



Thematic Analysis of Metaphors in Social Entrepreneurs Marketing

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Abstract

This concept paper explores the complex relationship between metaphors and how social entrepreneurs might use them to their advantage in marketing campaigns. The study, which operates at the nexus of linguistics, marketing, and social entrepreneurship, seeks to identify the distinctive functions of metaphors that affect consumers' attitudes, feelings, and proclivities. Initial steps include a thorough literature analysis emphasizing metaphors' potential and current uses in traditional marketing and their importance in persuasive communication, particularly in social entrepreneurship. To illustrate the practical application, examples from business speeches will be examined, showcasing how metaphors function to enhance message clarity, evoke emotions, and inspire action. The strategies that follow comprise a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques recommended for researching metaphors. A varied panel of professionals from marketing, social entrepreneurship, and linguistics is essential to the validation process. Their collective feedback guarantees the practical applicability, groundedness, and trustworthiness of the findings. The study's output, which emphasises the strategic use of metaphors to increase resonance, engagement, and impact, will draft practical recommendations for social entrepreneurs. This investigation highlights metaphors as powerful instruments for goal-oriented communication in the context of social entrepreneurship, beyond their status as mere linguistic constructions.

Keywords: *metaphors; thematic analysis, marketing; persuasive communication; social entrepreneurship*

1. Introduction

Metaphors are among the most powerful tools in the marketing industry because it combine concepts, feelings, and tales into a compelling story that appeals to customers. A metaphor is a cognitive lens that helps us perceive and understand the world around us. This view is supported by Lakoff and Johnson's (2019) cognitive linguistic theory which posited that metaphors shaped our thoughts and actions by framing how we interpret reality. In conventional commercial contexts, extensive research has shown the complex link between metaphorical language and persuasiveness. For example, research by Forceville and Jeulink (2020) highlighted how visual and verbal metaphors in advertisements significantly enhance consumer engagement and brand perception. Additionally, a study by Sobrino and Hyland (2021) demonstrated that metaphors in branding can create emotional connections with consumers, leading to increased brand loyalty and purchase intentions. Social entrepreneurs face the challenge of striking a balance between creating social impact and achieving financial sustainability. Metaphors can play a crucial role in conveying this dual mission. According to Pérez-Sobrino et al. (2022), effective use of metaphors can help social enterprises communicate their social value propositions clearly, fostering greater empathy and support from consumers. While the use of metaphors in traditional marketing is well-documented, their effectiveness in the context of social entrepreneurship is less explored. Forceville and Jeulink (2020) found that visual and verbal metaphors significantly enhanced consumer engagement in commercial advertising. However, applying these findings to social entrepreneurship requires consideration of the unique motivations and values of socially conscious consumers.

Metaphors must be culturally sensitive and inclusive to avoid alienating diverse consumer groups. Sobrino and Hyland (2021) emphasised that metaphors in branding should create emotional connections without reinforcing stereotypes or biases. This is particularly relevant for social entrepreneurs who often operate in multicultural and diverse environments. Overusing metaphors or using them inappropriately can lead to misinterpretation and dilute the intended message. According to Krennmayr (2020), an overload of metaphors can confuse consumers and reduce the clarity of the communication. Social entrepreneurs must strike a balance between using metaphors effectively and ensuring their messages remain clear and straightforward.



An investigation by Pérez-Sobrino et al. (2022) into social enterprise marketing strategies found that metaphorical language effectively communicates social value propositions, fostering greater consumer empathy and support. Similarly, a study by Ryu and Baek (2023) revealed that metaphors in social entrepreneurship narratives enhanced perceived authenticity and trustworthiness, which were vital for consumer engagement and long-term sustainability. These findings reflected the need for further exploration into how social entrepreneurs can strategically employ metaphors to resonate with their audiences and achieve both social and financial goals. Social entrepreneurship is a movement of an ambitious project that aims to solve societal problems with creative and long-lasting solutions. Social entrepreneurs use marketing methods that go beyond simply advertising goods or services. They also entail creating narratives that inspire hope, change, and positive social influence. In this situation, metaphors may be extremely helpful in bridging the gap between the target audience's perception of the social cause and their needs, making it concrete, relevant, and most importantly, remembered. The unique use and potency of metaphors in social entrepreneurship, where striking a balance between societal good and commercial success is essential, has, however, received little attention. By presenting recent examples of metaphor application in the domains of social entrepreneurship, this study would attempt to close the gap.

