



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

Adapting The Business Model Canvas For Social Enterprises: Insights Into Applicability, Challenges, And Opportunities

Dr. Freeda Maria Swarna M.

Director, Dharthi NGO, Bangalore, India

(<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9649-090X>)

Dr. Athula C. Gnanapala

Professor in Tourism Management, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka

(<https://www.orcid.org/0000-0001-8066-7822>)

Dr. Shaheed Khan¹

Head, Research and Training, Dharthi NGO, Bangalore, India

(<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5920-6703>)

Abstract

Business models and frameworks play a dynamic role in the corporate world, where billions of dollars are invested with the aim of maximizing income, revenue, and return on investment (ROI). Traditionally, these models have been crucial tools for strategizing growth and achieving organizational success. However, there exists another equally vital dimension of the business landscape: the social sector, encompassing social enterprises and self-help groups (SHGs), which operate outside the scale and visibility of Fortune 500 companies and major conglomerates.

Social enterprises, much like their corporate counterparts, are driven by clear visions, missions, goals, and objectives, all aligned toward achieving key result areas (KRAs). In emerging economies like India, the concept of a Social Stock Exchange (SSE) has gained prominence, highlighting the need to recognize and adapt business models traditionally designed for corporate environments to fit the unique realities of the social sector. These models not only support subsistence marketplaces but also aim to maximize benefits for all stakeholders involved.

This paper focuses on the applicability of the Business Model Canvas (BMC), a tool originally developed for corporate strategy, to the context of social enterprises (SE). Specifically, it explores how BMC can be effectively adapted to self-help groups (SHGs) engaged in ecotourism activities in India. The study assesses whether the robust framework of the BMC, proven in the corporate world, can support the growth, sustainability, and impact of initiatives in the social sector. The insights gathered aim to offer a foundation for applying the BMC to other areas within the broader social enterprise landscape.

¹ Corresponding author: shaheeddharthi@gmail.com

Keywords: Business Models, Business Model Canvas (BMC), Ecotourism, Frameworks, Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Social Enterprises, Social Sector.

1. Background of the Study

In today's dynamic economic landscape, the concept of business models has become pivotal across sectors. One of the most influential tools developed for business model innovation is the Business Model Canvas (BMC), introduced by Osterwalder and Pigneur (2010). The BMC provides a strategic framework that helps organizations to systematically understand, design, and innovate their business models by visualizing key components such as value propositions, customer segments, channels, revenue streams, and key activities. However, its primary focus has been on profit-driven corporate enterprises, leading to important questions about its applicability in mission-driven sectors such as social enterprises.

Social enterprises operate at the intersection of economic and social objectives, aiming not only to achieve financial sustainability but also to create meaningful social impact (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010). Their dual mission — blending profit with purpose — often requires a reimagining of traditional business tools. For instance, while the BMC defines "customer segments" as target markets for products or services, social enterprises must often balance multiple stakeholders, including beneficiaries, donors, and partners (Yunus, Moingeon, & Lehmann-Ortega, 2010). Similarly, "revenue streams" in social enterprises may derive from donations, grants, or impact investments, in addition to traditional commercial income.

In emerging economies such as India and Sri Lanka, the role of social enterprises has become increasingly significant, particularly in sectors like sustainable tourism, agriculture, handicrafts, and education (Kerlin, 2013). Initiatives such as community-based tourism (CBT), often driven by Self-Help Groups (SHGs), exemplify efforts to create livelihoods while promoting cultural heritage and environmental stewardship. However, many such initiatives face challenges in scaling their operations and ensuring long-term viability due to the lack of structured business models (Littlewood & Holt, 2018). Consequently, adapting strategic tools like the BMC to the realities of social enterprises becomes vital.

Several scholars argue that while the BMC offers a valuable starting point for social enterprises, it requires thoughtful customization. Traditional BMC components may not fully capture elements crucial to social value creation, such as volunteer engagement, community empowerment, or social capital generation (Massa, Tucci, & Afuah, 2017). Furthermore, social enterprises often contend with limited financial resources, weaker market linkages, and complex stakeholder dynamics, which challenge the straightforward application of corporate business strategies.

This chapter aims to explore the applicability of the Business Model Canvas to social enterprises, with a particular focus on community-based tourism initiatives supported by SHGs in India. Drawing on empirical insights and previous literature, the chapter investigates the opportunities BMC offers for structuring and strengthening social enterprises, as well as the challenges and modifications needed for effective use. By critically analyzing the adaptation process, the study seeks to contribute to the growing discourse on social entrepreneurship, innovation, and enterprise sustainability.

