

# A systematic literature review on personality traits in social entrepreneurship

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to provide a systematic literature review on personality trait research in social entrepreneurship, clarify the prevailing research categories and research themes, and suggest potential future research directions. The review process follows the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA). A total of 60 publications in the research topic from Web of Science and Scopus were analyzed. This study identifies four main categories in studies of personality traits in social entrepreneurship: ‘comparison of personality traits,’ ‘description of personality traits of social entrepreneurs,’ ‘personality traits and social entrepreneurial intention,’ and ‘personality traits and other factors.’ In addition, the themes in each category are also determined and several research gaps deserving of future investigation are recognized. Policymakers and educators gain a deeper understanding of personality traits in social entrepreneurship to have policies that trigger a change in social entrepreneurship education by cultivating personality traits towards sustainable development. This study classifies publications related to personality traits in social entrepreneurship and provides a guide for researchers by providing a systematic understanding of the research structure in this topic.

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## 1. Introduction

The term ‘personality’ is often used inconsistently in the extant literature and has been associated with motives, values, traits, skills, and even socio-demographic indicators. Social entrepreneurship has increasingly received attention from the academic community over the past two decades (Cohen, Kaspi-Baruch, & Katz, 2019). It is a business form that combines social vision with creativity to address social challenges in new ways and alleviate government budget tensions (Mair, Battilana, & Cardenas, 2012; Stephan & Drencheva, 2017). Social entrepreneurs are ethical, passionate individuals who introduce new approaches to solving social issues (Alvord, Brown, & Letts, 2004). Martin and Osberg (2007) argue that social entrepreneurs aim to benefit society by targeting underserved, neglected, or highly disadvantaged populations. Entrepreneurship activity can be interpreted as a result of personal and situational factors (Naffziger, Hornsby, & Kuratko, 1994). Personality is one of the key personal factors that drive an individual to become an entrepreneur in general, and social entrepreneurs in particular (İrengün & Arıkboğa, 2015). The term ‘personality’ is related to four aspects: motives, values, traits, and skills (Stephan & Drencheva, 2017). Among these four aspects, personality traits have attracted the most attention from scholars (Stephan & Drencheva, 2017); thus, in this study, the

authors only focus on personality traits in social entrepreneurship.

Personality traits are considered to be a reflection of factors affecting emotions, thoughts, and behaviors (Nga & Shamuganathan, 2010). Personality traits have been frequently used in explaining the behavior of social entrepreneurs (Llewellyn & Wilson, 2003; Nga & Shamuganathan, 2010). The past decade witnessed a significant increase in studies of social entrepreneurship in general and studies of personality traits in social entrepreneurship (Phan, Le, & Pham, 2019). These studies not only examine general entrepreneurial traits but also explore the social entrepreneurial traits of social entrepreneurs. In addition, the role of personality traits in relation to the social entrepreneurship aspects is also examined. The study of personality traits in social entrepreneurship has so far been dispersed and considered by some scholars to be an appropriate field providing an important perspective on why some individuals decide to become social entrepreneurs. However, the various types of personality traits and their relative roles in social entrepreneurship have remained controversial and underexplored. Firstly, most studies of personality traits in social entrepreneurship are inherited from the personality of general entrepreneurship. Therefore there may be a risk of stagnation and lack of rigor in studies of personality traits in the context of social entrepreneurship. Moreover, the few existing studies on the specific personality traits of social entrepreneurs are scattershot. They seem to be lacking interest and research orientation from the academic community due to the general perception of social entrepreneurship as a niche or narrow area pertaining solely to social entrepreneurship (Stephan & Drencheva, 2017). These restrictions may lead to the tendency of every study to either start from scratch or repeat the focus of previous works. A systematic literature review can provide knowledge of the main categories in a research field and current research gaps that need to be explored in the future (Phan et al., 2019). This study focuses on personality traits studies in social entrepreneurship to provide what we know and do not know about personality traits in social entrepreneurship, and the authors categorize studies into categories to encourage future research directions. This paper examines the extant literature regarding personality traits in social entrepreneurship on Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus, identifying the research categories within the literature. Next, research themes in each of these categories are identified and carefully reviewed. Finally, the authors suggest potential future research directions. This paper is structured as follows. The first section introduces the concepts of social entrepreneurship, the social entrepreneur, and personality traits. The second section describes research design and methodology. The next section delineates the analysis results that are followed by providing discussions of the findings and recommendations for future research. The last section presents the conclusion and limitations.