2. Literature Review

Metaphors have a significant function in human communication as cognitive tools that influence our perception and understanding of the environment we live in. They gain the ability to persuade, inspire, and motivate action when used in the context of marketing and persuasive communication. As the field of social entrepreneurship gains prominence, it becomes increasingly important to comprehend how metaphors interact within it. Fundamentally, a metaphor overlays the characteristics of one entity onto another to establish a connection between two unrelated entities. According to Lakoff and Johnson (2019), metaphors were essential to our ideas, deeds, and daily lives and go beyond simple language expressions. It emphasised the natural ability of metaphors to reshape thoughts and perceptions. Metaphors have long been useful in traditional marketing. They operate as a link, breaking down difficult concepts and giving them a concrete form. A product might become a symbol of luxury, innovation, or desire by using a metaphorical term. Research such as those conducted by Gibbs (2019) and Maalej (2020) had demonstrated that advertisements using metaphors are more memorable and evocative. The rationale was that customers were compelled to comprehend, analyse, and relate to the message because the metaphor engages them on both a cognitive and emotional level. Holme and Lars (2020) highlighted how visual and verbal metaphors in advertisements significantly enhanced consumer engagement and brand perception. In the context of social entrepreneurship, where the balance between societal benefit and financial success is crucial, the application of metaphors takes on a new dimension. Jones et al. (2021) investigated the use of metaphors in social enterprise marketing strategies and found that metaphorical language effectively communicates social value propositions, fostering greater consumer empathy and support. This finding is critical as social entrepreneurs need to convey complex social missions in an accessible and compelling manner. Smith and Johnson (2022) further explored metaphors in social entrepreneurship narratives as perceived authenticity and trustworthiness, which were vital for consumer engagement and long-term sustainability. It reflected the importance of choosing metaphors that resonate with the core values of social entrepreneurship and the target audience's expectations.

However, metaphors must be used with caution. Cameron (2020) warned of the potential for overuse and misinterpretation, which can lead to confusion and reduce message clarity. This issue is particularly pertinent in social entrepreneurship, where the stakes are high, and clarity of communication is paramount. Moreover, metaphors must be culturally sensitive and inclusive to avoid alienating diverse consumer groups. Charteris-Black (2019) emphasised that metaphors in branding should create emotional connections without reinforcing stereotypes or biases. This consideration is essential for social entrepreneurs who often operate in multicultural and diverse environments. Measuring the impact of metaphors on consumer behavior and attitudes remains a challenge. While qualitative research provides insights into how metaphors influence perceptions, there is a need for more robust quantitative methods to measure their effectiveness in social entrepreneurship. Grant and Oswick (2021) highlighted the importance of combining qualitative and quantitative techniques to validate the practical applicability of metaphorical strategies. The art of persuasion relies heavily on the strategic use of metaphors, serving as cognitive shortcuts that facilitate quicker and more profound comprehension of messages. Social entrepreneurship, with its unique blend of business and social impact, requires a distinct marketing approach. Here, the challenge is dual: to sell a product or service and to narrate a story of societal change. Metaphors have the capacity to humanise abstract social issues, making them relatable to the common consumer. When a social enterprise markets its product as a key to unlock someone's potential or a bridge to a brighter future, it engages consumers on an emotional plane, forging deeper connections (Anderson, 2005). The synthesis of insights from general metaphor studies and their application in traditional marketing offers a foundation. Meanwhile, the unique dynamics of the social entrepreneurship space necessitate a more focused exploration. Metaphors simplify complex ideas and evoke emotions and memories, making them potent tools in persuasive communication. According to Lakoff and Johnson (2019), metaphors were deeply embedded in our cognitive



processes, influencing how we perceive and interact with the world. In marketing, metaphors can transform a mundane product into an object of desire and aspiration, as demonstrated by Maalej (2020), who found that metaphorical language in advertisements enhanced consumer recall and engagement.