A deeper understanding of how frameworks like the BMC can be reinterpreted for social contexts is essential for practitioners, researchers, and policymakers who are committed to advancing the social enterprise sector. Ultimately, this adaptation could serve as a bridge for social ventures striving for greater impact and resilience in complex environments.

2. Objective of the Study

This study aims to examine the applicability of the Business Model Canvas (BMC), originally designed for corporate strategy, within the context of social enterprises (SEs). It specifically investigates how the BMC framework can be adapted to enhance the operations, growth, and sustainability of self-help groups

(SHGs) engaged in ecotourism activities in India. By evaluating the opportunities and challenges associated with applying the BMC to mission-driven initiatives, the study seeks to generate insights that can guide the broader adoption of the BMC across diverse segments of the social enterprise sector.

3. Methodology

In today's competitive landscape, failure is not an option for any business entity—especially for large corporations that consistently strive for success through the adoption of strategic frameworks and tools. The Business Model Canvas (BMC), introduced nearly two decades ago, has emerged as one such tool, widely recognized for its utility in enabling organizations to align their operations with their vision and mission.

This study aims to explore the applicability of the BMC framework within the context of Social Enterprises (SEs), with a specific focus on those operating in the tourism sector. While the traditional BMC was originally designed for profit-driven enterprises, this research investigates how its components can be adapted, expanded, and reinterpreted to fit the values and goals of social enterprises. The central hypothesis is that, with suitable modifications, the BMC can serve as an effective strategic tool for SEs to achieve sustainability, scalability, and social impact.

The research adopts a qualitative methodology, comprising in-depth interviews and case studies of selected tourism-focused social enterprises. Through these interactions, the study gathers practical insights into how SEs currently operate, the challenges they face, and how the BMC framework can be customized to support their objectives. The analysis is grounded in a thorough review of literature on business model innovation, coupled with firsthand accounts from social entrepreneurs. The ultimate goal is to offer a revised BMC framework tailored to the unique context of social enterprises, thereby contributing to both academic discourse and practical implementation strategies in the field.

4. Literature Review

The Business Model Canvas (BMC) is a one-page strategic management tool that outlines the nine fundamental elements of a business (Shakeel et al., 2020). Widely recognized for its utility in strategic planning and innovation, the BMC emphasizes both the external (customer-focused) and internal (operational) aspects of a business. Specifically, the right side of the canvas concentrates on customer segments, value propositions, channels, customer relationships, and revenue streams, whereas the left side addresses key resources, key activities, key partnerships, and cost structures—offering a comprehensive overview of the business's internal mechanisms (Baskara et al., 2019; Cosenz & Bivona, 2021).

Developed by Alexander Osterwalder and his mentor Yves Pigneur, the BMC has emerged as one of the most widely used and cited frameworks in both the corporate world and among entrepreneurs and innovators (Lima & Baudier, 2017). It provides a visual and intuitive representation of how a business creates, delivers, and captures value. This framework enables organizations to align their activities by illustrating potential trade-offs, exploring new market opportunities, and building strategic capabilities aimed at long-term sustainability and profitability.

For those unfamiliar with the BMC, Illustration 1 offers a bird's-eye view of its components, demonstrating how this versatile tool supports businesses in seizing opportunities and enhancing their strategic outlook.

Key Partners	Key Activities	Value Propositions	Customer Relationship	Customer Segments
	Key Resources		Channels	
Cost Structure			Revenue Streams	

Illustration 1: Business Model Canvas (Strategyzer, 2024; Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010)

The nine building blocks of the Business Model Canvas (BMC) offer a structured approach to understanding the critical elements that contribute to business success. As one anonymous Professor of Management insightfully noted, “When we first look at the BMC, it may not be clear where to begin. However, Osterwalder and Pigneur have thoughtfully designed a logical sequence that helps businesses—whether large or small—articulate their core components more effectively.”

Following this recommended flow, illustrated in Illustration 1, businesses can strategically navigate through the BMC by addressing the following components in order:

Customer Segments

Identify and list the primary customer segments. These should be selected based on their current or potential contribution to the business’s revenue. Understanding the target audience is the cornerstone of a successful business model.

Value Propositions

Define the products or services the business offers and the unique value they bring to customers. What problems do they solve? What needs do they fulfill?

Revenue Streams

Outline the main sources of income for the business. If the organization provides any services free of charge, these should also be mentioned, as they may play a strategic role in the business model.

Channels

Describe the methods through which the organization communicates with and delivers its value proposition to customers. This includes marketing, distribution, and service delivery mechanisms.

Customer Relationships

Detail the nature of relationships the business maintains with each customer segment. How are these relationships initiated, maintained, and enhanced?

Key Activities

List the critical activities the business must perform daily to deliver on its value proposition and operate successfully.

