

**EVALUATING THE EXTENT SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP CAN ASSIST
INDIA'S GROWTH**

by

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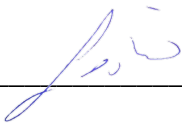
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research work to the loving memory of my late father, Dr. Shrishail I Biradar, a simple living high thinking human, and a truly kind and respected individual. He was not only a source of unwavering support for me but also for countless others whose lives he touched with his kindness and generosity. His selflessness and genuine concern for others have inspired me to be a better person and to strive for excellence in everything I do. His legacy of helping others shape their careers and making a positive impact on their lives will forever remain a guiding force in my own journey. I am deeply grateful for the invaluable life lessons he imparted and the profound love he shared with me. With this dedication, I honor his memory and the enduring influence he has had on my path of learning and service to others.

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This research work stands as a testament to the collective efforts and support of all these individuals, and I am deeply grateful for their presence in my life.

ABSTRACT

EVALUATING THE EXTENT SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP CAN ASSIST INDIA'S GROWTH

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This dissertation examines the role of social entrepreneurship in fostering India's growth and development. As a transformative force, social entrepreneurship blends innovative and sustainable business models with a strong commitment to addressing pressing social challenges. With India facing multifaceted socio-economic issues despite significant economic growth, there is a need to explore alternative strategies that can effectively tackle these complexities.

The research problem revolves around the potential of social entrepreneurship to contribute to India's growth and development. Traditional approaches to addressing social challenges have shown limitations, making social entrepreneurship a promising and innovative approach. By prioritizing social impact alongside financial viability, social entrepreneurs aim to create lasting social change, empowering marginalized communities and reducing social inequalities.

The research employs in-depth interviews with social entrepreneurs, policymakers, and industry experts to gather insights into how social enterprises operate within the Indian context and their impact on local communities. Key themes examined include job creation, community empowerment, innovation, and the barriers faced by social enterprises in scaling their operations.

Findings indicate that social entrepreneurship significantly contributes to India's growth by fostering inclusive economic development, creating employment opportunities, and promoting sustainable practices. However, challenges such as regulatory constraints, access to funding, and lack of awareness about social enterprises hinder their full potential.

The significance of this research lies in its potential to inform policymaking, guide social entrepreneurs, inspire aspiring changemakers, contribute to academic knowledge, and create awareness within the broader community. Policymakers can benefit from insights into the effectiveness of social entrepreneurship, leading to targeted policies and support mechanisms. For social entrepreneurs, the research offers a roadmap and learning opportunities. Aspiring changemakers can gain inspiration and guidance from real-world examples. Academics will find valuable contributions to the growing field of social entrepreneurship research. The broader community can recognize the potential of social entrepreneurship as a viable approach to societal challenges.

KEYWORDS

Social entrepreneurship, India, Inclusive growth, Sustainable development, Social impact, Economic growth, Social challenges, Poverty alleviation, Social innovation, Marginalized communities, Social ventures, Impact assessment, Social change, Empowerment, Social inequality

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables	xii
List of Figures	xii
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Research Problem.....	8
1.3 Purpose of Research	8
1.4 Significance of the Study	11
1.5 Research Purpose and Question/Hypothesis	15
1.6 Summary	17
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW	20
2. Introduction	20
2.1. Defintion and Conceptual Framework	20
2.2.1 Social Capital Theory	21
2.2.1 Dimensions of Social Capital.....	21
2.3 Application of Social Capital	26
2.4 Social Entrepreneurship Theory.....	28
2.4.1 Conceptual Framework	30
2.5 Models of Social Entrepreneurship.....	32
2.6 Intersection of Social Capital and Social Entrepreneurship.....	35
2.7 Conclusion.....	38
2.8 Summary	28
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY	40
3.1 Overview of the Research Problem.....	40
3.2 Operationalization of Theoretical Constructs	41
3.3 Research Purpose and Questions.....	42
3.4 Research Design.....	44
3.5 Population and Sample.....	45
3.6 Participant Selection.....	48
3.7 Instrumentation.....	50
3.8 Data Collection Procedures	52

3.9 Data Analysis	53
3.10 Thematic Analysis.....	53
3.11 Ethical Considerations.....	53
3.12 Research Design Limitations	59
3.13 Conclusion.....	61
CHAPTER IV: RESULTS	63
4.1 Introduction	63
4.2 Demographic Information	68
4.2.1 Age Distribution of Participants:.....	68
4.2.1 Educational Background of Participants:	69
4.2.3 Job Category:.....	70
4.2.4 Types of Business:	72
4.3 Results	76
4.4 Proposed Hypothesis testing	102
4.5 Triangulation of results	113
4.6 Summary	115
4.7 Conclusion.....	116
CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION	118
5.1 Discussion of Research Questions	118
5.1.2 Discussion relating to Existing Literature.....	122
5.2 Discussion of Hypothesis	129
5.3 Empirical Correlation of Social Entrepreneurship.....	132
5.4 Traingulation of Social Entrepreneurship on Growth.....	133
5.5 Summary	137
CHAPTER VI: SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	138
6.1 Summary	138
6.2 Implications.....	140
6.3 Recommendations	143
Conclusion.....	144
Appendix A: Informed Consent Form	149
Appendix B: Cover Letter	152
Appendix C: Interview Questions	1479
Appendix D: Interview Protocal.....	152

REFERNCES 153

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1: Key Social Challenges Addressed by Social Entrepreneurship in India.....	3
Table 1.2: Demographic Matrix Table of Participants.....	68

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig 5.1. Age Distribution.....	64
Fig 5.2 Educational Background.....	69
Fig 5.3 Job Category.....	70
Fig 5.4 Types of Business.....	73

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The emergence and growth of business in a country is the outcome of its knowledge and energy; its understanding and aspirations; its values, capability, and skills - economic, scientific, commercial, as well as industrial, agricultural, and technological. None of these alone can determine success or failure. All are needed in an environment that is both favorable and stimulating for growth of businesses. Finally, amongst our society's greatest strengths is pooling the knowledge of large and diverse masses of men and women and transforming it into enterprise that can bring illimitable improvement (Azeem et al., 2021).

