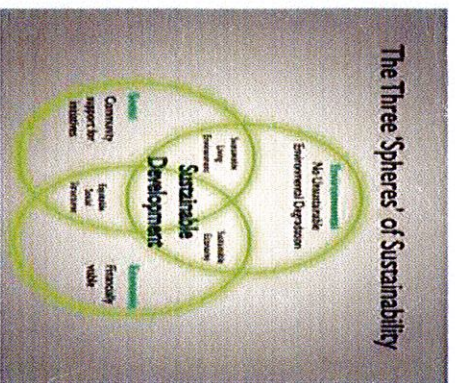


Sustainable Entrepreneurship

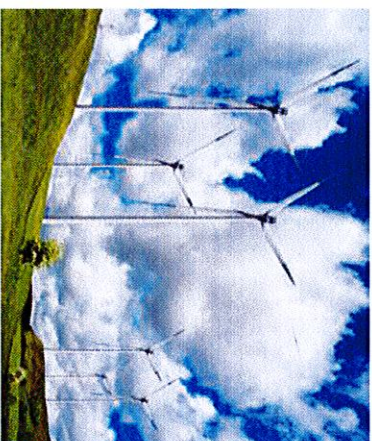


Sustainability has become a multidimensional concept that extends beyond environmental protection to economic development and social equity. It is a way of living that is capable of guaranteeing a continuity of life for all. It is a search for the common good; a way of living in its totality that makes possible the best conditions of life for everyone (without exception or any type of exclusion) at all times. According to (1995) Gladwin Etas there is an assumption that change will come from entrepreneurs introducing sustainable products, processes and services. That will sustain the nature, the sources of life support, communities and the future of our younger generation. Entrepreneur is increasingly being cited as a significant conduct for bringing about a transformation to sustainable products and processes. Therefore sustainable entrepreneurs embody greater consideration to not only transform either sustainable products or processes but also they should create profitable enterprises while achieving specific environmental and socio economic objectives.



According to well-known Indian researchers (2011) Kalam & Singh, sustainability involved along six dimensions namely, economic, technological, social, environmental, value and learning sustainability. Economic Sustainability implies that the financial model of the development tool is sound and robust, and that development tools are tuned to the core competency of the region. Technological Sustainability implies that technology will be the driving force behind the development tool employed. Social sustainability reflects the belief that people are not necessarily customers, and that an enterprise should be a partner in the lives of the people, should work closely with the local community, and facilitate building capacity and living standards. Environmental sustainability, the relatively well known concept of sustainability encompasses in itself issues of reducing emissions; reducing water and soil pollution; protecting biodiversity; preserving natural resources; waste recycling; awareness of ecology in the community; and accountability on environment. Value sustainability implies that development should be accompanied by the creation of a value-based society, thereby helping reduce social conflict. Lastly, sustainability related to learning and adaptability refers to the availability of infrastructure, opportunity and incentives for continuous

learning from each other, facilitating innovations.



Along with all of the above sustainable entrepreneurship is typically associated with the triple bottom line comprising three Ps, namely, people, planet, and profit. 'People' refers to an enterprise's treatment of its workforce; 'planet' refers to the impact of the company on natural resources and the environment; and 'profit' relates not just to the financial returns of the enterprise, but also to the allocation of the financial returns between investments and distribution of the gains. So we can clearly conclude that "Sustainable Entrepreneurship" is a balancing act of strategically managing and orienting environmental and social objectives and considerations, with entity specific financial goals steering the business objective.

The wealth and poverty of developing countries has been linked in modern times to the entrepreneurial nature of their economies. Where it has existed in plenty, entrepreneurship has played an important role in economic growth, innovation, and competitiveness, and it may also play a role over time in poverty alleviation. Due to the available opportunities (opportunities are broader in scope than in developed markets), competitiveness, associated risk, apprenticeship and human resources, government policies (not favorable) and research implications (limited or no research implications) and availability of financial resources, it will make entrepreneurship in developing countries different from rest of the world.

Being a country in the list of third world developing nations, applying sustainable entrepreneurship is the most suitable and the timely decision where it creates the right balance within these environments. It improve the quality of the processes while ensuring the environmental and social impact is limited and minimized. As a developing nation the encouragement of sustainable entrepreneurship will generate productive solutions to most of the social and economic problems that the country facing at the moment. It will provide satisfactory solutions to unemployment problem, deforestation, urbanization, and for conservation of rare and limited resources. Even the economic dimensions are dependent on the individuals, and the business objectives, sustainable entrepreneurship is an entrepreneurial action that targets the sustainability and preservation of the natural environment. Sustainable Entrepreneurship encapsulates an environmental problem and strives to transform a sector towards an environmentally sustainable state by solving the particular environmental goal. This is directly linked to Ecopreneurs efforts to act environmentally friendly with the introduction of 'green' products, processes and services. Sustainable Entrepreneurs aim is to create impact through creating environmental value.



Furthermore the "Sustainable Entrepreneurship" encompasses core societal objectives while creating social impact, solving societal problems and enhancing social wealth. The above fact will refuse to give up, with the objective to exploit new opportunities and to make the world a better place. For a country like Sri Lanka who suffers from poverty and unstable and messy political conditions with huge financial burden for international community, sustainable entrepreneurship embodies the objective to enhance social wealth, with the goal to create profit, and to ensure financial viability to pursue other opportunities that may arise to be exploited outside the realm of the social objective. As a start small and young firms are better at integrating sustainability performance into business objectives than converting bigger and established companies in to sustainable processes. Those companies will take time to implement the changes and get adapted with the sustainable processes. But small new businesses are easy to convert and more profitable to generate gains. It will automatically generate competitive advantages for these small firms and will promise the existence in the commercial world.

Furthermore these practices will restrict the miss use of resources for unnecessary and unprofitable activities. Sustainable entrepreneurship is not a concept where limited to new products and processes, it always blends with people and utilize individuals ability to perform well in their own professions.

It is evident that opportunity recognition for a Sustainable Entrepreneur targets an environmental or social imperfection, which they aim to solve.

Even though the pressure of the concept of sustainability create various types of market failures, opening up opportunities for new entrants which in turn lead to imitations, the such market failures like environmental and social disruptions can be alleviated, deriving from the strong economic policy stream that promotes the resolving of market failures and correcting of negative externalities.

Anyway the successful practice of sustainable entrepreneurship will developed radical technologies and innovative business models which contribute to minimize the environmental degradation and providing significant opportunities for the creation of economic and social benefits under limited and minimized harm with the usage of different sources of available life supports and other resources.

Finally these opportunities will establish the foundations for an emerging model of Sustainable Entrepreneurship, one which enables founders to obtain entrepreneurial rents while simultaneously improving local and global social and environmental conditions.

Dilupa Heenatigala,
Rohan Perera.



Reading Master's
Entrepreneur Department
University of Sri Jayewardenepura.