Key Resources

Identify the essential assets—human, intellectual, physical, and financial—that the organization requires to create value, reach markets, and maintain operations.

Key Partners

Recognize the external companies, suppliers, or collaborators that help the business achieve its goals. These partnerships may reduce risk, optimize operations, or provide access to critical resources.

Cost Structure

Specify the most significant costs involved in operating the business. These are typically derived from the key activities and resources needed to sustain the business.

This structured and sequential approach not only clarifies each essential component of a business model but also ensures coherence and strategic alignment across all functions. It helps organizations map their current operations while also identifying potential areas for growth and innovation.

Whilst there is lot of literature available for the BMC framework and the corporates that have accepted and implemented the norms too have put out lot of data for the stakeholders to read and react. BMC framework in the domain of SEs is more related to the functioning, rather than the achievement of profit which is not the motive. The facet of Welfare truly gets subscribed to the notion of SE, but then all SEs have to

contemplate a thought process that meanders on the facets of profitability not in the literal sense, but in a manner that will engage the SE better to build interventions and create an infrastructure that will ensure success for the society/community that is being engaged.

Osterwalder and Pigneur (2010), *Business Model Generation*, a handbook for visionaries, game changers and challengers is a bible for BMC, which one and all refer to. The handbook is a visual treat that engages the stakeholder to adopt to the nuances of the model. Sergio Sparviero whose, *the case for a socially oriented Business Model Canvas: The Social Enterprise Model Canvas* (Sparviero, 2019) is a foray into the aspects of applying BMC methodology to SE. It provides for an argument that ensures a deeper understanding to BMC and the frameworks and models that are relevant to the field of SE.

BMC, the Evolution

BMC has its own history and the way it evolved into a successful and accepted Business Model for organizations. Fritscher and Pigneur (2009) recognize that highly structured templates such as the BMC (which they earlier called Business Model Ontology Canvas (BMO) (illustration 2) must be carefully designed to offer enough specialized functionality to emphasize general thinking guidelines without compromising free thought and creativity. These objections and limitations do not seem to affect the growing popularity of the BMC. Despite such widespread adoption, however, there have been no systematic attempts to measure its perceived usability.

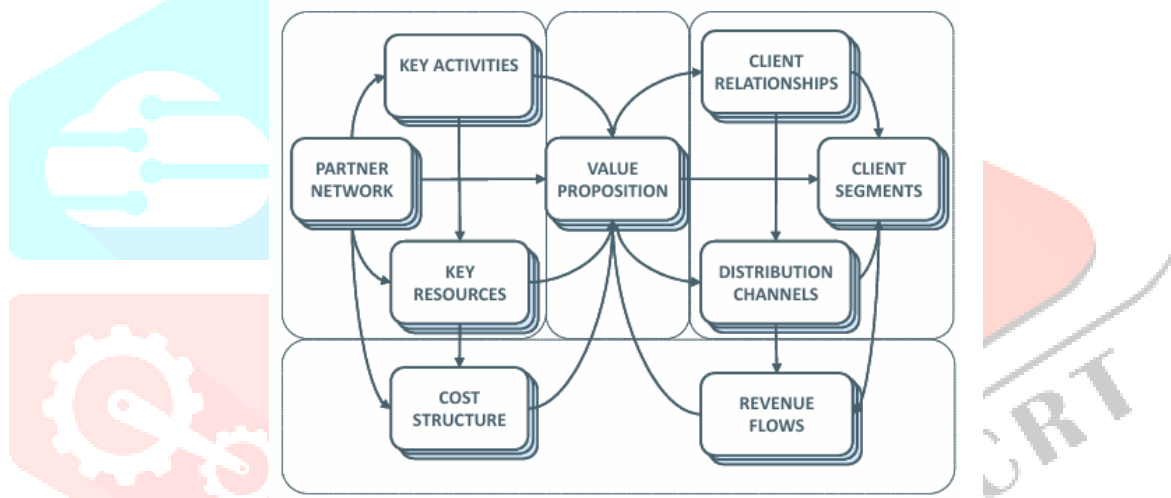


Illustration 2: Business Model Ontology Canvas (Fritscher and Pigneur, 2009)

Fritscher and Pigneur (2014) consider BMO to be part of the organization, at the Strategy level, which ensured the means to improve the design of business models in order for it to become a real issue for entrepreneurs and executives of the organization alike. Over a period of time, BMO got popular as BMC (Osterwalder and Pigneur, 2010). The need to evolve the model took place to better fit the needs of practitioners over academics and the visual representation improved under the effective influence of Design Thinking practice (Fritscher and Pigneur, 2014). When one deep-dives into the historicity of the BMC, one needs to go back to the publication of the thesis by Alexander Osterwalder (Osterwalder, 2004), which laid out the building blocks and the interactions that would occur. Fritscher and Pigneur (2014) speak of the fact that BMO spoke of identifying ‘what’ is provided to ‘whom,’ ‘how’ it is produced, and ‘how much,’ profit it generates.