These observations reveal three important dimensions of business. First, it links business growth directly with the development of the knowledge base of society. Secondly, it views business as a vital tool for fostering economic, industrial, and overall technological growth. And thirdly, it underscores the importance of the enterprise, the individual in business, in promoting the creative productive genius of the nation so that it can contribute to the goal of social justice (Surya et al., 2021).

Hence, business is not only the sole method by which an economy's growth and development can be achieved. In countries like India and elsewhere in the Third World, where nearly half of the population is below the poverty line and direly in need of access to even the basic necessities of life, it is the moral duty of business enterprises to help alleviate poverty by participating in meaningful operations, which generate not only secured and gainful employment for the masses but also upgrade their standard of living by promoting an equitable socio-economic order. People feel that the system truly looks after their needs, and not just those of a privileged few or a select minority (Kochhar, 2020).

Social entrepreneurship has emerged as a transformative force, blending the principles of traditional entrepreneurship with a strong commitment to addressing social issues and driving positive change in society (Dees et al., 1998; Austin et al., 2006). This dynamic approach has gained significant momentum worldwide, and in the context of a vast and diverse country like India, social entrepreneurship holds immense promise to contribute to inclusive and sustainable development (Salamzadeh et al., 2018).

The last decade has seen the rapid development of social entrepreneurship in various countries around the world. Combined with the rapid development of resources and networks, social entrepreneurship has become more and more popular in China. Some organizations specializing in social entrepreneurship incubators and accelerators have also emerged. How to allocate resources where they are distributed rationally and effectively in the process of quickly achieving social innovation and eventually leading to the growth and development of the company is particularly important. China's economy is the world's second largest, and it accounts for only 15.05% of the world's population. If it is possible to create significant reasons such as social entrepreneurship in China, it is expected to bring the world's development direction and parameters that can be re-established (Kickul & Lyons, 2020).

In developed countries, social entrepreneurship has also attracted numerous scholarly attentions, and its importance to national and global economic growth cannot be ignored. The United States is a representative of countries with relatively well-developed social entrepreneurship and has implemented a series of policies to encourage and support it, contributing to its GDP (Ebenezer & Babu, 2024).

In India, the social entrepreneurship environment is increasingly promising, and the focus is on social entrepreneurship because India has a good human resource advantage and vast opportunities in various fields. Therefore, in this study, India is selected as an example to

analyze the growing intention of social entrepreneurship and its impact on corporate growth. However, there is a lack of literature analyzing India's social entrepreneurship. Due to the country's special geographical and political environment, although the people of India have a strong sense of social responsibility and awareness, they generally create and participate in social entrepreneurship businesses. At the same time, India has gradually developed into a hotspot for social entrepreneurship in recent years, and many incubators, accelerators, and innovation competitions have been developed (Sorice et al., 2022).

The concept of social entrepreneurship encompasses a wide range of innovative and sustainable business models that seek to tackle pressing societal challenges, ranging from poverty and education to healthcare and environmental sustainability. India, being home to one of the world's largest populations, faces multifaceted social problems that necessitate innovative and agile solutions (Roy et al., 2019).

Despite considerable economic growth in recent years, India continues to grapple with significant socio-economic disparities, widespread poverty, and a lack of access to basic services for many of its citizens. The limitations of conventional approaches to development and welfare have become apparent, making it imperative to explore alternative strategies that can effectively address these issues.

Table 1.1 shows Key Social Challenges Addressed by Social Entrepreneurship in India

Social Challenge	Description
Poverty	Social entrepreneurs develop sustainable livelihood solutions and income-generating activities for the economically disadvantaged communities.

Education	Social entrepreneurs create innovative educational programs and platforms to improve access to quality education in remote and underserved areas
Healthcare	Social entrepreneurs establish affordable and accessible healthcare services telemedicine solutions, and medical outreach programs for marginalized populations.
Environmental Sustainability	Social entrepreneurs promote sustainable practices, renewable energy solutions, waste management, and conservation initiatives to protect the environment.
Gender Inequality	Social entrepreneurs empower women and girls through skill development, entrepreneurship opportunities, and advocacy for gender equality.
Unemployment	Social entrepreneurs create job training programs, skill development initiatives, and employment opportunities for the unemployed youth and marginalized communities.

Table 1.1: Key Social Challenges Addressed by Social Entrepreneurship in India

Social entrepreneurship offers a compelling and potentially transformative path towards sustainable development in India (Zahra et al., 2009). By leveraging the principles of entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurs not only seek financial viability for their ventures but also prioritize social impact and community well-being (Dees et al., 1998). These change makers are driven by a vision to create positive and lasting social change, empowering marginalized communities, and addressing long-standing social inequalities.

The growth of social entrepreneurship in India has been further catalyzed by advancements in technology, access to global networks, and an increasing emphasis on social responsibility and conscious consumerism. From innovative healthcare solutions to sustainable agriculture initiatives, social entrepreneurs are leveraging creativity and adaptability to meet the needs of underserved populations and create a more equitable society.

Although these challenges cripple an economy, according to (Chakravorti & Dalmia, 2023), India is expected to be the world's third largest economy by 2050, noting that India's recent success offers a model for other low-income countries to achieve annual growth rates approaching 7% over the next two decades. The unique relationship between India's caste and class system has created a brand of highly globally competitive professionals within the country. The Indian business environment has also seen significant changes. India's banking system has over \$270 billion left for investment in agriculture and infrastructure and is expected to grow by 20% over the next 5 years.

GDP has already grown at 8.4%. India's advanced education system and strong information technology sector are acting as a pump for global economies that seek cutting-edge workers. Foreign institutional investors have been investing in the Indian stock market because it is thought to be much less overvalued than other markets (Chakravorti & Dalmia, 2023).