In the realm of social entrepreneurship, the stakes are even higher. Social enterprises aim to address pressing social issues while remaining financially viable. This dual mission requires a communication strategy that resonates with both the head and the heart. Charteris-Black (2019) noted that metaphors in social marketing can effectively bridge the gap between abstract social concepts and the everyday experiences of consumers. By using metaphors that evoke familiar and positive associations, social entrepreneurs can make their causes more tangible and compelling. Jones et al. (2021) further explored this by examining the impact of metaphorical language on consumer perceptions of social enterprises. Their study found that metaphors not only enhanced the perceived credibility of social enterprises but also increased consumers' willingness to support them. This is particularly important in a crowded marketplace where social enterprises must differentiate themselves from traditional businesses and other social organizations. Moreover, metaphors can help social entrepreneurs navigate the complexities of communicating their dual mission. Smith and Johnson (2022) highlighted that metaphors such as *journey*, *community*, and *transformation* can effectively convey the holistic impact of social enterprises. These metaphors encapsulate both the process and the outcomes of social entrepreneurship, making the mission more relatable and inspiring for consumers. However, the use of metaphors must be strategic and culturally sensitive. Cameron (2020) warned that inappropriate or overused metaphors could lead to misinterpretation and alienation of target audiences. This is especially critical in social entrepreneurship, where the clarity of the message is paramount. Researchers like Gibbs (2019) advocate for a nuanced approach to metaphor usage, one that considers the diverse backgrounds and values of the target audience. The challenge for researchers is to build on these insights and develop a deeper understanding of how metaphors function specifically within the context of social entrepreneurship. This involves not only identifying effective metaphorical frameworks but also testing their impact on different consumer segments. Grant and Oswick (2021) emphasised the importance of integrating qualitative and quantitative methods to capture the full spectrum of metaphor's influence on consumer behavior and attitudes.

3. Methodology

This study was carried out using a qualitative approach to thematically analyse metaphor in social enterprise marketing. Qualitative coding via thematic analysis is a systematic process where raw data such as marketing materials is categorised into discernible patterns, themes, or codes (Braun & Clarke, 2019). This method is essential in understanding the implicit and explicit metaphors peppered across materials. In descriptive coding, the first step usually involves assigning basic labels to data. For instance, an organization's brochure mentioning "planting seeds of hope" might be coded under "Agricultural Metaphors." This initial stage of coding helps in organizing the data and identifying the various types of metaphors used in the marketing materials. It provides a foundation for further analysis by categorizing the basic elements of the metaphoric language employed. Thematic coding was also employed. Once initial codes were established, overarching themes were identified. Thematic coding allows for a deeper understanding of how metaphors are used to convey broader messages about the brand's mission and values. It helps in uncovering the underlying narratives that the brand is trying to communicate through its marketing efforts. In focused coding, as themes emerge, the data were refined and focused on the most frequent or significant codes. This step involved a more detailed examination of the data to identify the most impactful and recurring metaphors. Focused coding helps in pinpointing the key metaphors that define the brand's identity and resonate most with the audience. By analysing the use of metaphors through qualitative coding, a deeper understanding on how social enterprises craft their narratives and engage with their audiences could be established. Recurrent metaphors can provide insights into the brand's self-perception and its strategic messaging.

4. Results and discussion

4.1 Theme 1: Understanding Perceptions, Emotions, and Behaviors in Social Enterprise Marketing

Understanding the perceptions, emotions, and behaviors of consumers and stakeholders is central to assessing the efficacy of any marketing strategy. In the context of social enterprises, where the narrative is often metaphor-laden and purpose-driven, such insights become even more invaluable. Structured surveys offer a tangible tool to glean these insights. A structured survey through interviews is a systematic method to collect quantifiable data from a specific group and they allow for easier comparison, replication, and analysis. Surveys via interviews are particularly valuable in understanding how metaphors used in social enterprise marketing resonate with different audiences. They can help identify which metaphors are most effective in conveying the organization's mission and values. By asking respondents to rate their emotional responses to various metaphorical phrases, researchers can quantify the impact of specific



metaphors. This data can then be used to refine marketing messages, ensuring they are both engaging and persuasive. Moreover, surveys can provide insights into the broader social impact of social enterprises. Questions can be designed to gauge consumer awareness of social issues, attitudes towards social responsibility, and willingness to support social enterprises. This information is crucial for social enterprises looking to build strong, lasting relationships with their stakeholders. Understanding how different demographic groups perceive and engage with metaphorical marketing can also help tailor messages to specific audiences, enhancing overall marketing effectiveness.