When the readers understand illustration (3) it becomes clear the way the founders of the model focused on the nuances of the organization to ensure a qualitative understanding and a way forward. Fritscher and Pigneur (2014) further report the adoption of the application, the tool, the framework into three levels of maturity, as inspired by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (<https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/level-descriptions>), which has three groups that were juxtaposed with the BMC framework. The three groups were created in regards to the usage of the BMC framework by individuals and organizations.

Level 1: **Novice** (Basic User)– use the BMC as a simple common language and visualization help.

Level 2: **Expert** (Independent User) – use the BMC as a holistic vision to understand and target a business model's sustainability. They understand the model's methods, such as high level links and colors, which helps to connect ideas and follow the interactions.

Level 3: **Master** (Proficient User) – use the BMC in the global Strategy, which is a process that evolves and adapts to its environment. They understand that the design of a model has to accompany such a process by supporting concepts of iteration, transformation (mutation) and choosing alternatives (selection).

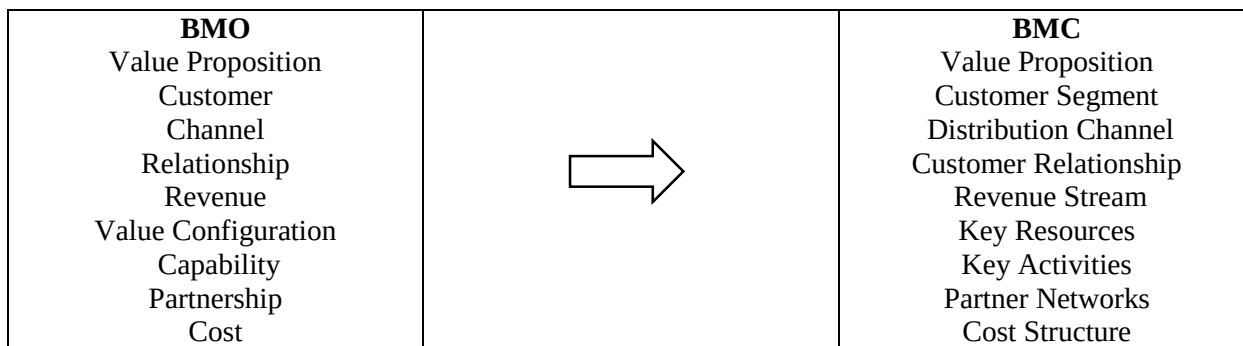


Illustration 3: BMO movement to BMC (Fritscher and Pigneur, 2014)

Many a practitioner who have worked on the BMC vouch for the authenticity and vigor that the framework brings to Strategy and Strategic Management. Nguyen (2024) writing about six successful BMC examples, exemplifies how organizations like Amazon, Uber, Airbnb, Google, Gillette, and Skype have adopted BMC and made their businesses successful. Thence, the question arises, if the BMC has been successful in large corporates, and even small medium enterprises (SME), can the same be adopted for Social Enterprises, Self-help Groups (SHG) and others and ensure that those entities at the bottom of the pyramid and able to access success, considering the fact that, if there is a success that occurs in these areas, the benefit is directly the community, and not any capitalistic entity, that will invest and then look at the Return on investment (RoI).

5. BMC and Social Enterprises

Sergio Sparviero's seminal work, The Case for a Socially Oriented Business Model Canvas: The Social Enterprise Model Canvas (SEMC) (Sparviero, 2019), has significantly inspired the authors to reconsider and adapt the traditional Business Model Canvas (BMC) for the unique context of social enterprises (SEs). Building on this foundation, the authors propose the evolution of the BMC into a more socially attuned framework termed the Social Enterprise Model Canvas (SEMC) that better aligns with the missions, values, and stakeholder engagement imperatives of SEs. While profitability may not be the immediate priority for SEs, SEMC supports sustainable value creation by enhancing stakeholder engagement and promoting long-term viability, including opportunities for capital reinvestment and the replication of best practices for broader social benefit.

Sparviero (2019) argues that business models in social enterprises are instrumental in articulating, challenging, transferring, and recombining the tacit knowledge embedded in implicit cognitive schemas and heuristics. These models act not merely as operational tools but also as conceptual frameworks that guide social impact strategies. Supporting this perspective, Massa et al. (2017) highlight that business models play a critical cognitive and communicative role, they simplify complex ideas, facilitate internal and external collaboration, and foster coordinated social action across stakeholders.