## **2. Literature review**

### ***2.1. The concept of social entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurs***

Several scholars have synthesized critical research and create different concepts to capture their critical potential to provide some direction for applying critical research to advance understanding of social entrepreneurship. The typology presented entails myth-busting, the critique of power-effects, normative critique, and the critique of transgression. While the meaning of social entrepreneurship varies, it is often thought to alleviate social problems, catalyze social transformation or make ordinary businesses more socially responsible (Mair & Marti, 2006). Social entrepreneurship is an exciting field attracting many scholars with high levels of motivation and passion (Ghalwash, Tolba, & Ismail, 2017; Phan et al., 2019). There have been many attempts to define social entrepreneurship in the literature. Yet, due to the relative novelty of this field of research, the definitions of social entrepreneurship are diverse and

controversial (Germak & Robinson, 2014). Leadbeater (1997) defines social entrepreneurship as reinvestment of profits from business activities into social goals. According to Mair and Marti (2006), social entrepreneurship is a process of identifying business opportunities and pursuing them with innovative methods to solve social problems. According to Dacin, Dacin, and Matear (2010), social entrepreneurship ‘focuses on the social value creation mission and outcomes ... of undertakings aimed at creating social value.’ Besides, other definitions focus on social change and innovation in solving social problems (Dees & Anderson, 2003; Kong, 2010), or the effects of socializing goals on individual profits (Martin & Osberg, 2007; Peredo & McLean, 2006). Overall, social entrepreneurship definitions focus on social values, innovation, community development, and social sustainability. The main difference between entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship lies in its motivation and goals (Roy, Brumagim, & Goll, 2014). Although entrepreneurship can still have a positive social effect, social entrepreneurship emphasizes social values beyond economic values (Zahra, Gedajlovic, Neubaum, & Shulman, 2009). Social entrepreneurship can be non-profit or profitable; regardless, a social mission is their main purpose (Martin & Osberg, 2007; Weerawardena & Mort, 2006). Social entrepreneurs are described as social heroes who use their talents and business skills to change society (Boluk & Mottiar, 2014). Similarly, İrengün and Arikboğa (2015) characterize social entrepreneurs as creative individuals who conduct creative business activities with ethical values to solve basic social problems. In addition, social entrepreneurs can identify opportunities and solve social problems with innovative methods while accepting risks and creating social values (Roy et al., 2014). The basic difference between a commercial entrepreneur and a social entrepreneur is reflected in their business vision. While commercial entrepreneurs focus on profits from business activities, social entrepreneurs aim to bring benefits to some underrepresented social segments.

The fundamental difference between profit-oriented and social entrepreneurs is reflected in their company vision (Dees, 1998). According to Zahra et al. (2009) and Bargsted, Picon, Salazar, and Rojas (2013), there are three types of social entrepreneurs:

- Social bricoleur: These entrepreneurs focus on addressing local small-scale social needs;
- Social constructionist: These entrepreneurs exploit opportunities and address market failures by filling the gaps for unresponsive social issues, thus helping to reform and improve the social system.

Social engineers: They discover systematic issues of social structure to bring about revolutionary solutions.

## ***2.2. The concept of personality traits***

Research on the personality traits of entrepreneurs took place in the mid-20th century. These studies involve areas such as economics, psychology, and sociology to sketch entrepreneurs, learn about motivation and personality traits that define them. The early years of the 21st century witnessed a significant increase in interest in entrepreneurship, the subject of entrepreneurial character has strongly revived, intending to contribute to entrepreneurship education policies. In recent years, scholars have begun to pay more attention to the characteristics of social entrepreneurs because of the differences in motivation between commercial and social entrepreneurs.

Personality traits are structures that explain the regularity of people’s behaviours, and explain why different people react differently to the same situation (Cooper, 1998). Personality traits can be defined as integrated characteristics that determine the reasons for emotions,

awareness, and behaviours (Nga & Shamuganathan, 2010). Personality traits are innate or nurturing characteristics that affect an individual ability, motivation, attitude, and temperament (Brandstätter, 2011). While the natural view is that an individual's personality traits are influenced by heredity, the nurturing perspective suggests that childhood environment, education, and experience will reinforce new and emergent personalities. Therefore, personality traits are conceived as a stable average state, partially deliberate and partially adapted subconsciously. Personality traits can predict and explain the behaviour of an individual, as well as behavioural differences among individuals (Llewellyn & Wilson, 2003). These personality traits form a tendency to act in a certain way and can be interpreted as an action trend (Rauch & Frese, 2007). Herrmann (1991) describes a personality trait as follows: "for each person a unique, relatively stable behavioural correlate which endures over time." Based on this approach, personality traits drive actions and, therefore, affect entrepreneurial behavior as a form of action.