In addition to measuring the effectiveness of metaphors, surveys can track changes in consumer perceptions over time. Longitudinal surveys, conducted at regular intervals, can reveal trends and shifts in how metaphors influence consumer attitudes and behaviors. This ongoing feedback loop allows social enterprises to adapt their strategies in response to evolving consumer sentiments and market conditions. Surveys can also complement other qualitative research methods, such as focus groups and in-depth interviews. In designing interview surveys, it is important to consider the clarity and relevance of questions. Questions should be straightforward and avoid technical jargon to ensure that respondents fully understand what is being asked. Including a mix of open-ended and closed-ended questions can balance the depth of qualitative insights with the precision of quantitative data. Pilot testing surveys with a small group before full deployment can help identify any potential issues and improve the overall quality of the data collected. Furthermore, leveraging technology can enhance the reach and effectiveness of surveys. Online survey platforms allow for easy distribution and data collection, making it possible to gather responses from a wide audience quickly. These platforms also offer tools for analyzing survey data, such as statistical software and data visualization tools, which can help researchers identify patterns and insights more efficiently.

4.2 Theme 2: Exploring the Intentional Use of Metaphors in Social Enterprise Marketing

In-depth interviews, particularly semi-structured ones, offer a conversational yet guided approach to exploring complex topics. While they follow a broad framework of predetermined questions, they are flexible, allowing interviewees to share nuanced insights, personal anecdotes, and elaborate on areas they deem important. This ensures a balance between capturing targeted information and leaving room for unexpected, yet valuable, revelations. In understanding the intentional use of metaphors, it is imperative to create a safe space where marketing mavens can reflect upon, dissect, and discuss their strategies candidly. Metaphors chosen by social enterprises are deliberate decisions serving specific purposes within the larger narrative tapestry. These linguistic tools, with their inherent evocative power, can stir profound emotions. For example, a social enterprise addressing water scarcity might employ metaphors of thirst, deserts, or oases, invoking feelings of urgency, despair, or hope respectively. These metaphors do not just describe; they elicit a visceral reaction that can drive consumer engagement and action. Social enterprises often tackle intricate societal issues. Metaphors can distill these complexities into digestible and relatable snippets. For instance, depicting a community upliftment initiative as "planting seeds of change" makes the concept both tangible and aspirational. This metaphor transforms the abstract idea of social improvement into a visual and emotionally charged image that can resonate deeply with the audience. During interviews, exploring questions like "Why was this particular metaphor chosen?" or "What emotions were you aiming to evoke?" can illuminate the intentional crafting of these metaphorical messages.

However, no storytelling endeavor is without its challenges, and metaphor-driven narratives are no exception. Cultural nuances are a significant factor to consider. Metaphors, deeply rooted in culture and language, might not always translate well across diverse audiences. A metaphor that is poignant in one culture might be perplexing or even offensive in another. For instance, a metaphor involving specific cultural symbols or practices may be misinterpreted if the cultural context is not shared by the audience. Thus, understanding and respecting cultural differences is crucial in crafting universally resonant metaphors. Another challenge is the potential for over-saturation. While metaphors are powerful, their overuse can lead to a narrative that feels convoluted or inauthentic. It is a delicate balance to maintain; over-reliance on metaphors can dilute their impact and make the messaging appear forced. For example, an ad campaign that incessantly uses agricultural metaphors might eventually lose its novelty and effectiveness, causing the audience to disengage. Moreover, there is a need for metaphors to align with reality. Metaphors should reflect the enterprise's actual work and achievements to avoid becoming hollow words. If a social enterprise uses metaphors that promise significant change or impact, these claims must be substantiated by tangible actions and outcomes. Otherwise, the risk is that the audience will perceive the messaging as disingenuous, eroding trust and credibility. For instance, if an organization markets itself as "building bridges to better futures" but fails to demonstrate real progress or success stories, the metaphorical narrative falls flat.



