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SOCIO-ETHICAL ISSUES AND SUSTAINABLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP: THE FACTORS
THAT INFLUENCE DECISION-MAKING IN THE INNOVATION PROCESS

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ABSTRACT

When socio-ethically significant factors are ignored in sustainable entrepreneurship, value creating opportunities may be missed and unintended and negative consequences can occur. Understanding how sustainable entrepreneurs effectively incorporate and manage socio-ethical issues, and the factors that effect this process, is consequently important. Through the development and application of a tool designed to help sustainable entrepreneurs identify socio-ethical factors, we identify factors that impact the ability of sustainable entrepreneurs to incorporate socio-ethical issues into the innovation and start-up process. Using the lens of ethical decision-making, we find that even where awareness is enhanced, barriers exist that can prevent sustainable entrepreneurs from effectively managing socio-ethical issues. We question the applicability of ethical decision-making models to innovation and entrepreneurship contexts, proposing a revision.

KEYWORDS: Ethical Business; Ethical decision-making; sustainable entrepreneurship; socio-ethical factors