Medical tourism is another significant area of growth. India's focus on reaching 7% growth rates over the next 20 years has established many new investment initiatives with foreign, local, and private entities. But as things stand, such growth has engendered problems in terms of urban congestion, and thus the expected stable economic viability of this growth is at risk. With such growth rates expected from this nation, there is a rising level of imaginative and resourceful entrepreneurs at all levels who have begun to realize and deal with some of the social problems of not having basic infrastructure. These entrepreneurs have generated valuable joint ventures with foreign entrepreneurs who see the risks and uncertainty of reservation as predictable opportunities for investment. India should consider the formation of its own private enterprise system operating community programs that meet the various basic needs of the disadvantaged and underprivileged. In such social entrepreneurship and community programs, the investors have a direct responsibility to the program because the country and the community have been the program's main financial contributors. Social

entrepreneurship has the desire to change the world. The issue is global social responsibility, as well as corporate social responsibility (Mathiyazhagan et al., 2021).

Visionaries like Mahatma Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave emphasized the importance of self-sufficiency and community development, which align closely with the principles of social entrepreneurship. Gandhi's philosophy of "Gram Swaraj" (self-governance at the grassroots) and Vinoba Bhave's Bhoodan Movement (land-gift movement) reflected their belief in decentralized, community-based solutions to social issues. In recent decades, India has witnessed a surge in social entrepreneurship activity, driven by both grassroots activists and institutional organizations (Roy et al., 2019). The advent of microfinance institutions, such as Grameen Bank and SKS Microfinance, demonstrated the power of innovative financial models to uplift marginalized communities.

While there is a growing body of literature examining social entrepreneurship globally, there remains a significant gap in understanding its specific impact on business growth within the Indian context. Existing studies often focus on the definitions, theories, and general outcomes of social entrepreneurship without delving deeply into how these ventures contribute to economic development and business dynamics in India.

Additionally, most research tends to emphasize either the social outcomes or the economic viability of social enterprises, often neglecting the interplay between the two. Furthermore, there is limited empirical evidence on the factors that enable or hinder the growth of social enterprises in India, including regulatory frameworks, access to finance, and market challenges.

Moreover, the impact of social entrepreneurship on traditional business sectors and overall economic growth in India has not been adequately explored. Understanding how social

enterprises influence employment generation, innovation, and competitiveness in the broader business landscape is crucial for policymakers and stakeholders.

This research aims to fill these gaps by providing a comprehensive analysis of how social entrepreneurship affects business growth in India, examining both qualitative and quantitative dimensions, and offering insights into the unique challenges and opportunities faced by social enterprises in the Indian market.

1.2 Research Problem

The delicate balance between economic growth and equity has been a challenge faced by all nations. Even as India is one of the fastest-growing nations in the world, it is yet to address some major socio-economic problems like basic healthcare, primary education, women's empowerment, and livelihood, especially in the rural areas and at the bottom of the income pyramid. The role of social entrepreneurs in creating economic opportunities for themselves and social benefits for society by using market mechanisms is significant for inclusive economic growth. These entrepreneurs lead civil society's response to social issues.

Despite significant economic progress in recent years, India continues to grapple with various complex social issues that hinder inclusive and sustainable development (Roy et al., 2016). These challenges include widespread poverty, income inequality, lack of access to quality education and healthcare, environmental degradation, and unemployment. Traditional approaches to addressing these problems, such as government-led initiatives and philanthropy, have shown limitations in achieving comprehensive and lasting solutions.

In this context, social entrepreneurship has emerged as a promising and innovative approach to tackling social issues in India. Social entrepreneurship endeavors to combine the innovative and profit-driven strategies of traditional entrepreneurship with a strong social

mission (Dees et al., 2001). Social entrepreneurs seek to create ventures that not only generate financial returns but also bring about positive social change and impact.

These ventures aim to address societal challenges through innovative products, services, or business models, often targeting underserved communities and marginalized populations. Despite the increasing prevalence of social entrepreneurship in India, there is a lack of comprehensive understanding regarding its impact on business growth within the country. Specifically, the research problem centers on the following questions:

What is the extent of social entrepreneurship's influence on traditional business sectors in India?

How do social enterprises contribute to employment generation, innovation, and overall economic growth in the Indian context?

What are the unique challenges and opportunities faced by social enterprises in India that affect their ability to drive business growth?

This research problem highlights the need to systematically evaluate the contributions of social entrepreneurship to India's economic landscape, as well as to understand the mechanisms through which these enterprises operate and thrive. By addressing this problem, the study aims to provide valuable insights for policymakers, business leaders, and social entrepreneurs themselves, ultimately fostering a more supportive environment for social enterprises and enhancing their role in driving sustainable economic development in India.

1.3 Purpose of Research

The purpose of this research is to conduct a comprehensive investigation into the role of social entrepreneurship in India's growth and development. The study aims to delve deeply into the practices, impact, and challenges of social entrepreneurship initiatives in the Indian

context. By doing so, it seeks to contribute significantly to the existing body of knowledge on social entrepreneurship and its potential to address complex social issues and promote sustainable economic development.

Firstly, this research intends to explore how social entrepreneurship initiatives have been effectively addressing social challenges in India. Social entrepreneurs often identify pressing societal issues, such as poverty, lack of access to education and healthcare, environmental degradation, and gender inequality, as opportunities for positive social change. Understanding how social entrepreneurs identify and prioritize these challenges for their ventures will provide valuable insights into the alignment of social missions with the needs of the local communities and marginalized populations (Alter et al., 2015).

Secondly, the research aims to investigate the contribution of social entrepreneurship to economic development and job creation in India. Social enterprises adopt various business models, ranging from nonprofit organizations to hybrid models that combine profit-making with social impact. Examining these diverse models and revenue-generation strategies will shed light on how social entrepreneurship can drive economic growth while simultaneously addressing social issues. Understanding the mechanisms through which social enterprises achieve financial sustainability will be crucial for designing effective policies to support and scale such ventures (Mair et al., 2006; Yunus et al., 2003).