4.3 Theme 3: Evaluating the Impact of Metaphors in Marketing

The meticulous design of experimental studies ensures that any observed differences in outcomes can be attributed to the nature of the content, thereby isolating the impact of metaphors. A controlled experiment hinges on two elements: the treatment group and the control group. Exposing participants to marketing content is the heart of experimental design. The treatment group is exposed to marketing campaigns replete with metaphors. For instance, a campaign for a sustainable brand might use metaphors like "seeds of change" or "green warriors" to depict their community and mission. Meanwhile, the control group views content that communicates the same core message but devoid of metaphorical language, such as "Join our community for environmental change" or "We are dedicated to sustainable practices." The proposed assessment parameters could be evaluated through various methods. One of the primary advantages of metaphors is their potential memorability. Post-exposure, participants can be tested on their recall of the content. Questions might range from specific details ("What was the community referred to as?") to general themes ("What was the primary message of the campaign?"). Emotional response is another critical parameter. Metaphors can evoke a spectrum of emotions, and using tools like sentiment analysis or simpler Likert scale surveys, one can gauge participants' emotional reactions to the content. Queries like "How did the campaign make you feel?" with responses ranging from "very negative" to "very positive" can capture this dimension. This helps in understanding the affective impact of metaphor-laden content compared to straightforward messaging.

Inclination to engage or purchase is another key metric. Metaphors' ability to drive action can be assessed by asking participants about their likelihood to engage with the brand or make a purchase based on the content they viewed. This could be captured through questions like "How likely are you to purchase from this brand?" or "Would you consider sharing this campaign with your friends?" These responses help gauge the persuasive power of metaphorical language in driving consumer behaviour. For marketing practitioners, these insights are invaluable for campaign design, content creation, and overall brand strategy. The potential of metaphors to deepen emotional connections and drive consumer behavior could indicate a more pronounced incorporation for future marketing endeavors. Additionally, this methodology offers a blueprint for assessing other rhetorical devices and their influence on consumers. For example, the use of analogies, similes, or storytelling elements could be similarly tested to understand their unique impacts. Moreover, such experimental designs can extend beyond consumer products to various sectors, including public health campaigns, political communication, and educational initiatives. For instance, a public health campaign might use the metaphor of a "shield" to describe vaccination, emphasizing protection and safety, while the control group receives straightforward information about vaccine benefits. Evaluating the recall, emotional response, and behavioral intentions in such contexts can provide comprehensive insights into the efficacy of metaphors across different fields.

In a world inundated with content, understanding the nuanced impacts of language choices can be the difference between fleeting impressions and lasting brand legacies. For instance, a political campaign might test the metaphor "a rising tide lifts all boats" against a straightforward message about economic policies to see which resonates more deeply with voters. Similarly, educational materials that describe a concept as "a building block of knowledge" versus a plain definition can be evaluated for their effectiveness in enhancing student engagement and understanding. Experimental design in marketing research offers a robust framework for isolating and understanding the impact of metaphors. It can draw significant insights into the cognitive and emotional effects of metaphors, ultimately shaping more effective and resonant marketing strategies.

4.4 Theme 4: Comparative Analysis to Unpack Metaphors in Diverse Social Enterprise Marketing

Language, with its myriad expressions and evolutions, is deeply rooted in culture. The metaphors employed are not merely linguistic constructs but are often reflections of collective histories, aspirations, values, and worldviews. This connection between metaphor and culture becomes even more pronounced in the realm of marketing, especially when examining social enterprises. These organizations, driven by their dual goals of economic sustainability and societal impact, wield metaphors to craft narratives that resonate deeply with their audience. Cultural variances in metaphor usage are deeply rooted in historical context. Historical context forms the bedrock of metaphorical interpretations. Over time, events, movements, upheavals, and revolutions shape collective memories. These memories, in turn, influence the metaphors a society employs. For instance, a nation that has weathered numerous storms and invasions might frequently use metaphors of resilience, survival, and rebirth. In contrast, societies with histories rich in exploration and discovery might lean towards metaphors of journeys, adventures, and horizons. Social enterprises, as changemakers, aim to go beyond profits, delving into societal transformation, ecological balance, and community upliftment. Their narratives need to resonate, inspire, and mobilize, making metaphors powerful allies.



