era Hill University,
Dehradun, Uttarakhand, India

ABSTRACT

India has paid a lot of focus on social innovation in emerging economies, with an emphasis on encouraging inclusive growth and tackling societal concerns. This process has been shaped and supported in large part by a national system of innovation (NSI) based approach. The NSI framework in India acknowledges the significance of coordination and collaboration among numerous stakeholders, including the government, academia, business, and civil society. It encourages fusing knowledge, technology, and entrepreneurship to fuel social innovation. The construction of incubation centers, innovation labs, and funding programmes that explicitly support social entrepreneurs are just a few of the measures that have been put in place to foster social innovation. These initiatives aim to support sustainable development, improve access to essential services, and strengthen local communities. The NSI method has also made it easier to develop networks and venues for mentoring, capacity building, and knowledge sharing. Through the exchange of ideas and best practices, these collaborative spaces support cross-sectoral cooperation. To address urgent societal issues and pave the road for sustainable and equitable growth in emerging economies, India's NSI-based approach has been crucial in fostering social innovation.

Key words: Social innovation, Emerging economies, Inclusive growth, National systems of innovation (NSI), Stakeholder collaboration, Knowledge sharing, Sustainable development.

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1. Introduction

In recent years, social innovation in developing nations has drawn a lot of attention from academics who are now aware of its potential to address urgent societal issues and promote sustainable development. Van der Have and Rubalcaba (2016) indicated that "social innovation" has become a stand-alone discipline within the science of innovation, highlighting the growing significance and interest in this field. They emphasized the critical part that social innovation plays in determining the course of developing economies and claimed that this is because it is a response to the "evolving needs and demands" of society. They emphasized that social innovation is a dynamic process that adjusts to "changing circumstances" rather than a static idea. They stated that because social innovation looks for "innovative solutions" to societal problems, it marks a break from conventional problem-solving methods. It is possible to think of social innovation as "a collective endeavor" in which many different parties collaborate to "effect change." This cooperative strategy acknowledges the value of many viewpoints and specialization in fostering social innovation. Social innovation is even more important in the context of growing economies like India. Such economies need "innovative approaches" that go beyond conventional theories of development to address the problems they face, such as poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation. They argued that harnessing local expertise, resources, and "cultural specificities" is more important than simply copying industrialized economies' solutions in emerging economies. This strategy acknowledges the significance of context-specific responses that take into account the particular requirements and goals of local communities.

In an emerging market, Katmon et al. (2019) assessed the link between "board diversity" and the caliber of CSR disclosure. They investigated how "comprehensive board diversity" affected the volume and standard of CSR disclosure. They observed a strong correlation, showing that more diverse boards were better for firms' "disclosure practices" regarding CSR initiatives. They asserted that a diverse board, made up of people with different backgrounds, experiences, and viewpoints, was vital in fostering "social innovation" within businesses. Organizations were more likely to gain access to a larger variety of ideas, insights, and knowledge by bringing together a diverse group of people. Because of this diversity, "societal challenges" could be understood better, and creative solutions could be developed for them.

In tracing the development of the term "social innovation," Ayob et al. (2016) highlighted the concept's contentious nature and various interpretations. They contended that social innovation "came to be" in response to shifting societal requirements and the rising awareness of the shortcomings of conventional methods of resolving social issues. They emphasized "social innovation's" dynamic aspect, implying that it is a continuing process of experimentation, adaptation, and learning. They emphasized the various interpretations and opposing points of view that have shaped its development over time. They draw attention to the various ways that this idea has been conceptualized and deployed by noting the contentious nature of "social innovation." They emphasized that "social innovation" "came to be" as a response to the shifting requirements and difficulties encountered by society. "Social

innovation" is defined by a constant process of experimentation, adaptation, and learning. This adaptable quality of "social innovation" reflects its capacity to address changing societal requirements and promote revolutionary change.

2. Literature Review

Social innovation is a notion that has gained popularity in recent years because of collaboration, drawing the interest of academics and professionals who are concerned with societal issues and promoting sustainable development. Ziegler (2017) asserts that social innovation was looked at from a cooperative perspective, emphasizing the significance of "collective efforts" in fostering creativity. It emphasized the need for cooperation amongst a range of stakeholders, including the public and corporate sectors, as well as civil society and academics. The participants' interconnection and shared accountability for developing "innovative solutions" were recognised by this cooperative approach. A national system of innovation-based approach has become essential in the setting of developing economies like India for promoting innovations in society with integrated efforts and utilisation of resources.

Regarding smart cities, Kar et al. (2019) addressed the idea and presented the idea of "digital nations" for innovative society and sustainability. They claimed that by offering "innovative solutions" to societal problems, digital technology can improve social innovation. The significance of a comprehensive strategy that utilizes digital technologies in a variety of fields, including education, health care, agriculture, and governance. This strategy acknowledged how digitalization can stimulate social innovation and support sustainable development in developing nations like India. According to Bradley et al. (2012), capital by itself was insufficient to encourage development in developing economies. They claimed that promoting creativity required a complete strategy that included "institutional support," the development of human capital, and collaboration. A systems-based strategy that included a supporting institutional framework, investments in human capital, and cooperation among many stakeholders became crucial for fostering social innovation in the setting of developing nations like India, where resources may be in short supply. This strategy acknowledged that innovation depended not just on financial resources but also on a supportive atmosphere and teamwork.