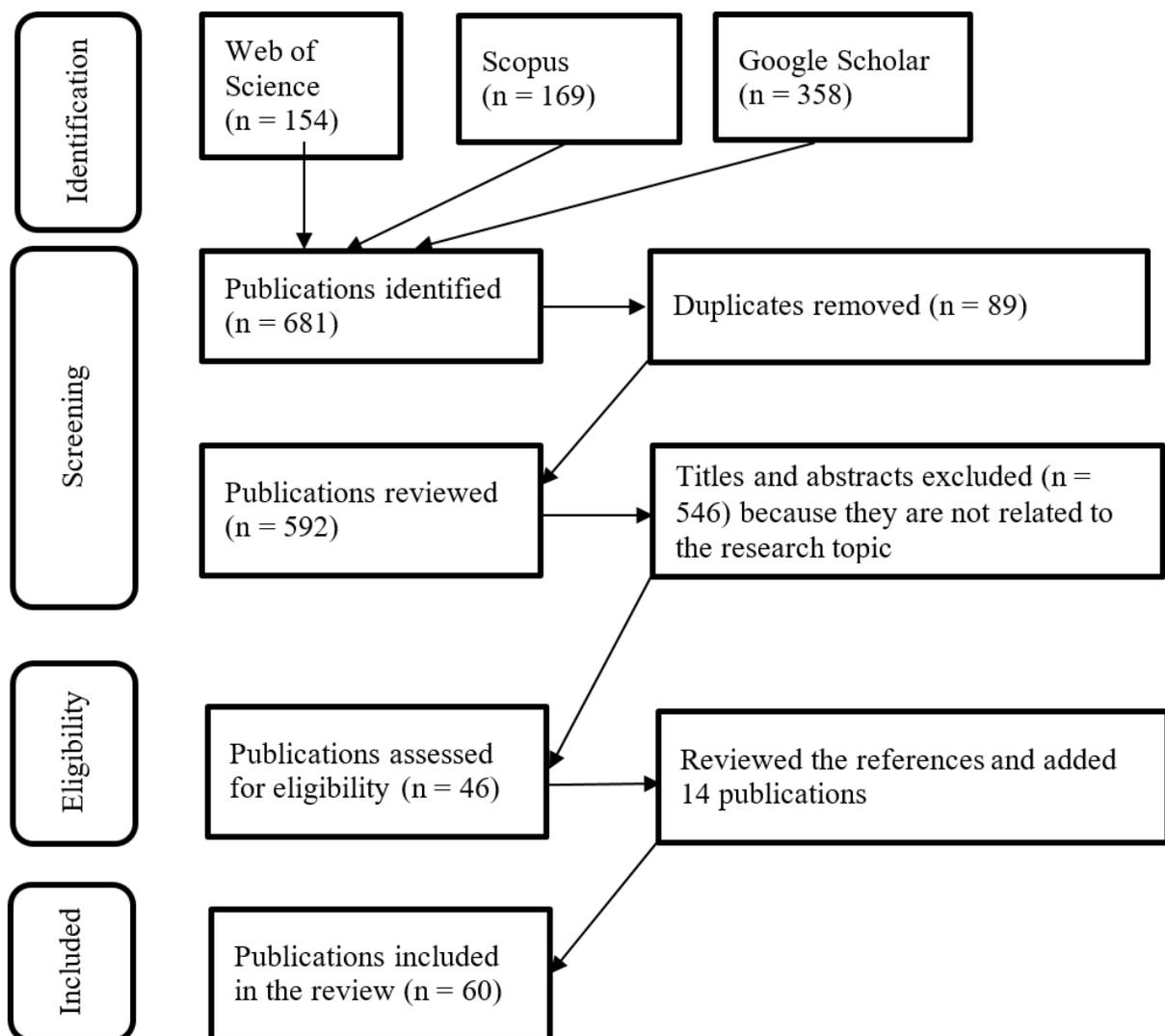
Some discrete traits are considered as explanations for entrepreneurial behavior in general and social entrepreneurship behaviour, such as risk propensity (Chipeta & Surujlal, 2017), locus of control (Schjoedt & Shaver, 2012) and self-efficacy (Tiwari, Bhat, & Tikoria, 2017b). More recently, personality traits such as narcissism (Campbell & Miller, 2011; M. M. Smith et al., 2016), the desire for autonomy (Van Gelderen & Jansen, 2006), alertness, perseverance, creativity, pro-activity, and emotional intelligence (Van Gelderen et al., 2008; Zampetakis, Kafetsios, Bouranta, Dewett, & Moustakis, 2009) have begun to receive the interest of the entrepreneurial academic community.

