

From Intention to Actualization: The Transformative Journey of Social Entrepreneurs in the Philippines

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Abstract: Social entrepreneurship has garnered considerable attention from policymakers, academics, and practitioners seeking to solve social, cultural, and environmental challenges. While social entrepreneurial intention reflects an individual's willingness to engage in these activities, converting intentions into actualized, operational ventures remains a persistent challenge. Actualization involves opportunity recognition, resource mobilization, and executing business models capable of delivering simultaneous social and economic value. This research integrates the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Entrepreneurial Event Model (EEM) to provide a nuanced understanding of the drivers, barriers, and strategies within the social enterprise pipeline. Using a mixed-methods design, data were gathered from MSME owners with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects and business graduates in Baguio City, Philippines. The quantitative findings indicate that while composite factors create a positive intention framework, an individual's explicit propensity to act serves as the primary statistically significant predictor of intention. Qualitatively, securing sustainable funding mechanisms emerges as both the fundamental baseline step and the primary operational barrier to venture survival.

Keywords: Social Entrepreneurship; intention; actualization; key factors; behavior; theory of planned behavior; entrepreneurial event model

1. INTRODUCTION

Social entrepreneurship represents a transformative approach to solving systemic market voids through innovative, self-sustaining business solutions. Over the past decade, this field has shifted from peripheral grassroots initiatives to an active point of interest for global and local policy frameworks. The modern ecosystem encompasses diverse structural formats ranging from non-profit institutions to for-profit businesses anchored heavily by a definitive social mission.

In developing economic contexts like the Philippines, social enterprises provide essential mechanisms to alleviate poverty, enhance healthcare access, and promote educational equity. Data from the British Council highlight that the baseline number of social enterprise start-ups in the Philippines has tripled over the past decade, emphasizing a growing cultural and academic pivot toward prosocial commercial frameworks. Concurrently, traditional Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) increasingly align their commercial operations with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, serving as structured vehicles for localized social entrepreneurship.

1.1 Research Gaps and Objectives

Despite accelerating academic interest, a significant gap persists between cognitive intention and market actualization. While many individuals express a strong initial intent to launch social ventures, empirical execution rates regularly falter. Existing literature extensively details isolated components—such as individual motivation or organizational impact frameworks—but often lacks an integrated model explaining the mechanism of transition from thought to action.

This study addresses this gap by combining the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Entrepreneurial Event Model (EEM). Specifically, it evaluates how personal attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control (confidence), and the propensity to act (readiness) collectively shape

intentional states and subsequent venture emergence within the unique socioeconomic landscape of Baguio City.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study systematically evaluates the psychological and situational forces governing social entrepreneurial execution through three main objectives:

SOP 1: What are the key factors that influence social entrepreneurial intentions in terms of attitude, subjective norms, confidence (perceived behavioral control and feasibility), and readiness (propensity to act)?

SOP 2: Is there a significant relationship between social entrepreneurial intention and actualization?

SOP 3: What are the initial steps and planning methods used by enterprise owners to realize the actualization of a social enterprise?

2. THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual architecture of this study integrates two core behavioral models to capture internal psychological states alongside external environmental triggers.

2.1 Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The Theory of Planned Behavior suggests that human behavior is driven directly by behavioral intentions, which are shaped by three separate antecedents

2.1.1 Attitude

A person's favorable or unfavorable cognitive evaluation of a target behavior

2.1.2 Subjective Norms

Perceived social pressures and expectations emanating from core social networks (family, peers, mentors).

2.1.3 Perceived Behavioral Control

The perceived ease or difficulty of executing a behavior,

reflecting an individuals' self-efficacy and control over required resources.

2.2 Entrepreneurial Event Model (EEM)

The Entrepreneurial Event Model complements TPB by focusing on situational elements that prompt entrepreneurial activities. It operates on three primary constructs.

2.2.1 Perceived Desirability

The emotional and value-based appeal of starting a venture.

2.2.2 Perceived Feasibility

The degree to which an individual views venture creation as practically viable based on available resources and training.

2.1.3 Perceived Behavioral Control

The perceived ease or difficulty of executing a behavior, reflecting an individuals' self-efficacy and control over required resources.