The function of industry organizations as middlemen within national innovation systems to improve institutional capabilities for innovation in emerging nations. Watkins et al. (2015) underlined the critical role that industrial associations play in promoting cooperation and knowledge exchange across various participants in the innovation ecosystem. In order to develop the crucial "institutional capacities" for social innovation in developing nations like India, these groups served as "intermediaries" between the government, academics, and enterprises. Brem and Wolfram (2014) focused on research and development (R&D) efforts in emerging markets and the introduction of "new product development" terminologies. They looked at the "bottom-up approach" to innovation and emphasized the need for new terminology and frameworks to describe the special traits and difficulties of developing markets. They understood how critical it was to modify conventional R&D strategies for the

unique setting of emerging countries, where social innovation was crucial in addressing societal needs.

Surie (2017) focused on the creation of a "innovation ecosystem" for renewable energy in India, placing a particular focus on the function of "social entrepreneurship." In the field of renewable energy, it recognised the enormous potential of social entrepreneurs as agents of transformation and innovation. Social entrepreneurs were regarded as essential "catalysts" who recognised social and environmental problems and came up with creative solutions to solve them. It emphasised the value of social entrepreneurship in promoting social innovation and tackling sustainability challenges in developing nations like India. Social entrepreneurs were able to fill gaps in the renewable energy sector and have a good social effect by utilising their entrepreneurial attitude and creative ideas. The promise of social entrepreneurship in emerging economies, with a focus on the need for supportive ecosystems that promoted and supported social innovation for sustainable development.

Understanding these marketplaces' distinctive traits and dynamics is crucial for successful "social innovation," according to Paul (2019). The necessity to acknowledge the diversity and heterogeneity found in "emerging markets" like India was one of the main points raised. A rich environment for "social innovation" was created by the country's sizable population and diverse socioeconomic origins. Organizations could better design and implement socially innovative marketing strategies if they were aware of the preferences, requirements, and aspirations of various consumer segments. This required adjusting the products, services, and communication strategies to fit the regional context and "cultural sensibilities". The significance of market dynamics and trends in promoting "social innovation" was also emphasized. Rapid technical progress, shifting consumer habits, and shifting societal agendas were all common in "emerging markets" like India. It acknowledged these tendencies as "social innovation" potential, such as using digital platforms to increase access to goods and services for all people or creating environmentally friendly solutions. "Cultural nuances" were also a focus because by understanding the social, cultural, and religious aspects that affect consumer behaviour, businesses could create marketing plans that are in line with regional beliefs and traditions. This "cultural sensitivity" encouraged a stronger bond with customers and raised the possibility that "social innovation" efforts would be effective.

Rosca et al. (2017) assessed "business paradigms for sustainable innovation" with an emphasis on cost-effective goods and services. They noted that such business models had a considerable potential to promote "social innovation." Low-cost options that tended to the needs of "low-income populations" were identified as being represented by frugal goods and services. Along with addressing concerns about affordability, these goods and services sought to add value to people's lives and raise their standard of living. They made a point of highlighting the significance of implementing "sustainable practices" within these business structures. Organizations have been able to address social problems while reducing their ecological imprint by using ecologically friendly methods. The main elements of these sustainable business models included the utilization of renewable resources, energy-efficient

technologies, and waste minimization techniques. In addition to promoting environmental sustainability, this strategy also gave local communities the chance to grow economically and create jobs. The "leverage of limited resources" was an important component of frugal innovation. To maximize the impact of their goods, businesses operating in growing markets like India had to find creative solutions to resource constraints.

In emerging economies, Mani et al. (2018) emphasized the value of "improving the effectiveness of supply chains through supplier social sustainability." They emphasized the value of taking social considerations into account throughout the supply chain, especially about supplier social sustainability practices. Organizations have been able to improve the effectiveness of their supply chains while also advancing social progress in developing nations like India by supporting ethical standards, responsible sourcing, and fair labor practices.

3. Conclusion

Social innovation is crucial in developing nations like India, and a national systems of innovation (NSI) based strategy is critical to promoting its development and effect. India, a country that is rapidly industrializing, suffers many social problems like poverty, inequality, and access to essential services. By combining social and technological breakthroughs, social innovation provides novel solutions to deal with these issues. India can successfully utilize the potential of social innovation by implementing a national systems of innovation approach. This strategy highlights the connections and teamwork among many stakeholders, such as the government, academics, corporations, and civil society organizations. The development and spread of social innovations are facilitated by the enabling environment it generates for knowledge sharing, cooperation, and resource mobilization. The vast prospects for social innovation are presented by India's diversified and dynamic social landscape. The NSI method promotes community participation and the inclusion of marginalized groups while acknowledging the value of context-specific solutions. By empowering communities and enhancing their well-being, this bottom-up strategy makes sure that social innovations are pertinent, inclusive, and durable. Additionally, the NSI approach recognises the importance of legislative interventions and enabling ecosystems in promoting social innovation. India can develop a supportive environment for social innovation by developing policies that encourage social entrepreneurship, reward creativity, and offer financial and technical support. This would not only solve societal issues but also improve India's competitiveness in the international market. In order for India to use social innovation as a catalyst for social transformation and sustainable development, a national systems of innovation oriented strategy is essential. India can unleash the full potential of its thriving social innovation ecosystem, bringing about positive change and bettering the lives of its population, by encouraging collaboration, inclusivity, and policy support.

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