A prominent personality model is the Big Five model (Costa & McCrae, 1992), which provides a way of characterizing general traits including neuroticism, openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, and agreeableness (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Openness is related to social issues and the willingness to adopt new methods to create social values (Berings, De Fruyt, & Bouwen, 2004; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). In addition, openness also involves social vision, innovation, and social leadership (İrengün & Arikboğa, 2015; Judge & Bono, 2000). Extraversion has been found to be related to social entrepreneurship, sustainable vision, and the ability to apply financial perspectives in the context of social services. Conscientiousness is described as compassion, trust, and humility. Nga and Shamuganathan (2010) claim that conscientiousness is related to five aspects of social entrepreneurship. Neuroticism expresses individual emotional stability (Llewellyn & Wilson, 2003; Nga & Shamuganathan, 2010). Individuals with too many negative emotions such as anger, sadness, and anxiety are more likely to lack confidence in starting a social business (Zhao & Seibert, 2006). Conscientiousness involves meticulousness, perseverance, hard work, and maintaining high performance to achieve social goals (Barrick & Mount, 1993; Nga & Shamuganathan, 2010). However, some criticisms of the Big Five model are the overly common nature of personality traits, so it is impossible to predict the specific behaviors of entrepreneurs in general and social entrepreneurs in particular. The limitations of the Big Five model have motivated researchers to explore specific personality traits to combine into a multidimensional personality framework such as self-efficacy, creativity, risk-taking, locus of control, and achievement autonomy. Recently, some specific social entrepreneurial traits have begun to receive the attention of the academic community. Several specific traits which have been identified include empathy, moral obligation, and social entrepreneurial self-efficacy, creativity, humility, and social responsibility (Chipeta & Surujlal, 2017; Kedmenec, Rebernik, & Perić, 2015; Politis, Ketikidis, Diamantidis, & Lazuras, 2016; Prieto, 2011). These traits are considered to be typical for social entrepreneurs, as they help social entrepreneurs maintain their motivation levels and commitment to creating social values while encouraging individuals to participate in social business activities (Stephan & Drencheva, 2017).

### 3. Methodology

A systematic literature review is performed to synthesize and classify knowledge, identify main categories and themes, as well as suggest future research directions (Xia, Zou, Griffin, Wang, & Zhong, 2018). This review process follows the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) (Figure 1).

The search was limited to publications in peer-reviewed journals, conferences, and books published in English, with publication dates between 1<sup>st</sup> January 1900 and 15<sup>th</sup> August 2018. The phrase “social entrep\*” and “personality” or “social entrep\*” and “trait” or “social entrep\*” and “characteristic” were searched in the topic field in the Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus. A total of 323 publications were found: 169 publications from the Scopus database and 154 publications from the WoS database.



**Figure 1.** PRISMA flowchart for systematic literature review

Source: The authors

The authors carefully reviewed the titles and abstracts to remove duplicate publications. This process eliminated 24 publications. After the main text of the 299 remaining publications was thoroughly examined, another 239 publications were removed because they were not related to the research topic. The process initially yielded only 60 publications. As a result, a total of 60

publications were established for content analysis in this literature review. Publications are categorized independently by authors into subject groups based on issues related to personality traits that have been addressed. At the coding step, each author highlights the sentences or sections that describe the publication's content. Based on the coding results, the authors combine several codes into a single theme. Several themes were then combined into a single category. The authors then conducted discussions to form a consensus on the classification of these articles. In the case of articles related to topics belonging to two or more categories, a decision has been made to classify the articles with most supporters. The authors carefully read the publications in each of these categories to identify the main content and named each category.

#### 4. Results

The content analysis resulted in four categories: 'comparison of personality traits between social entrepreneurs and commercial entrepreneurs,' 'description of personality traits of social entrepreneurs,' 'personality traits and social entrepreneurial intention,' 'personality traits and gender,' and 'personality traits and other factors' (see Table 1).

**Table 1**

Categories and themes in personality traits research in social entrepreneurship

Categories	Themes
Category 1: Comparison of personality traits (11 publications)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The comparison between social entrepreneurs and commercial entrepreneurs through the Big Five personality traits (03 publications)</li> <li>- A comparison of general entrepreneurial traits between social entrepreneurs and others in society (08 publications)</li> </ul>
Category 2: Description of personality traits of social entrepreneurs (15 publications)	
Category 3: Personality traits and social entrepreneurial intention (21 publications)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Big Five personality model and social entrepreneurial intention (06 publications)</li> <li>- Specific personality traits and social entrepreneurial intention (15 publications)</li> </ul>
Category 4: Personality traits and other factors (13 publications)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Personality traits and success factors (08 publications)</li> <li>- Personality traits and motivation (01 publication)</li> <li>- Personality traits and gender (01 publication)</li> <li>- Others (03 publications): recognizing social entrepreneurship support, performance, social entrepreneurial process</li> </ul>

Source: The authors

##### **4.1. Category 1: Comparison of personality traits (11 publications)**

The authors found two themes within this category, namely ‘a comparison between social entrepreneurs and commercial entrepreneurs through the Big Five personality traits’ and ‘a comparison of general entrepreneurial traits between social entrepreneurs and others in society’.