Thirdly, the study seeks to identify the key success factors and challenges faced by social entrepreneurs in India. Social entrepreneurship is often characterized by innovative approaches and resourcefulness, but it also encounters unique challenges due to its dual focus on social impact and financial sustainability. Investigating these success factors and challenges will provide valuable lessons for aspiring social entrepreneurs and policymakers. Learning from the experiences and strategies of successful social entrepreneurs will enable emerging

change makers to navigate the complexities of initiating and sustaining social ventures (Nicholls et al., 2006; Roy et al., 2016).

Lastly, this research aims to assess the extent to which social entrepreneurship leads to positive social impact and sustainable change in India. Measuring and evaluating the social outcomes of social entrepreneurship initiatives can be challenging due to the multifaceted nature of social issues. Therefore, understanding the methodologies and approaches employed by social entrepreneurs to assess their impact will contribute to the growing field of impact assessment in social entrepreneurship. Identifying successful practices for achieving meaningful and sustainable social change will inform the design of evidence-based strategies and policies to promote social entrepreneurship as a viable approach for development.

Additionally, the research seeks to identify the specific mechanisms through which social entrepreneurship influences traditional business sectors and fosters innovation, employment generation, and community development. Ultimately, the findings will provide actionable insights for policymakers, stakeholders, and social entrepreneurs themselves, facilitating the development of strategies that enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of social enterprises in India while promoting a more equitable society.

In conclusion, the purpose of this research is to offer a comprehensive understanding of the role of social entrepreneurship in India's growth and development. By investigating the practices, impact, and challenges of social entrepreneurship in the Indian context, this study seeks to provide insights for policymakers, practitioners, academics, and aspiring changemakers interested in leveraging social entrepreneurship for positive social change and sustainable development in India and beyond.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The significance of this research lies in its potential to contribute valuable insights to various stakeholders, including policymakers, social entrepreneurs, researchers, and the broader community. By exploring the role of social entrepreneurship in India's growth and development, this study offers several key contributions:

Policymakers: Policymakers play a crucial role in creating an enabling environment for social entrepreneurship to thrive. The findings of this research can inform policymakers about the effectiveness of social entrepreneurship as a tool for addressing social challenges and promoting inclusive growth. Understanding the challenges and success factors faced by social entrepreneurs can help policymakers design targeted policies and support mechanisms that facilitate the growth of social enterprises (Alter et al., 2015).

Addressing Socio-Economic Challenges:

This research is significant as it directly addresses pressing socio-economic issues faced by India, such as inadequate healthcare, insufficient educational opportunities, and gender inequality. By focusing on how social entrepreneurship can provide solutions, the study contributes to the discourse on sustainable development and poverty alleviation.

Promoting Inclusive Economic Growth

The findings will shed light on the potential of social enterprises to drive inclusive economic growth by creating jobs and providing essential services to underserved populations. Understanding this relationship can help policymakers design interventions that support social entrepreneurship as a viable model for economic development, particularly in rural and marginalized communities.

Enhancing Policy Formulation:

The research will provide valuable insights for policymakers regarding the role of social entrepreneurship in economic policy. By identifying best practices and successful models, the study can inform the development of supportive regulatory frameworks and funding mechanisms that encourage the growth of social enterprises.

Contribution to Academic Literature:

This study will fill a significant gap in the existing literature on social entrepreneurship in India by providing empirical evidence on its impact on business growth and socio-economic development. It will contribute to academic discussions and theoretical frameworks surrounding social entrepreneurship, economic growth, and equity.

Guiding Social Entrepreneurs:

For social entrepreneurs, this research will offer practical insights into the challenges and opportunities they face in the Indian market. By understanding the factors that contribute to their success or failure, aspiring social entrepreneurs can make informed decisions that enhance their impact and sustainability.

Social entrepreneurs are at the forefront of driving positive change in society. For existing social entrepreneurs, this research can serve as a source of inspiration and learning. By examining successful social entrepreneurship initiatives, social entrepreneurs can gain valuable insights into effective strategies, innovative business models, and impact measurement techniques (Mair et al., 2006).

Understanding the challenges faced by fellow social entrepreneurs can help them anticipate and address obstacles more effectively (Roy et al., 2016). Additionally, the study can provide validation and recognition of the contributions of social entrepreneurs, motivating them to continue their efforts and make a difference in society

Encouraging Collaboration

The research will highlight the importance of collaboration between social enterprises, traditional businesses, government agencies, and non-profit organizations. By demonstrating how partnerships can amplify the impact of social entrepreneurship, the study will encourage multi-stakeholder engagement in addressing socio-economic issues.

Fostering Innovation:

By exploring how social enterprises foster innovation in addressing social problems, this research will emphasize the need for creative solutions that leverage market mechanisms. This focus on innovation can inspire new approaches to tackling long-standing challenges in various sectors.

Long-Term Economic Sustainability:

The insights gained from this research can contribute to a broader understanding of how social entrepreneurship can lead to long-term economic sustainability. By promoting practices that not only generate profit but also deliver social value, the study aligns with global trends towards responsible business practices and corporate social responsibility.

Moreover, insights into the impact assessment and sustainability practices of social entrepreneurs can assist in developing evidence-based policies that maximize the social value generated by these ventures (Mair et al., 2006; Yunus et al., 2003). By aligning policies with the needs and goals of social entrepreneurs, policymakers can create an ecosystem that fosters the growth and scaling of social entrepreneurship in India.

Aspiring Changemakers:

Aspiring social entrepreneurs often face uncertainties and challenges in starting their ventures. This research can serve as a roadmap and guide for these aspiring changemakers. By analyzing the experiences and practices of established social entrepreneurs, aspiring changemakers can learn from real-world examples and apply best practices to their own ventures (Alter et al., 2015; Dees et al., 2001).

The study can help them identify potential areas of impact, develop sustainable business models, and understand the importance of measuring and communicating social outcomes (Mair et al., 2006; Yunus et al., 2003). Empowering aspiring social entrepreneurs with knowledge and guidance can foster a new generation of innovative and impactful social ventures in India.

Broader Community

The impact of social entrepreneurship extends beyond individual ventures; it can catalyze positive change at the community and societal levels. The study's findings can raise awareness among the broader community about the potential of social entrepreneurship as a viable approach to tackling social challenges (Nicholls et al., 2006; Roy et al., 2016). By understanding the social impact of these ventures, the broader community can recognize the importance of supporting and collaborating with social entrepreneurs in their efforts to create a more equitable and sustainable society.