Adapting the BMC to a Social Enterprise Context

To investigate the practical applicability of BMC to social enterprises, the authors adapted the traditional BMC framework to a specific case involving a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) – illustration 4: The Eco-Development Committee (EDC). This EDC was established by the Forest Department of Tamil Nadu and is managed by local community members. These members predominantly belong to indigenous tribal

groups such as the Badagas, Kattunayakas (including subgroups like the Jennu Kurumbas), Kurumbas, Todas (primarily in the Ooty region), Kotas, Irulas, and Paniyas (Bala, n.d.).

The adaptation of BMC in this setting provided valuable insights into how strategic management tools developed for corporate enterprises can be recalibrated for community-based initiatives in ecotourism and conservation. The EDC, as a form of social enterprise, did not solely prioritize financial return but emphasized ecological preservation, local empowerment, and inclusive development. In such contexts, SEMC serves not only to structure operations but also to drive mission-aligned decision-making, stakeholder accountability, and sustainable development.

This adaptation process revealed the need to reinterpret traditional BMC components, such as customer segments, value propositions, and key resources through a lens more attuned to social impact rather than pure market economics. For instance, 'customer segments' may include both paying tourists and non-paying community beneficiaries, while 'value propositions' may focus more on cultural preservation and environmental stewardship than product features alone.

The authors argue that a well-adapted SEMC has the potential to serve as a transformative tool for social enterprises operating in diverse sectors. It enables SEs to articulate their goals more clearly, measure impact more effectively, and attract socially conscious investors and partners.

Key Partnerships (viii)	Key Activities (vi)	Value Propositions (ii)	Customer Relationships (v)	Customer Segments (i)
- Forest Department - Tour Operators - Travel Agents - Educational Institutions - Walk-ins - Other resorts in the vicinity for Safari tours and other products of MTR - Government and Private Vehicles moving through the MTR for restaurant usage	- Safari - Birding - Nature Walks - Educational Tours - Elephant Camp - Interpretation Centre - Accommodation - Restaurant - Souvenir Centre	- Part of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve - Flora and Fauna at its best - Tribes of the Area - River Moyar and the Gorge - MTR and its environs - Agricultural products - Traditional Medicinal and Nature based cure - Nature Guides from the local Tribal community - Domestic visitors, love the Safaris and elephant camps - International visitors who want the	- Repeat Visitors - Social Media publicity - Impact through Social Media - FAM Tours	- Domestic - International - Civil Servants on tours - FAM Tourists - Scientists - Anthropologists - Film makers
	Key Resources (vii)		Channels (iv)	
	- Safari - Elephant Camp - Interpretation Centre - Existing Infrastructure of Accommodation and Restaurant		- Sales through Forest Department Website - Walk-ins sales - Social Media - Documentaries and films	

		solitude of MTR Film makers/ tourism		
Cost Structure (ix) - Salaries to the Mahouts, drivers, the Forest Staff, and others employed as contractors in the MTR ecosystem - Vehicle maintenance - Loans to the members of the ETMC/EDC - Maintenance of the Elephants - Regular maintenance cost for accommodation and other facilities			Revenue Streams (iii) - Income from Safaris - Income from Elephant Centre - Income from Accommodation facilities - Income from Restaurants - Interests u ifrom loans to EDC members through Revolving funds - Income from Vehicle Parking area - Income from charges for Film Shooting and general photography and for Professional Wildlife Photographers - Research Teams and Organizations that invest in Forest, Ecology and Environment activities	

Illustration 4: Business Model Canvas mapped on the SPV at MTR (Khan and Swarna, 2024)

The BMC applied on MTR clearly delivers an opportunity for the SPV to function and ensure success for the enterprise. Nahar (2023) a Tourism Consultant, mentions, “the BMC helps to capture all the aspects well, but the SPV at MTR is based on the issue of how the Forest Department, who play the role of a facilitator get the Tribes in the area to manage the forests, through Community-based ecotourism (CBET) products and ensure livelihood options to the community, not necessarily as a profit motive, but from the social, and economic impact, and through livelihood options that one can foresee. The BMC in its truest sense, does not capture the essence of the Social Goal of the Enterprise.” A question that arises is, whether profit making models of Management can be adopted to SEs.