*The comparison between social entrepreneurs and commercial entrepreneurs through the Big Five personality traits (03 publications).* Three studies explore the difference between social entrepreneurs and commercial entrepreneurs through the Big Five personality traits (i.e., neuroticism, openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, and agreeableness). According to Van Ryzin, Grossman, DiPadova-Stocks, and Bergrud (2009), social entrepreneurs show a higher level of extraversion than general population samples. In particular, they are more interested in political and social issues. Similarly, Cohen et al. (2019) conducted research to compare the personality traits of social and commercial entrepreneurs in Israel. The results show that social entrepreneurs score higher in extraversion and openness to experience. In contrast, Lukes and Stephan (2012) did not find a difference in the Big Five personality traits between commercial and social entrepreneurs. This difference stems from the overly common nature of personality traits in the Big Five, so it is impossible to clearly predict the role of social entrepreneurs' personality traits.

*A comparison of general entrepreneurial traits between social entrepreneurs and others in society (08 publications).* Five studies focus on the comparison of entrepreneurial traits between social entrepreneurs and others in society such as volunteers, philanthropists, commercial entrepreneurs, social activists, and social workers (Bargsted et al., 2013; Dacin et al., 2010; Praszkie, Nowak, & Zablocka-Bursa, 2009; Seiz & Schwab, 1992; Shaw & Carter, 2007). These studies show that social entrepreneurs have some common traits with commercial entrepreneurs, such as self-efficacy, persistence, risk tendency, and autonomy/career anchor, locus of control, values, and types of empathetic emotions and optimism. Both social and commercial entrepreneurs require creativity and innovation; however, in a social context, those of the former are manifested in applying new solutions to social issues. More comprehensively, social entrepreneurs have lower levels of internal locus of control and entrepreneurial self-efficacy than those of commercial entrepreneurs (Bacq, Hartog, & Hoogendoorn, 2016; Diaz, 2003). In addition, social entrepreneurs have a higher level of risk tolerance and creativity than commercial entrepreneurs (R. Smith, Bell, & Watts, 2014).

#### ***4.2. Category 2: Description of personality traits of social entrepreneurs (15 publications)***

Under this category, publications deploy different methods to describe potential social entrepreneurs or social entrepreneurs. Jilinskaya-Pandey and Wade (2019) developed a Social Entrepreneur Quotient (SEQ) scale to identify individuals with high potential to become social entrepreneurs. They determined that social entrepreneurs have personality traits including achievement autonomy, creativity, ethics, openness, and risk-taking. Barendsen and Gardner (2004) describe social entrepreneurs with diverse personality traits, including being energetic, persistent, confident, independent, and pragmatic. Similarly, Lumpkin, Moss, Gras, Kato, and Amezcua (2013) also assume that the dimensions of social entrepreneurial orientation include innovativeness, proactiveness, risk-taking, competitive aggressiveness, and autonomy. More comprehensively, Sullivan Mort, Weerawardena, and Carnegie (2003) conceptualize social entrepreneurship as multidimensional constructs in which key personality attributes include innovativeness, proactiveness and risk-taking. In addition, some other personality traits such as emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, resilience, and determination are mentioned (Akar & Ustuner, 2017; Sengupta, Sahay, & Croce, 2018). Several other traits have been mentioned in the

description of personality traits of social entrepreneurs such as social responsibility (Yu & Wang, 2019), fear of failure, socialization (Martínez, Bañón, & Laviada, 2019), compassion (Arend, 2013), passion for realizing their vision, and strong ethical fiber (Drayton, 2002; Mair & Marti, 2006), four dimensions of humility (Pate & Wankel, 2014), altruism (Tan, Williams, & Tan, 2005), integrity (Achleitner, Lutz, Mayer, & Spiess-Knafl, 2013), and pro-social orientation (Rahman & Pihie, 2014).

#### **4.3. Category 3: Personality traits and social entrepreneurial intention (21 publications)**

The majority of studies regarding personality traits in social entrepreneurship belong to this category. Moreover, studies about personality traits in this category help explain the formation of social entrepreneurial intention. In this category, the two themes of ‘the Big Five personality model and social entrepreneurial intention’ and ‘specific personality traits and social entrepreneurial intention’ are identified.