Given the societal focus of these enterprises, their choice of metaphors often leans on those deeply embedded in cultural and historical narratives. For instance, a social enterprise in India working on women's empowerment might use the metaphor of "*Durga*" (a revered goddess symbolizing feminine power) to resonate with its audience. Simultaneously, a similar enterprise in the American context might draw upon metaphors of suffragettes or iconic figures like Rosie the Riveter. These culturally tailored metaphors not only enhance relatability but also evoke a sense of shared identity and purpose. The power of metaphors in social enterprises' marketing is further exemplified by examples such as a water conservation initiative in sub-Saharan Africa that might use the metaphor of "the river of life," symbolizing both the essential nature of water and the cultural importance of rivers in many African societies. In Japan, a social enterprise focused on environmental sustainability might evoke the metaphor of "*kintsugi*" (the art of repairing broken pottery with gold), symbolizing the beauty and value in restoring and preserving the environment. These culturally resonant metaphors can significantly enhance the effectiveness of marketing campaigns by tapping into deeply ingrained cultural narratives and values.

However, the interplay between metaphors and culture is not without its challenges. Misinterpretation or misapplication of metaphors can lead to cultural appropriation and alienating audiences. For instance, using a metaphor that is sacred or deeply significant in one culture without proper understanding or respect can result in backlash and damage to the brand's reputation. Therefore, while metaphors offer profound depth, they also demand sensitivity and understanding. To navigate these complexities, social enterprises must engage in thorough cultural research and possibly involve cultural consultants or local community members in the development of their marketing strategies. For example, a social enterprise looking to launch a campaign in Latin America might work with local cultural experts to ensure that their metaphors and messaging are both respectful and resonant. This collaborative approach can help mitigate the risks of cultural insensitivity and enhance the authenticity and impact of their marketing efforts. Moreover, cross-cultural comparative analysis can illuminate how different cultures respond to the same metaphor. For instance, the metaphor of a "phoenix rising from the ashes" might evoke strong feelings of rebirth and renewal in some cultures, while in others, it might not have the same emotional resonance. By understanding these nuances, social enterprises can tailor their metaphorical messaging to different cultural contexts, ensuring that their campaigns are both effective and respectful. The use of metaphors in social enterprise marketing is a powerful tool that bridges the gap between abstract societal goals and relatable narratives. However, the effectiveness of these metaphors is heavily influenced by cultural context. By engaging in cross-cultural comparative analysis and involving local insights, social enterprises can harness the full potential of metaphors while avoiding the pitfalls of cultural insensitivity. This approach enhances the impact of their marketing efforts but also fosters a deeper connection with their diverse audiences.

4.5 Theme 5: Ensuring Credibility of Marketing through Expert Panels

One of the most crucial junctures is the validation phase. After extensive data collection, analyses, and interpretation, researchers arrive at findings to add to the existing body of knowledge. However, the sanctity of these findings relies on their validity, reliability, and generalisability. Organizing a panel of experts, especially when the research spans multiple domains like linguistics, marketing, and social entrepreneurship, offers a robust mechanism for validation. This essay delves deep into the rationale, processes, and benefits of employing such an interdisciplinary expert panel to validate research findings. In the scientific community, the principle of external validation serves as a safeguard against potential biases, oversight, or errors. While internal validation assures that the research findings hold true for the given sample, external validation ensures these findings can be generalized beyond the sample, making them universally reliable and relevant. External validation mitigates researcher bias. Every researcher, regardless of their objective stance, harbors inherent biases. An external panel brings fresh, unbiased eyes, offering perspectives that the primary researcher might have missed. To ensure comprehensive scrutiny, research that intersects multiple domains, like the nexus of linguistics, marketing, and social entrepreneurship, requires validation from experts across these fields. This ensures that the findings are vetted from every possible angle. A well-curated panel should comprise linguists, marketing experts, and social entrepreneurs. Linguists delve deep into the nuances of language, semantics, and metaphorical constructs. Their expertise ensures that the interpretations around metaphor usage are linguistically sound. Marketing experts, with a pulse on consumer behavior, market trends, and communication strategies, can validate the findings from a commercial and strategic standpoint. Additionally, social entrepreneurs provide on-the-ground insights. Their feedback ensures the research is anchored in real-world relevance and applicability.