In conclusion, the significance of this research lies in its potential to inform policymaking, guide social entrepreneurs, inspire aspiring changemakers, contribute to academic knowledge, and create awareness within the broader community. By examining the role of social entrepreneurship in India's growth and development, this study aims to contribute to the advancement of the field and foster positive change for the betterment of society.

1.5 Research Purpose and Question/Hypothesis

As India continues to navigate the complexities of rapid economic growth alongside persistent socio-economic challenges, the role of social entrepreneurship has emerged as a critical area of study. Social entrepreneurs are uniquely positioned to address pressing issues such as healthcare access, educational disparities, and gender inequality, particularly in underserved rural areas. By leveraging innovative market mechanisms, these entrepreneurs not only create economic opportunities for themselves but also contribute to broader social benefits, thereby promoting inclusive growth.

Research Questions:

- **What are the unique challenges faced by social enterprises in India that affect their growth and sustainability?**

Social entrepreneurship holds the potential to address a wide range of social challenges prevalent in India, including poverty, education, healthcare, environmental sustainability, gender inequality, and unemployment.

The RQ1 seeks to identify and prioritize these social challenges from the perspective of social entrepreneurs. By understanding the issues that drive social entrepreneurs to action, this research will provide insights into the pressing societal problems that social entrepreneurship initiatives aim to tackle.

- **How does social entrepreneurship contribute to economic growth and development in India?**

Social entrepreneurship not only aims to create social impact but also plays a crucial role in driving economic growth and development. RQ2 will examine the various ways in which social entrepreneurship initiatives contribute to economic development in India. This

includes job creation, income generation, fostering innovative business models, and promoting sustainable economic practices. By understanding the economic dimensions of social entrepreneurship, this research will highlight the potential of social ventures to create positive changes in the economic landscape.

➤ **What are the mechanisms through which social entrepreneurship fosters inclusive growth in India?**

Inclusive growth is essential for sustainable development, ensuring that the benefits of economic growth are distributed equitably across all segments of society. RQ3 seeks to investigate the mechanisms through which social entrepreneurship fosters inclusive growth in India. This involves examining how social ventures engage with marginalized communities, create access to resources and opportunities, and empower disadvantaged groups to participate in economic activities. By understanding these mechanisms, this research will provide insights into the potential of social entrepreneurship to promote inclusive development.

➤ **How do market mechanisms used by social entrepreneurs influence their ability to create social value and economic opportunities?**

The success of social entrepreneurship ventures is often influenced by various market mechanisms. The RQ4 aims to identify and analyse the obstacles faced by social entrepreneurs in India. These challenges may include limited access to capital, regulatory hurdles, social stigma, scaling difficulties, and measuring social impact effectively. Understanding the barriers and challenges will provide valuable insights for policymakers and stakeholders to create an enabling environment for social entrepreneurship to thrive.

By addressing these research questions, this study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on social entrepreneurship in the Indian context. The comprehensive

exploration of these questions will offer practical implications for policymakers, social entrepreneurs, and researchers to leverage the potential of social entrepreneurship as a driver of transformative change in India's growth and development journey.

1.5.2 Hypothesis Development:

In addition to research questions, hypotheses can be formulated to provide tentative explanations or predictions that can be tested through empirical analysis. Based on the problem statement and existing literature, the following hypotheses have been developed:

1. H1: Social entrepreneurship plays a significant role in addressing social challenges such as poverty, education, healthcare, and environmental sustainability in India.
2. H2: Social entrepreneurship positively contributes to economic growth by promoting innovation, creating employment opportunities, and attracting investments in underserved regions of India.
3. H3: Social entrepreneurship fosters inclusive growth in India by empowering marginalized communities, promoting social inclusion, and reducing inequalities.
4. H4: Limited access to funding, lack of supportive policies, and insufficient ecosystem support act as barriers to the growth and effectiveness of social entrepreneurship in India.

These hypotheses will be tested and analyzed using relevant data and methodologies to provide insights into the relationship between social entrepreneurship and India's growth agenda.

1.6 Summary

This chapter delved into the intricate landscape of social entrepreneurship and its potential to contribute to India's growth and development. The introductory section provided

an overview of the emergence of social entrepreneurship as a transformative force, merging entrepreneurial principles with a commitment to addressing social challenges. It underscored the significance of social entrepreneurship in a country as diverse and populous as India, emphasizing its promise in creating inclusive and sustainable change.

The historical context of social entrepreneurship in India highlighted the philosophical foundations laid by visionaries like Mahatma Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave, echoing the principles of decentralized and community-based solutions. The chapter then examined the contemporary surge of social entrepreneurship driven by grassroots activists and institutional organizations, pointing to the potential of innovative financial models and social enterprises across various sectors.

The research problem was articulated within the context of India's persisting socio-economic disparities, posing the question of whether social entrepreneurship can effectively address these issues. The purpose of the research was elaborated, encompassing a comprehensive investigation into the practices, impact, and challenges of social entrepreneurship in India. The four research questions were presented, each addressing a different facet of social entrepreneurship's potential impact.

The significance of the study was outlined, detailing its implications for policymakers, social entrepreneurs, aspiring changemakers, academics, and the broader community. By addressing both economic and social dimensions, this research aspires to contribute to a more equitable society while enhancing the sustainability and effectiveness of social entrepreneurship in India.

In summary, this chapter lays the groundwork for a comprehensive exploration of social entrepreneurship's impact on India's business growth and socio-economic development, setting the stage for the subsequent chapters that will delve deeper into the research methodology,

findings, and implications of this important area of study. The next chapter highlights the literature and theoretical framework of the study.

CHAPTER II:

LITERATURE REVIEW

2. Introduction

All the literature identifies the relevance of social capital to social entrepreneurship. While there are other theoretical perspectives from the sociology of work and economics about which social capital theory might be considered as an update or contribution, the two sets of literature most notable for their relevance to social entrepreneurship are the Theory of Social Capital and Social Entrepreneurship Theory.