*The Big Five personality model and social entrepreneurial intention (06 publications).* Ip, Wu, Liu, and Liang (2018) and Hsu and Wang (2018) tested the direct impact of conscientiousness, neuroticism, agreeableness, extraversion, and openness on social entrepreneurial intention. In order to better understand the impact of personality traits on social entrepreneurship, Nga and Shamuganathan (2010), İrengün and Arikboğa (2015) and Preethi and Priyadarshini (2018) conducted studies examining the impact of the Big Five on five dimensions of intention towards social entrepreneurship: social vision, sustainability, social networking, innovativeness, and financial returns. Finally, Tran and Von Korflesch (2016) also proposed a conceptual model of social entrepreneurial intention, in which the Big Five personality traits affect social entrepreneurial intention through social entrepreneurial outcome expectations and social entrepreneurial self-efficacy.

*Specific personality traits and social entrepreneurial intention (15 publications).* Another set of studies investigated the relationship between entrepreneurial traits and the intention to start a social business. These studies affirmed that most of these entrepreneurial personality traits are also linked to social entrepreneurial intention. Such personality traits include creativity, proactivity, and risk-taking propensity (Chipeta & Surujlal, 2017; Kedmenec et al., 2015; Politis et al., 2016; Prieto, 2011), self-efficacy, and emotional intelligence (Tiwari, Bhat, & Tikoria, 2017c). Three social entrepreneurial traits have received the most attention in social entrepreneurship: empathy, moral obligation, and social entrepreneurial self-efficacy. These personality traits are considered to be closely related to the intention of starting a social business (Ayob, Yap, Sapuan, & Rashidd, 2013; Bacq & Alt, 2018; Hockerts, 2015; Hockerts, 2017; Lacap, Mulyaningsih, & Ramadani, 2018; Mendoza & Lacap, 2015; Yu & Wang, 2019). In addition, three studies simultaneously examined the impacts of entrepreneurial traits (i.e., risk-taking propensity, innovativeness, need for achievement, need for independence, proactiveness, self-efficacy, creativity, entrepreneurial mindset, compassion) and social entrepreneurial traits (i.e., empathy, sense of social responsibility, moral obligation, humanitarian aspects, and perseverance) on social entrepreneurial intention (Ernst, 2011; Ip, Liang, Wu, Law, & Liu, 2018; Tiwari, Bhat, & Tikoria, 2017a).

#### **4.4. Category 4: Personality traits and other factors (13 publications)**

Studies in this category focus on the relationship between personality traits and other factors that affect social entrepreneurship, such as success factors, motivation, gender, social entrepreneurship support, and the social entrepreneurial process.

*Personality traits and success factors (08 publications).* Eight studies focus on critical

success factors in social entrepreneurship or social enterprises. These studies reveal that the core traits for success include innovativeness and leadership (Alvord et al., 2004; Satar & John, 2019; Satar & John, 2016), creativity (Barrett, Balloun, & Weinstein, 2005; Roy et al., 2014), innovation, proactiveness, risk-taking and self-efficacy (Christie & Honig, 2006; Douglas & Prentice, 2019; Nsereko, Balunywa, Munene, Orobia, & Muhammed, 2018).

*Personality traits and motivation (01 publication).* Ghalwash et al. (2017) explore the personality traits and backgrounds of social entrepreneurs, particularly in relation to the motivation to undertake social ventures. Personality traits that motivate the establishment of social enterprises include an entrepreneurial mindset, innovation, compassion, humanitarian aspects, risk-taking, and perseverance.

*Personality traits and gender (01 publication).* Bernardino, Santos, and Ribeiro (2018) used the Big Five personality traits to explain gender differences in establishing social enterprises. The results show that female social entrepreneurs have higher agreeableness levels than male social entrepreneurs, and there are no differences among the remaining personalities.

*Others (03 publications).* The Big Five model is also employed to understand the role of personality traits in recognizing social entrepreneurship support (Wood, 2012), performance (Liang, Peng, Yao, & Liang, 2015), and the social entrepreneurial process (Lam-Lam, Ahumada-Tello, Plascencia-López, & Perusquia-Velasco, 2018).