Writing about a Business Innovation Strategy for Batik Iwatic Balikpapan, East Kalimantan, Hamdana (2021) articulates, “the BMC is a visual template for strategic management that serves the new business or the existing business. The business model canvas is a tool designed to help us to understand and describe an organizational strategy that is represented in a simple form. It helps in the mapping of the small medium enterprises (SME).” The authors got a phenomenal opportunity to speak with Jayasinghe one of the Managers of the Heeloya Village Tourism destination in Sri Lanka. The village is naturally authentic, and their farming lifestyle has never changed since their settlement. Paddy farming, beekeeping, toddy tapping, handicrafts, and spice growing are the primary income sources of the villagers. Besides the agriculture economy that is on display, it is the friendship of the local community, who want to show the visitors their cultural ethos that builds the SE in Heeloya. Jayasinghe (2025), local headman, when asked by the authors, about Village Tourism in Heeloya from a perspective of BMC, he was candid to mention, “though I do not have the highest of education, I can tell you, the Heeloya product has been naturally created and curated, well, the activities, the resources, are all provided by nature. It is the visitors who derive value propositions of enjoying nature over the day or at even two days.” He further added, the cost structure has been kept very simple, and revenue streams, so to say are the visitors themselves. If we can understand this, then we have understood the importance of the Model that is being discussed.” When the authors asked a question about the impacts of the products of Heeloya on the community, Jayasinghe was vocal enough to state after

understanding the BMC framework, “the model does not capture the impact on the community, which should be measured and changes brought about as required.”

Social Enterprise Model Canvas (SEMC)

BMC, no doubt speaks about, the Value Proposition for the organizations, the corporates that consider the model, the framework. The question that comes about for the SE is what are the value propositions that one needs to evaluate, should it only be about profit, the answer definitely is; it is not about the profits alone, but what a model/framework especially in the domain of businesses can bring about in the form of livelihood options, impacts on the society and the families. The issue of subsistence marketplaces where, SE ensure that the marginalized get to earn whatever little they can, by way of subsistence; which will further enable survival of the individual and the family. Without questioning the efficacy of BMC, SE needs to have a model/framework that will emulate the factors of success that organizations get to benefit from profit making frameworks/models that help build an organization. Time and again, academics, have spoken about the impact that one needs to assess, in SEs. The impacts that can be assessed are multidimensional. Social, Economic, Environmental, Cultural, sometimes, even Political, Judicial, and Administrative impacts under the facet of Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA) have to be considered. These are the impacts that bring in the RoI for the investments, interventions done on the SEs. Sparviero (2019) in a definitive way, speaks of the Social and Environmental Costs and Benefits, which are to be looked at in tandem. Sparviero (2019) has furthered the cause of the SE, and presented the SEMC not really as an alternative, but as a framework, a tool that will cater to the rational of the SE, considering the way communities, and people involved in the SEs use the resources and create opportunities for the intended beneficiaries. When one focuses on the SEs, it is critical that one needs to understand the uniqueness of the SE, and the also the issues that the SEs face in the short and long-term. Sparviero (2019) creates the SEMC by elucidating the SE experiencing the difficulties in their portfolio which include:

- (1) Blending social and economic objectives;
- (2) Effectively communicating the objectives and their coherence with the use of resources and, more generally, the strategy;
- (3) Assessing, or more precisely quantifying its results in terms of output, outcomes and impact; and
- (4) Adopting the best governance mechanisms that enable the pursuit of mission values and objectives.

Keeping these parameters in mind, Sparviero (2019) places the SEMC, which is built on the foundation of the BMC as enunciated by Alexander Osterwalder and team.

Governance (Gov)			
Non-Targeted Stakeholders (NtS)	Key Resources (KR)	Channels (CH)	Customers & Beneficiaries (C&B)
	Key Activities (KA)	Customer & Beneficiaries Engagement (C&B E)	
Mission Values (MV)	Social Value Proposition (SVP)		Impact Measures (IM)
Objectives (Obj)			Output Measures (OM)
Cost Structure (C\$)		Income (I\$)	

Illustration 5. SEMC (Sparviero, 2019)

Sparviero (2019) in order to meet the challenges of SEs by adopting the instrumental principles described, the SEMC is composed of 14 building blocks (illustration 5): four of them are inherited from the BMC and designed to contain a similar type of information; five of them correspond to the remaining building blocks of the BMC, but they have been redefined to fit the analysis and terminology of SEs, and finally, five

building blocks are new and specific to the analysis of SEs. The five building blocks inherited from the BMC (as defined in Osterwalder and Pigneur 2010) are:

- (1) **Key Resources (KR)**, the building blocks that describes the most important assets required to make a business model work;
- (2) **Key Activities (KA)**, which describes the most important things a company must do to make its business model work;
- (3) **Channels (CH)**, which describes how an organization communicates with and reaches its customers to deliver its value proposition (although, in the case of SEs, not only its customers, but also its beneficiaries). The Channels, tantamount to a network that the SE is able to establish and ensure for itself on the long-run;
- (4) **Cost Structure (C\$)**, which describes all costs incurred to operate a business model. It can be seen that in the SEs it is critical that, with the most affordable of measures, the impact should be felt to the maximum extent, hence, the Cost Structure plays a dynamic role. The aspect that one needs to understand is that the issue of Subsistence Marketplaces, where the SEs are involved, the cost structure will be crucial, if not critical.