Social capital theory is, as always in the literature reviewed below, defined most comprehensively in terms of its capacity to provide collective and individual benefits to members or participants in a network. Yet each paper concentrates on different characteristics of social capital, or different such outcomes, thereby allowing different authors to stress the social in social capital and others to highlight its value in providing competitive advantage, political control, financial capital, or other benefits provided in economic or psychological terms. Supporters of those dualism theories naturally emphasize the multiplicity of the contributions from social capital.

The Theory of Social Capital and Social Entrepreneurship Theory have so much to say about each other across such important matters of our day that it is unclear who can more readily gain by studying the other. Then again, as compelling and yet nascent as both sets of literature are today, the value provided to both sets of authors by careful adjudication amongst the various works is in evidence (Ip et al, .2022; de et al., 2021).

2.1. Definition and Conceptual Framework

This chapter aims to establish the theoretical grounds for an empirical analysis of the social capital of social entrepreneurs and social enterprises. The study begin by considering the theory of social capital as originally formulated by Coleman. Coleman focuses on the benefits

that accrue from the networks of relationships that individuals are party to. This is often referred to as 'bonding' social capital. In addition to such bonding social capital,

Coleman (2022) argues that there are considerable benefits from individuals' contacts with other networks within society that can be referred to as 'bridging' social capital. This formulation represents the structural understanding of social capital. More recent theorists such as Bourdieu move beyond the notion of social capital as being derived from the relationships in which individuals are engaged and focus on the resource effects of social capital (Coleman et al., 2022).

That is, whereas Coleman views social capital as a function of embedded relationships, trust, and norms of reciprocity in social networks, Bourdieu argues that social capital is embedded in society's institutions and processes. Hence, social capital can exist beyond a person's social network. There have been few dissenters to the idea that social capital is a positive resource, but moral arguments have been attached to the concept. Such arguments are centered on the view that social capital should not be directly accumulated but rather that norms, networks, and trust should be used in the promotion of civil society. Critics of this perspective go further still, suggesting that associational behavior is organizationally based and might not necessarily have the positive consequences that theorists propose (Portes, 2024).

2.2. Key Theorists and Historical Development

2.2.1. Social Capital Theory

The term social capital has been widely used since the beginning of the 1960s, but its theoretical significance varies. Where there is considerable broadness in analytical approach, however, is in the etymology of the concept, its history, and the evolution of its definition and conceptual significance. In defining social capital, there are several key thinkers and schools that are important to consider. They combine classic and modern theory, which have generated an increase in the number, importance, and empirical studies concerning the subject. Given the

broadness of the concept assigned to 'social capital,' the study have that the definition is given in agreement with various authors (Bourdieu, 1986).

There is no consensus on the most appropriate method for defining social capital. One of the first sociologists who sought to reintroduce the issue in question; only more recently, with the advent of contemporary discussion, was it corrected, and the concept of social capital has become part of various works of young scholars in the field of social sciences. The central axis of the discussion is precisely the scarcity of theoretical work on the subject, which would involve different forms of capital, one of which would be social capital. According to one perspective, social capital is a sum of current resources, which is linked to the possession of a worthy social network, durable, institutionalized (Lang et al., 2022).

On the other hand, another sociologist is also attributed the qualification of father of the theory of social capital, Pierre Bourdieu. This thinker cared to think of a variable capable of gathering the effects of non-material assets present within the community, which he called social capital. In his work, he defines it as the sum of resources, actually or virtually, linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less a large number of people, more or less institutionalized.

It is noted that both thinkers ended up giving a spatial sociology character to the theory of social capital, and this limitation of the concept for the physical space has broadened the criticism that this seems more like an attempt to make visible the hidden standards of a society and less a viable variable for directing economic analysis.

Another perspective is attributed with the emphasis on the concept of social capital as a determinant structure since the root of various economic and political processes. The concern, probably, emerges from the idea that market institutions and structures of political institutions would be determined in part by the social capital of the societies in question. It is stated that freedom is enabled by social trust, by the belief that institutions act in favor of the population

for the public good, and that the concept of rule of law is part of social capital. The rule of law would be socially valuable since it would guarantee predictability and security, which are vital factors in a business environment, as they are key components to ensure that investment decisions are not changed (Crowley & Walsh, 2024)

Another scholar was the one who made qualitative studies of social capital and is an important reference on that subject. This individual analyzed social capital as a feature of community members, a feature based on the values and norms shared by a group of people, but also as a feature of institutions. Organizations, in this view, are responsible for changing values and motivation; social networks, in their view, are responsible for facilitating cooperation between agents, ultimately promoting social development. These networks act in a normative way, requiring members to follow the same rules (Portes, 2024)

2.2.2 Types and Dimensions of Social Capital

Based on suggestions and definitions provided, the following classification is made: (a) social ties (creation of relatedness, bonding capital), (b) trust (reliability of people, general respect and regard that people hold for each other, bonding capital); (c) norm of reciprocity (fairness, viewed in terms of social customs, rules of games, and habits in an organization or in society that enhance bonding capital); (d) behavioral conventions and informal rules (understood as societal norms, including cultural conventions and political practices); (e) sense of belonging, association participation, and collective action (to increase participation in social life).

Since there may be several connotations attributable to different groups of authors within the group of researchers on social capital, there are academics who are more concentrated on emphasizing unique definitions and applications for this concept. Given the nature of the phenomenon, this is highly justified. Under the dominance of functionalist thinking, interpretations of various dimensions of social capital rather emphasize the strengths

and possibly negative implications of this collective good. Among the non-functionalists of this concept, there is virtually no differentiation between various social capital phenomena, with few questionings if certain individual actions coupled with micro-organizational practices are really to be considered social capital in their most essential nature (Carmen et al., 2022).