## **5. General discussion and future research directions**

Regarding the use of the Big Five model in Category 1 and list 2, the Big Five model only shows the high or low level of the five personality traits (neuroticism, openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, and agreeableness) when contrasting commercial and social entrepreneurs. Most social entrepreneurs often have higher levels of extraversion and openness to experience than commercial entrepreneurs (Cohen et al., 2019; Van Ryzin et al., 2009). Because the Big Five model uses five universal personality traits, it seems to be ineffective in highlighting the specific personality traits of social entrepreneurs. In addition, the personality traits can be very diverse; as such, simply using the Big Five model because of its wide acceptance by different scholars has led to overlooking specific personality traits such as innovativeness, stress tolerance, and compassion (Ip, Wu, et al., 2018). Personality traits in general, and the Big Five in particular, are greatly influenced by cultural and demographic factors. Therefore, further research can examine the impact of the Big Five in different cultures as well as the interaction between personality traits, culture, and demographic factors in the process of forming social entrepreneurial intention and behavior. In addition, according to Ashton and Lee (2007), a latent personality trait nonetheless exists: one represented by the loyalty, modesty, honesty, and sincerity of an individual, a trait best defined as honesty-humility. When this sixth trait is added, the Big Five model is re-imagined as HEXACO (Ashton & Lee, 2007). Thus, there is adequate room to study the HEXACO model in the context of social entrepreneurship.

Regarding Category 2 (description of personality traits of social entrepreneurs) and Category 3 (personality traits and social entrepreneurial intention), these studies show that social entrepreneurs seem to share many personality traits with commercial entrepreneurs, including risk-taking, self-efficacy, internal control, and proactivity. The authors suggest that some other entrepreneurial personality traits such as competitiveness, narcissism, and emotional intelligence should also be examined in relation to social entrepreneurship. Competitiveness reflects an individual's desire to win and perform better than others (Fuller, Liu, Bajaba, Marler, & Pratt,

2018). Individuals with high competitiveness often have the ability to improvise and create solutions to solve problems (Neneh, 2019). Entrepreneurs and narcissists share many characteristics in the Big Five model (Brandstätter, 2011). Many studies have linked high-risk behaviors to narcissism (Foster, Shenese, & Goff, 2009; Lakey, Rose, Campbell, & Goodie, 2008). This may be related to the fact that narcissists focus on success and achievement, and are not afraid of failure (Elliot & Thrash, 2001), so narcissism can also be perceived as an important personality trait of entrepreneurs in general and social entrepreneurs in particular. Emotional intelligence refers to the ability of individuals to manage their emotions wisely (Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham, 2010). Although there is an increasing interest in emotional intelligence from both academics and practitioners (O'Boyle, Humphrey, Pollack, Hawver, & Story, 2011); surprisingly, there exists little research on emotional intelligence in the extant literature on entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship (Ahmetoglu, Leutner, & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2011).

The findings from the studies that focus on the comparison of personality traits in Category 1 and Category 2 reveal that social entrepreneurs share similar pro-social behaviour with social workers, volunteers and philanthropists (Bargsted et al., 2013). Thus, further investigation is needed on the intention to become social entrepreneurs of these three social-oriented professions. In addition, for Category 3, empathy, moral responsibility and social entrepreneurial self-efficacy are the most frequently researched traits in the empirical studies. Other mentioned traits include social responsibility, fear of failure, socialization, compassion, passion for realizing their vision, ethical fiber, humility, altruism, integrity, and pro-social orientation, all with the potential to become fruitful avenues for research in the future. In addition, most studies focus on the social entrepreneurial traits of social entrepreneurs without considering their context. Future research can explore the phenomenon more systematically to realize how the environment interacts with social entrepreneurial traits to promote social entrepreneurship. Process research approaches should be applied to monitor the development of individual social entrepreneurial traits and connect it to events taking place. Life history research may also be used to investigate the genesis of social entrepreneurial trait formation. In addition, more research is needed to explore other social entrepreneurial traits. One of the approaches that can help illuminate the study of social entrepreneurial traits is looking at pro-social personality traits. Individual differences in the sense of empathy and social responsibility are often regarded as the core of 'pro-social personality' (Penner, Dovidio, Piliavin, & Schroeder, 2005; Preston & De Waal, 2002). As introduced by Penner, Fritzsche, Craiger, and Freifeld (1995), the pro-social personality traits are widely used in social activities and volunteering research. Social entrepreneurship is also a social-oriented activity; the impact of pro-social traits on social entrepreneurs may be more complex than for volunteers and social activists. Thus, it is necessary to discover the pro-social traits of social entrepreneurs in subsequent studies.

In Category 4, studies of personality traits in social entrepreneurship focus on various aspects such as success in social entrepreneurship (Alvord et al., 2004; Satar & John, 2019; Satar & John, 2016), social entrepreneurial ventures (Wood, 2012), performance (Liang et al., 2015) and the social entrepreneurial process (Lam-Lam et al., 2018). More discussions are needed on the role of personality traits in modifying other aspects of social entrepreneurship such as operationalization of social entrepreneurship, social innovation, market orientation, progressive competition, and strategic choices.