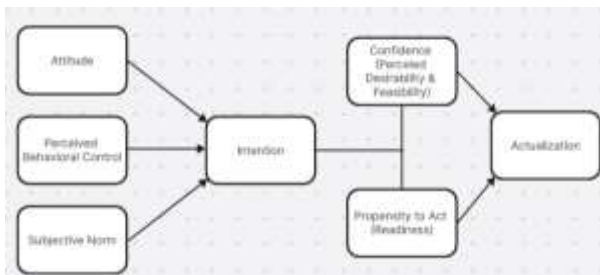


Figure. 1 Integrated TPB-EEM Conceptual Framework

3. DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study utilizes an integrated mixed-methods research design. Quantitative metrics isolate the directional impact and correlations among behavioral antecedents, intentions, and actualization. Qualitative data gathered from open-ended survey sections provide context regarding the operational adjustments, initial steps, and survival barriers encountered during execution.

3.2 Population, Sample, and Locale

The research was conducted in Baguio City, Philippines, a regional hub characterized by a strong local entrepreneurial culture and collaborative governance networks. The respondent group (N = 17) consists of MSME owners managing active CSR programs, alongside BS Entrepreneurship students and recent graduates from the top three higher education institutions in the city. This demographic mix balances nascent intentional profiles with active, operational business managers.

3.3 Demographic Profile of Respondents

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3.4 Data Gathering Tool and Procedure

Primary data were gathered using a self-administered structural survey deployed via Google Forms. The quantitative parameters utilized a standardized 7-point Likert Scale to measure intensity. The instrument was split into three main operational parts

3.4.1 Part I

Respondent demographic profiles.

3.4.2 Part II

Closed-ended psychometric indicators mapping the integrated TPB and EEM variables.

3.4.3 Part III

Qualitative open-ended prompts tracking the initial tactical steps and structural barriers faced by active business operators.

Continuous compliance with research ethics protocols was maintained through verified informed consent forms, explicit guarantees of participant anonymity, and data-handling security measures.

Table 1. Profile of Respondents According to Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	9	52.9%
Female	8	47.1%
Total	17	100%

Table 2. Profile of Respondents According to Educational Attainment

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Middle School	4	23.5%
Bachelor's	12	70.6%
Master's	1	5.9%
Total	17	100%

3.5 Analytical Framework and Scale Interpretation

Data distributions were evaluated for statistical normality prior to running advanced tests. Mean scores generated from the 7-point Likert scale are evaluated using the intervals outlined in Table 3.

Table 2. Interpretation Grid for 7-point Likert Scale

Scale Range	Quantitative Interpretation
1.00 – 1.86	Not influential at all/Strongly Disagree
1.87 – 2.73	Slightly influential/Disagree
2.74 – 3.60	Somewhat influential/Somewhat Disagree
3.61 – 4.47	Moderately influential/Neutral
4.48 – 5.34	Very influential/Somewhat Agree
5.35 – 6.21	Extremely influential/Agree
6.22 – 7.00	Completely influential/Strongly Agree

Quantitative data were processed using descriptive statistics, Ordinary least Squares (OLS) multiple linear regression to analyze the antecedents of intention, and Spearman's Rho (ρ) non-parametric correlation to assess the relationship between intention and actualization.

4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.1 Evaluation of Variables and Antecedents

4.1.1 Attitude Towards Behavior

A high weighted mean of 5.83 indicates that an individual's cognitive attitude is an extremely influential driver. The sample strongly validates the fundamental societal value and strategic viability of the social enterprise framework.

4.1.2 Subjective Norms

While subjective social norms are categorized as very influential (4.86), individual indicators reflect a lower score compared to internal attitude. Academic and professional institutional support mechanisms (mentors and advisors) show the highest relative score within this social block (5.24).

4.1.3 Perceived Behavioral Control

The resource access variable shows the lowest absolute average score (4.71) within this block. This underscores that while respondents report moderate confidence in their skills (5.12) and resilience (5.18), they view actual resource acquisition as a primary structural constraint.

4.1.4 Propensity to Act

The risk-tolerance metric (5.47) emerges as a leading behavioral trait, showing that active risk acceptance is essential to navigate the transition between cognitive motivation and commercial reality.

4.1.5 Propensity to Act

The data shows the explicit commitment levels focused toward social enterprise formulation. The composite weighted mean (4.92) shows a strong, actionable intent across the respondent pool, driven primarily by an individual willingness to expend direct personal effort (5.12).