Recent inquiries into social capital highlight qualitative aspects of social interactions, stress the content of relations, particularly the different forms of association and institutional relationships, and accentuate motivations concerning individual actions in obtaining collective goods. Possible results of quantitative research may unmask multiple barriers or at least shed light on the complexities and ambiguities derived from different conceptual links, employing different theoretical bases or operational subtlety quality measures. Indeed, statistical data is capable of engineering controls into models, even if too large or too flexible research designs are poor substitutes for proper theoretical schema. Thus, in the real world, data is both a test and an essential tool for comparison with theories, which should only begin to be judged by the respective possible inferences from empirical evidence (Gubbins and Dooley, 2021).

2.2.3 Bonding, Bridging, and Linking Social Capital

The term bonding social capital involves the level of trust and reciprocity among members in one community or group. This type of social capital helps to achieve group solidarity and harmony. A community or a group that has high levels of bonding social capital may have a better chance of success in their operations through close cooperation and mutual recognition. Therefore, high bonding social capital is beneficial when the objectives are to provide social services.

However, when the goals are to increase the supply and demand of goods and services, focusing only on bonding social capital might be detrimental. This is why the concept of bridging social capital is introduced, which gives a community and its members a broader connection to the world by building relationships with members of other communities. In this

context, a community with a high level of bridging social capital has high visibility and easy access to external resources (Sánchez-Arrieta et al., 2021).

In addition, further developing this concept, a third form of social capital called linking social capital is introduced, which is governed by power hierarchies. The actors are from different social or cultural backgrounds interacting in a very unfamiliar way for the sake of some goal that is usually not involving a familiar social preservation way of decision-making. It is a form of social capital that can help the community negotiate with the power holders who control important resources. In other words, linking social capital can prevent the exploitation of resources by certain groups.

2.2.4 Structural, Relational, and Cognitive Dimensions

While social capital has numerous definitions and viewpoints, there are several consistent theoretical positions. 1) Social capital is a matter of the structure of relations (relations between and among persons). 2) Social capital resides in the community and is, therefore, external to the individual who can draw on resources and support. 3) Social networks are a key to obtaining useful resources. 4) These networks of association and participation are composed of recurring, mutually beneficial exchanges. 5) These networks may also foster societal norms and values that are beneficial to that network or community. 6)

Finally, it is these norms or networks that empower participants. Indeed, social capital might be a critical factor in unraveling some of the fundamental phenomena within the social sciences (Tahmasebi & Askaribezayeh, 2021).

Several longstanding traditions of social capital led to a nuanced and somewhat diverse understanding of the concept. This study builds on one of these traditions. While criticisms of social capital have steadily grown, some traditional questions, centred on the "capital" notion, must be reformulated and clarified. To do so, it seems useful to explore the spirit of social capital and provide a brief review of the writings of some early proponents. Our analysis will,

therefore, be organized in three steps: first, we will set up a framework for discussing social capital, a framework resting on the good old ideas of utility and exchange that marked early research on social capital (Ajates, 2021).

2. 3. Applications of Social Capital Theory in Social Entrepreneurship

One of the major challenges of entrepreneurship is how to maintain a social network that will withstand the test of commercial advantage. Social capital, therefore, is harnessed as a key means of achieving and maintaining business and management advantage. While its application in the fields of business management, marketing, economics, personal development, and organization development is often noted, its integration with social entrepreneurship is less well documented. A number of studies detail how improved levels of social capital within an organization can lead to profitable commercial advantage and service improvements.

Purwati et al., (2021) argues that such studies suggest that business strength and survival seek the level or form of capital that can be accessed through elite contacts within the social structure of society, resulting in overall organizational weaknesses. It is therefore proposed that business strategy needs to change from an inward to an outward-looking orientation. Such relationships situate new business developments within a broad social and international context, indicating that high levels of social capital access strengthen the power and leadership within the world capital system, providing the means for organizational growth and improvement. Although it has generally been applied to business responses to existing societal relationships, the principles of social entrepreneurship add a different dimension to the way of making use of contact status to develop new initiatives. It also raises questions as to the role of class and capital in defining how social business initiatives are developed and to where resources, power, and control are provided (Cachón-Rodríguez et al., 2022).

2. 3.1. Enhancing Access to Resources

Social entrepreneurs need to access and control resources. They consistently try to expand the capacity of their organization to better serve the community of which they are part. They attain the necessary resources through strong networks and relationships. Thus, associational activity encourages the strong relationships to be built where the necessary resources can be accessed and utilized.

Research suggests that social capital provides superior access to resource distribution structures, building strong networks, such as friends and acquaintances with influence to assist with obtaining resources and those corporate actors who are important to the enterprise. Strong associational structures, such as members of a church or fellow university students, can provide social affiliation and support, including material resources as well (Lyu et al., 2022; Uekusa et al., 2022).

One of the reasons that social capital theory has been suggested as providing an appropriate theoretical basis for social enterprise research is that social capital serves to bridge social class boundaries in their interactions with economic organizations by removing the disadvantages resulting from low social class.

Muringani et al., (2021) stated that low social class Americans find it more difficult than those of higher social class to access social networks for finding jobs, housing, health care resources, or the other advantages to which more advantaged Americans have access. By associating so strongly, members of the upper economic, lower social class within the corporation found access to the actors in the corporation who were most important to the well-being of the enterprise. These lower social class Americans in the corporation are engaged in associating with and utilizing the social capital resources of their co-workers to gain access, less directly, to economic control of the organization. These fundamentally positive interactions work to create the positive view of social enterprise productivity, which contributes

to identifying the social enterprise and appreciating the material benefits it provides (Beard, 2021).

2. 3.2. Building Trust and Collaboration

The notion of cooperation is a central point in social capital theory. Presently, collaboration is considered a fundamental value of public organizations. For social capital theory, cooperation is the product of underlying connectedness and norms that constrain individual behavior in the interests of other members. Building on the distinction between bridging social capital and bonding social capital, bridging features a broader, more inclusive level of cooperation and better operates between those in differing groups, yielding collective goods and services that are agenda-neutral, while bonding is more common within homogeneous groups, potentially amplifying faction (Rayamajhee & Bohara, 2021).