The overall content analysis reveals that social entrepreneurial intention is the most widely studied outcome of personality traits across all four categories. Moreover, the five components of the intention to start a social business - social vision, sustainability, social

networking, innovativeness, and financial returns - also receive considerable attention from academics (İrengün & Arıkboğa, 2015; Nga & Shamuganathan, 2010; Preethi & Priyadarshini, 2018). More studies should focus on the interactive effects of traits and other factors such as experience and education and how these factors affect social entrepreneurial intention. In addition, the mechanism detailing the move from intention to behavior is one of the most challenging in studies of the intention to start a social business. Therefore, longitudinal design can be a useful approach to examine the relationship between personality traits to not only social entrepreneurial intention but also social entrepreneurship behavior.

Emerging research highlights the changing personality of an individual (Li, Fay, Frese, Harms, & Gao, 2014). These studies suggest investigating the mechanism that changes personality traits in social entrepreneurship. Studies that determine which aspects of personality traits may change in the process of becoming social entrepreneurs are also highly recommended. In addition, existing studies examine the positive impact of personality traits on social entrepreneurship; however, is there any negative impact or 'dark side' of personality traits that inhibit social entrepreneurship? There is ample room to study the potential negative impacts that personality traits may bring to social entrepreneurship.

Finally, regarding methodological issues, it would be interesting to test the roles of personality traits in social entrepreneurship by various methods such as the multi-method and experimental methods. Most existing studies of personality traits in social entrepreneurship are quantitative studies (Ip, Wu, et al., 2018; Nga & Shamuganathan, 2010; Van Ryzin et al., 2009) which may lack depth in explaining the effects of personality traits on social entrepreneurs. In the future, more qualitative research should be done to supplement and deepen the understanding of the personality traits of social entrepreneurs. In addition, using extensive data such as GEM (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor) data can become useful in comparing differences between social entrepreneurs and commercial entrepreneurs. The development and testing of GEM measurements can also help develop a valid method and can be employed to determine who can and who cannot be a social entrepreneur (Van Ryzin et al., 2009).

## **6. Conclusion**

This study classifies publications related to personality traits in social entrepreneurship and provides a guide for researchers by providing a systematic understanding of the research structure in this topic. Based on 60 research publications related to personality traits in social entrepreneurship, four categories are identified, including 'comparison of personality traits,' 'description of personality traits of social entrepreneurs,' 'personality traits and social entrepreneurial intention,' and 'personality traits and other factors.' The scrutiny of each catalog has identified the basis for some new research directions. First, there is adequate room to study the HEXACO model in the context of social entrepreneurship. Secondly, some personality traits such as competitiveness, narcissism, and emotional intelligence, social responsibility, fear of failure, socialization, compassion, passion to realize their vision, ethical fiber, humility, altruism, integrity, and pro-social orientation, all with the potential to become fruitful avenues for research in the future. Third, more research is needed to explore other social entrepreneurial traits. Process research approaches should be applied to monitor the development of individual social entrepreneurial traits and connect them to events taking place. Fourth, more discussions are needed on the role of personality traits in modifying other aspects of social entrepreneurship such as operationalization of social entrepreneurship, social innovation, market orientation, progressive competition, and strategic choices. Finally, there is room to study the 'dark side' of personality traits to social entrepreneurship. This study has major implications for all kinds of

practitioners. Policymakers and educators gain a deeper understanding of personality traits in social entrepreneurship to have policies that trigger a change in social entrepreneurship education by cultivating personality traits towards sustainable development. In addition, policymakers can rely on social characteristics to find individuals who are really dedicated and determined to pursue the establishment of social enterprises. The social personality traits scale can be helpful to find and help potential social entrepreneurs. Educators can develop strategies to develop social personality traits for children by engaging in social issues or participating in social activities to foster entrepreneurship to nurture social entrepreneurship and gradually change society's perception of starting a social business. Through suggestions for future research, scholars have research directions intending to contribute greater insight into personality traits within social entrepreneurship. A limited number of publications regarding the personality traits of social entrepreneurs are included in this systematic literature review. Thus, when more research becomes available, a repeated, systematic review paper would help confirm the current analysis and categorization. This is a systematic qualitative review; a quantitative literature review (i.e., meta-analysis) can help identify the specific importance of each personality trait. Finally, future research may use advanced methods such as co-citation analysis and co-word analysis better to explore patterns and trends in this research field.

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