The unique features of SEMC can be further understood, when we dissect the other postulates as included in the framework that will augur well with the SEs.

- 5) **Social Value Proposition (SVP)**, which, like the Value Proposition in the BMC, describes the bundle of products and services that create value for specific customers and beneficiaries.
- (6) **Non-targeted Stakeholders (NtS)**, which replaces the Key Partnerships building block of the BMC, focuses on stakeholders that might be likely affected by the activities of the organizations and stakeholders that are partners, but not customers or targeted beneficiaries of the social actions envisaged by the organizations.
- (7) **Customers and Beneficiaries (C&B)**, which replaces the Customer Segments of the BMC, is used to define groups of people that an organization aims to reach and serve through various interventions that are required for the SE.
- 8) **Customers and Beneficiaries Engagement (C&BE)**, which replaces the Customer Relationships building block of the BMC, suggests a deeper analysis of the relationships established by the organizations with its targeted beneficiaries, which is considered as two-ways, because customers and beneficiaries are involved in the creation of value for the SE.
- 9) **Income (I\$)**, which replaces the Revenue of the BMC, suggest the inclusion of all kinds of financial and in-kind resources that non-profit and for-profit organizations are recipients of, such as donations, fees, government funding, investments and gifts.

The facets of Mission Value, Objectives, Impact measures, Output measures and Governance, clearly address the most important aspects for a SE, which will enable the effective functioning and also ensure the success of the SE. The five aspects can be enumerated and understood to the best of understanding as follows:

- 10) **The Mission Values (MV)**, which defines the higher, long-term, desirable end-states or goals of the organizations that will have an impact on the society and its people;
- (11) **The Objectives (Obj)**, which defines the short term, desirable modes of conduct and more practical targets of the organizations. The objectives and goals become critical to the SE in focusing on the right kind of interventions that will lead to the ultimate success;
- (12) **The Impact Measures (IM)**, which defines the assessment measures of mission values. Impacts of all hues, Environmental, Economic, Social, Cultural, and these days, Judicial and Political have been considered as important to assess the success or failure of the SE;
- (13) **The Output Measures (OM)**, which defines the assessment measures of the objectives; and
- (14) **The Governance (Gov)**, which defines the main rules and/or boards and committees put in place to manage the organization.

Conclusion

Jeroen Kraaijenbrink (Kraaijenbrink, n.d.) acknowledges the Business Model Canvas (BMC) as a valuable addition to the strategic management toolbox but also highlights certain limitations, most notably the absence of key strategic elements such as competition, values, and organizational goals. While these omissions may be less critical in profit-driven corporate settings, they become more pronounced when applied to social enterprises (SEs), where mission alignment and value creation for society take precedence over financial profit. This gap underlines the need for a more nuanced strategic framework tailored to the unique dynamics of SEs.

Social enterprises operate within a hybrid paradigm that seeks to blend the efficiency of business practices with the compassion and community focus of voluntary or nonprofit organizations. As McNerney (2012) points out, SEs serve as a bridge between the institutional domains of business and civil society, enabling cross-pollination of ideas and strategies between these often-disparate sectors. In doing so, SEs demand tools that reflect this hybridity tools that prioritize stakeholder engagement, societal welfare, and long-term impact over short-term profits.

The Social Enterprise Model Canvas (SEMC) emerges as a much-needed evolution of the traditional BMC. It retains the intuitive visual appeal and structural clarity of the original while incorporating social goals, stakeholder diversity, and community-centric values. The SEMC is not just a tool for planning and strategy; it becomes a roadmap for mission-driven organizations to navigate complexity, articulate their purpose, and ensure accountability across internal and external stakeholders.

Ultimately, the adaptation of the BMC to fit the social enterprise context reflects the broader shift in global business priorities from profit maximization to purpose maximization. In this transition, SEMC serves as a timely and essential framework that empowers social enterprises to design, test, and scale impactful solutions for a more inclusive and sustainable future.