4.2 Inferential Statistics and Predictive Models

4.2.1 Multiple Linear Regression: Antecedents of Intention

To test the predictive value of the independent behavioral variables on Total Intention (TI), an Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) multiple linear regression was conducted. The independent variables include Total Attitude (TA), Total Subjective Norms (TS), Total Confidence/PBC (TC), and Total Propensity to Act (TP).

The model yields an $R^2 = 0.869$, showing that the four behavioral antecedents explain 86.9% of the variance in social entrepreneurial intentions. The ANOVA results ($F = 19.822$, $p < 0.001$) confirm that the model is statistically significant. The coefficient matrix shows that Total Propensity to Act (TP) is the only unique, statistically significant predictor of social entrepreneurial intention within this framework ($B = 0.809$, $p = 0.006$). Although Attitude, Subjective Norms, and Confidence shape the overall intentional landscape, they do not exert separate, statistically significant effects when controlling for an individual's explicit readiness and propensity to act ($p > 0.05$).

4.2.2 Correlation Analysis: Intention versus Actualization

To evaluate the transition from cognitive state to physical market implementation under observed non-normal data distributions, a non-parametric Spearman's Rho (ρ) correlation was calculated. Intention (TI) was analyzed against two actualization dimensions: Initial Tactical Steps Taken and Experienced Operational Challenges Encountered.

The correlation profile demonstrates a weak, non-significant positive relationship between intent and initial structural steps ($\rho = 0.112$, $p = 0.668$), alongside a weak, non-significant negative relationship between intent and perceived challenges ($\rho = -0.027$, $p = 0.918$). These findings indicate that high intent alone does not automatically result in practical business execution or insulate an entrepreneur from market challenges. This highlights the presence of an "intention-actualization gap." Notably, initial steps and operational challenges share a significant positive correlation ($\rho = 0.493$, $p = 0.044$), showing that active venture creation directly exposes entrepreneurs to structural market challenges.

4.3 Qualitative Synthesis: Initial Steps and Structural Barriers

Qualitative analysis of the open-ended responses from local business operators reveals clear operational patterns regarding venture actualization.

Capital Sourcing as a Foundational Priority: Confirming quantitative indicators, respondents rank securing startup funding and working capital as the primary requirement for business entry.

Resource Attrition and Venture Failures: Operational disruptions stem primarily from cash-flow volatility. Multiple active respondents noted that past social projects or integrated business models had to close due to inadequate financial reserves to sustain social missions alongside regular commercial overhead.

The Double Burden of Social Enterprises: Unlike traditional businesses, social entrepreneurs must generate commercial revenue while funding localized social programs, making financial management doubly complex.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

Antecedents of Intention: Social entrepreneurial intention is driven by positive personal attitudes, strong institutional mentorship, internal confidence, and individual risk-tolerance.

The Primacy of Readiness: Multiple linear regression demonstrates that an individual's explicit propensity to act is the primary driver of intention. Intentions remain abstract until combined with a clear personal willingness to accept risk and take concrete steps.

The Intention-Actualization Gap: Spearman correlation analysis shows that high intentional scores do not significantly correlate with successful project actualization. This gap is caused by sharp structural challenges encountered during the transition from planning to market execution.

Capital Constraints: Qualitative data confirm that resource security—specifically sustainable capital funding—is both the core prerequisite for venture actualization and the primary cause of early-stage venture closure.

5.2 Recommendations

Curriculum Design and Experiential Learning: Higher education institutions should shift entrepreneurship programs from purely theoretical planning to applied, experiential models. Training should focus on practical risk management, resource-constrained execution, and navigated simulations of market challenges to improve students' internal propensity to act.

Targeted Financial Skill Development: Academic modules must integrate specialized training in dual-bottom-line accounting, social impact metrics, cost-benefit balancing, and diversified fundraising (such as blended finance, localized micro-loans, and impact investment capital).

Structural Mentorship Frameworks: Academic centers and local governance bodies should expand structured mentorship

programs. Connecting nascent student innovators with established MSME operators who run successful CSR initiatives can build practical confidence and lower market entry barriers.

Peer Learning Ecosystems: Collaborative networks and peer learning groups should be established across the region. These platforms allow active social entrepreneurs to share best practices, exchange resource strategies, and collaborate on structural challenges to improve long-term venture resilience.

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