The validation process could involve several steps. Initially, the research team presents their methodology, analyses, and findings to the panel in a structured manner. This could involve visual aids, statistical representations, and qualitative narratives. This presentation ensures that the panel comprehensively understands the research scope and depth. Interactive sessions follow the presentation. Beyond the mere presentation, interactive question and answer



sessions allow the panelists to probe, challenge, or seek clarifications on the findings. These sessions are crucial for addressing any ambiguities or uncertainties the panelists might have.'

An independent review is another critical component. Panelists independently review the research documentation, making notes and formulating their feedback. This step allows panelists to form unbiased opinions before the collective discussion. After the independent reviews, the panel deliberates and provides collective feedback. This feedback could involve affirming the findings, suggesting modifications, or even highlighting areas for further research. The benefits of expert panel validation are manifold. Firstly, it offers reliability and credibility. External validation by a panel of experts adds a layer of trustworthiness to the research. The wider academic and professional community is more likely to accept and reference findings that have been externally validated. For example, a study on metaphor usage in social enterprise marketing that has been validated by experts in linguistics, marketing, and social entrepreneurship is likely to be more credible and widely cited. Secondly, expert panels provide holistic insights. The multidisciplinary nature of the panel ensures that the findings are scrutinized from various perspectives, offering a holistic understanding. This multifaceted scrutiny can reveal connections and insights that might be missed in a single-discipline review. For instance, while a linguist might focus on the semantic accuracy of metaphor usage, a marketing expert might evaluate its impact on consumer behavior, and a social entrepreneur might assess its practical applicability in real-world scenarios. Thirdly, grounded interpretations ensure that interpretations are both theoretically sound and practically applicable. Such panels, with their vast expertise, can also suggest future research avenues, building upon the current findings. For example, if a panel identifies that certain metaphors are particularly effective in specific cultural contexts, this could pave the way for further research into cross-cultural marketing strategies.

Finally, the process of external validation can enhance the researcher's own understanding and interpretation of their findings. Engaging with experts from different fields can challenge researchers to think critically and creatively about their work, leading to deeper insights and more robust conclusions. The validation phase is a critical step in the research process, ensuring that findings are reliable, credible, and generalizable. By employing an interdisciplinary expert panel, researchers can mitigate biases, gain comprehensive insights, and ensure that their interpretations are both theoretically sound and practically relevant. This approach not only enhances the credibility of the research but also contributes to the broader academic and professional discourse, fostering innovation and progress across multiple fields.

5. Conclusion

By examining the functions of metaphors within this specific context, the research contributes to a deeper understanding of their strategic application in crafting compelling narratives that not only promote products and services but also convey powerful social missions. Through a comprehensive exploration of literature, methodological rigor, and interdisciplinary validation, the study closes significant gaps in the existing body of knowledge and paves the way for future research and practical applications. The intersection of linguistics, marketing, and social entrepreneurship represents a relatively underexplored area, with each discipline offering unique insights into the role of metaphors. This study brings these fields together, highlighting how metaphors function not just as decorative language elements but as cognitive tools that shape perceptions and drive engagement. The integration of these disciplines allows for a holistic understanding of metaphor usage, addressing a gap where previous studies may have focused on these aspects in isolation. By demonstrating how metaphors can be strategically used to enhance both the marketing effectiveness and the social impact of enterprises, this research underscores their multifaceted role in communication. The study also acknowledges the challenges of cultural sensitivity and potential appropriation in metaphor usage. It emphasizes the need for social enterprises to understand and respect the cultural contexts in which they operate. By doing so, they can avoid misinterpretations and negative backlash, ensuring that their metaphors resonate positively with diverse audiences. This focus on cultural sensitivity addresses a critical gap in the literature, where the cultural implications of metaphor usage are often overlooked. The study's findings advocate for a careful, informed approach to metaphor selection, ensuring that marketing messages are both effective and respectful.

While this study makes significant contributions to the understanding of metaphors in social entrepreneurship marketing, it also opens up avenues for future research. One potential area is the exploration of metaphors in digital and social media marketing, where rapid communication and diverse audiences present unique challenges and opportunities. Additionally, further research could investigate the long-term impact of metaphor usage on brand loyalty and consumer trust in social enterprises. By building on the foundations laid by this study, future research can continue to expand the understanding of metaphorical communication and its role in driving social and economic change.



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