Abstract This paper analyzes how social venture capitalists evaluate the integrity of social entrepreneurs. Based on an experiment with 40 social venture capitalists and 40 students, we investigate how five attributes of the entrepreneur contribute to the assessment of integrity. These attributes are the entrepreneur’s personal experience, professional background, voluntary accountability efforts, reputation and awards/fellowships granted to the entrepreneur. Results indicate that social venture capitalists focus largely on voluntary accountability efforts of the entrepreneur and the entrepreneur’s reputation when judging integrity. For an overall positive judgment of integrity, it seems to be sufficient if either voluntary accountability efforts or reputation of the entrepreneur are high. By comparing social venture capitalists with students, we show that experience leads to a simpler decision model focusing on key attributes.
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