References

- Bala, G. (n.d.) Tribes in and around Mudumalai. Retrieved from <https://www.deepjunglehome.in/tribes-in-and-around-mudumalai/>
- Bala, G. (n.d.). Ecotourism and tribal communities in the Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve. [Unpublished manuscript/Report].
- Baskara, A.S., Kaburuan, E.R., Ardiansyah, L., Sfenrianto, S., and Hwa, T.H. (2019). Business model canvas of motorcycle after-sales service mobile application. *International Journal of Civil Engineering and Technology*. 10(4), pp. 344-352. Retrieved from <http://iaeme.com/Home/issue/IJCIET?Volume=10&Issue=4>
- Cosenz, F., and Bivona, E. (2021). Fostering growth patterns of SMEs through business model innovation. A tailored dynamic business modelling approach. *Journal of Business Research*. Vol 130, PP. 658-669.
- Defourny, J., & Nyssens, M. (2010). *Social enterprise: What do we know? What do we need to know?* Social Enterprise Journal, 6(2), 5-28.
- Fritscher, Boris and Pigneur, Yves (2014). Extending the Business Model Canvas: A Dynamic Perspective. Proceedings of the Fifth International Symposium on Business Modeling and Software Design (BMSD 2015) pp. 86-95 DoI: <https://doi.org/10.5220/0005885800860095>
- Fritscher, Boris and Pigneur, Yves (2009). Supporting Business Model Modelling: A Compromise between creativity and constraints. Conference: Task Models and Diagrams for User Interface Design, 8th International Workshop, TAMODIA2009, Brussels, Belgium, September 23-25, 2009. DoI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-11797-8_3

Hamdana. (2021). Applying Business Model Canvas on SMEs as a Business Innovation Strategy Batik Iwatic Balikpapan, East Kalimantan. *Advances in Economics, Business and Management Research*. Vol. 193. Atlantis Press.

Jayasinghe (2025, January 12) Personal Communication. [Discussion].

Kerlin, J. A. (2013). *Defining Social Enterprise across Different Contexts: A Conceptual Framework Based on Institutional Factors*. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 42(1), 84–108.

Khan, Shaheed and Swarna, M., Freeda Maria (2024). The Business Model Canvas (BMC) approach for Community-based ecotourism (CBET) Strategy and Business Transformation in Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR), Tamil Nadu, India. *International Research Journal on Advanced Engineering and Management*. 2(10), pp. 3191-3204. DoI: <https://doi.org/10.47392/IRJAEM.2024.0472>

Kraaijenbrink, Jeroen (n.d.). Updating the Business Model Canvas: “The Strategy Sketch.” Retrieved from <https://www.jeroenkraaijenbrink.com/articles/strategy-sketch-business-model-canvas>

Lima, Marcos and Baudier, Patricia (2017). Business Model Canvas: Acceptance among French Entrepreneurship Students enhancing innovation artefacts in Business Education. *Journal of Innovation Economics and Management* 23(2): 159. DoI: <https://doi.org/10.3917/jie.pr1.0008>

Littlewood, D., & Holt, D. (2018). *Social entrepreneurship in South Africa: Exploring the influence of environment*. *Business & Society*, 57(3), 525-561.

Massa, L., Tucci, C. L., & Afuah, A. (2017). *A critical assessment of business model research*. *Academy of Management Annals*, 11(1), 73-104.

Massa, L., Tucci, C. L., & Afuah, A. (2017). A critical assessment of business model research. *Academy of Management Annals*, 11(1), 73–104. DoI: <https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2014.0072>

McInerney, P., B. (2012). Social Enterprise in Mixed-Form Fields: Challenges and Prospects. (Eds.). Yeheskel Hasenfeld and Benjamin Gidron, *Social Enterprises: An Organizational Perspective*. 162–84. London & New York: Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN: 9781349347575

Nahar (2023, June 1) Personal Communication. [Discussion].

Nguyen, Ngoc (2024, September 6) 6 successful Business Model Canvas Examples across industries. Retrieved from <https://bsscommerce.com/shopify/business-model-canvas-examples/>

Osterwalder, A., & Pigneur, Y. (2010). *Business Model Generation: A Handbook for Visionaries, Game Changers, and Challengers*. John Wiley & Sons.

Osterwalder, Alexander and Pigneur, Yves (2010). *Business Model Generation, a handbook for visionaries, game changers and challengers*. New Jersey. John Wiley and Sons. ISBN: 9780470876411

Shakeel, J., Mardani, A., Chofreh, G., Goni, A., and Klemes, J.J. (2020). Anatomy of Sustainable business model innovation. *Journal of Cleaner Production*. Vol. 261. Article ID 121201.

Sparviero, S. (2019). The case for a socially oriented business model canvas: The Social Enterprise Model Canvas. *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, 10(2), 232–251. DoI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/19420676.2018.1541011>

Strategyzer (2024, February 26). The Business Model Canvas. Retrieved from https://assets-global.website-files.com/64830736e7f43d491d70ef30/65d36b6f31059e94e2ff517c_A3-Business%20Model%20Canvas-2023.pdf

Yunus, M., Moingeon, B., and Lehmann-Ortega, L. (2010). *Building social business models: Lessons from the Grameen experience*. Long Range Planning, 43(2-3), 308-325.

