

# **Embedding Ecopreneurial Behaviour: Proposed Social Marketing Interventions From Value-In-Behaviour Perceptions of Plastic Waste Ecopreneurs**

Asphat Muposhi Miriam Mugwati, and Rukudzo MawereView

Abstract

Background

Plastic waste is a growing social and environmental problem in developing economies due to poor waste management infrastructure and improper disposal behaviours. This study explores how ecopreneurship can be embedded as a long-term strategy for managing plastic waste in Zimbabwe.

Focus of the Article

This study focuses on Zimbabwe, a developing country that is grappling with plastic waste. Value-in-behaviour perceptions of plastic waste ecopreneurs were explored.

Research Questions

This study attempts to answer the following questions: (1) What are the specific set of values that motivate ecopreneurs to start ecopreneurial ventures in Zimbabwe? (2) What are the challenges confronting ecopreneurs in Zimbabwe? (3) What is the potential role of social marketing as a strategy intervention to embed ecopreneurial behaviour in Zimbabwe?

Importance to the Social Marketing Field

This study extends the value-in-behaviour theory to deepen the current understanding of the relationship between ecopreneurship and social marketing in the context of a developing economy.

Methods

A qualitative research method was employed. Twenty-one in-depth interviews were conducted with ecopreneurs in Zimbabwe involved in plastic waste collection, recycling and eco-innovations. Interview data was analysed using thematic analysis.

Findings

Economic value, social value and ecological value emerged as the major value perceptions that motivate ecopreneurs. Funding, limited availability of plastic waste management infrastructure, low market value affixed to eco-innovations, derogatory connotations associated with waste collection and lack of community based support in sorting plastic waste were identified as the major stumbling blocks.

Recommendations for Research or Practice Social marketing interventions for embedding ecopreneurial behaviour in Zimbabwe are proposed. Ecopreneurship may be promoted by disseminating educational messages that emphasize on economic, social and ecological benefits.

Challenges confronting ecopreneurs such as lack of funding and plastic waste management infrastructure need to be addressed.

#### Limitations

This study focused only on ecopreneurs in plastic waste management. Thus, the findings cannot be generalised to ecopreneurs involved in other forms of ecopreneurship. Secondly, the study was conducted in a developing economy where waste collection infrastructure is limited.