Earlier research on social capital in public administration ((Panday et al., 2021) has concerned itself primarily with understanding how social capital can emerge and manifest in local settings like neighbourhoods or villages or through more formal social organizations. More recent work in government has been undertaken to assert how social capital may have an impact on the performance of government programs and services. The set value hypotheses normally express that there are advantages to having relationships with and drawing on those persons and institutions outside of government.

Bonds represent a younger age of associations and predicted relationship patterns with corruption. Alternately, bridging includes an older, richer mix of associations and is more generally considered to yield better cooperation and mutual terms (Panday et al.2021)

2. 4. Social Entrepreneurship Theory

Social entrepreneurship scholars have developed a few theoretical frameworks, but none is particularly noted for its widespread usage. In this section, we examine the different theories that are often used in social entrepreneurship research. We begin by identifying the

two types of theories used in social entrepreneurship writings: namely, characteristics of entrepreneurs and the opportunity. After this, the study draws on criticisms of current thinking in social entrepreneurship research to identify three theories that are still underutilized in this field: effects-based theories, bricolage, and the maker-versus-taker concept. Following this discussion, we identify implications for future research.

Social entrepreneurship research often draws on one of the theories of social enterprise, the resource-based view, stakeholder, and institutional theories, among others. None of these theories is unique to social entrepreneurship; however, other fields like strategic or corporate social responsibility research also call on them. Despite many conceptual and empirical differences, a majority of the work centres on what differentiates the social entrepreneur from other types of entrepreneurs, asking relevant questions about whether social innovation in social entrepreneurship a similarity or a difference is (Kruse et al.2021; Vo-Thanh et al., 2021)

Social entrepreneurship researchers, in general, try to understand the peculiarities of the social entrepreneur regarding motivation, aspirations, and business orientation. However, the theory of social entrepreneurship does not bring much to understanding either the opportunity or the unique resource configuration obtained by the social entrepreneur or their resulting effect. This lack of diversity in theories is not unique to social entrepreneurship research. In fact, it is more of a general problem in the social sciences. Organizations need a combination of 'doers', 'strategists', and 'dreamers' who all work together; they should think in terms of multiple imperatives and work with profit and purpose, yet capitalism is often criticized for lacking that diversification. However, many fields within business studies have developed their body of science in four distinct areas: conceptual work, a focus on the entrepreneur or their personality, empirical work at the micro-level, and macro-level societal effect. Although these perspectives are important, they offer limited insights into how being entrepreneurially driven benefits the individual members as a greater whole (Morris et al., 2021; Stirzaker et al., 2021).

We argue that our understanding of social entrepreneurship may be enhanced by drawing on five theories currently underutilized in this research stream: micro-level effects-based theories; logic or bricolage; the maker-versus-taker concept; the grand narrative about social entrepreneurs with regard to institutional-addressing activities in society; and social capital, which has often been mentioned in a social entrepreneurship context but never really demonstrated as either an antecedent or a potential effect.

While the resource-based view can supplement some knowledge gaps in social entrepreneurship research, the grand narrative and resources and resource in kind can be expected to provide unique insights, especially with respect to dynamics and life development phases of social venture creation. Before going into the reasons to rely on these theories and providing a rationale as to why they are underutilized in social entrepreneurship research, it is beneficial to shortly review what is known about theory development in the social entrepreneurship field (Carmen et al.2022)

2. 4.1. Conceptual Framework

The literature in the field of social capital has evolved from its origins as an element of successful cooperation within a community, promoting the wealth and development of nations, to its current acceptance as a dynamic resource facilitating the attainment of local public goods and services. The concept of social capital can be used to explain many of the well-established stylized facts of the development process by cultural legacies, community goals and conflicts, and trade, technology adoption, and growth. In terms of the outcomes achieved, there is extensive literature documenting the benefits to both the individual and the community as a result of the formation and investment in social capital (Li et al., 2022).

The formation of social capital creates pathways for the efficient local exchange of mutual benefits, and these externalities to social relationships provide the incentive scheme necessary for economic efficiency. At the community level, the benefits of social capital

investment can be documented in terms of collective action whereby the community is seen to internalize the costs and benefits of, for example, the formation and care of local amenities and the operation of local services.

This literature also points out that in most cases benefits exceed their costs, and it identifies a number of mechanisms that explain why people might invest in social capital. These include traditional notions of reciprocity, norms, and trust, but also participation in group activities, joint ownership of material goods, and a sense of belonging and identity.

However, the sustainability of communities and their social and economic fabric is not necessarily sufficient to withstand exogenous shocks, and globally, new companies are increasingly recognizing how important the efficient production of public goods and engagement of the public sector have become to their long-term prospects. The literature in social entrepreneurship has been founded on the notion that social capital can be used to compensate for the shortcomings of other forms of capital with regard to the production of public goods. At the same time, companies actively attempt to recreate damaged social capital in the communities in which they operate by participating in social capital-building projects (Olmedo et al., 2023).

2. 4.2. Key Theorists and Historical Development

In this chapter, the fundamental mission is to provide an understanding based on the basic literature available. First, the theory of social capital, its general framework, explanation, and related issues will be provided. Later, the social entrepreneurship theory, its description, and related issues will be discussed.

For a better understanding of the nature of social entrepreneurship, a listing of different entrepreneurship theories was provided. Over time, various theories have been developed regarding the impact of the government on business. These theories can be classified into seven groups: (1) the Classical View and the Invisible Hand Group; (2) the Managerial Theory; (3)

the Market Failure Group; (4) the Social Welfare Theory; (5) the Concern for Social Responsibility Group; (6) the Stakeholder Theory; (7) the Agency Theory (Wirba, 2024).

An overwhelming majority of academic literature on social capital builds on the works of various scholars; the conceptual roots of social capital date back to the works of others. However, the major boost and explosion for social life in the eyes of political interviews can be seen after a significant publication focusing on specific regions. The framework defines social capital with a range of community guilds, advocacy groups, non-political local clubs, and political parties linked to the proportion of eligible voters. The increase within these parameters enhances the efficiency of regional governments, and thus the norm of trust. An increase in the number of clubs in a province seems to have a positive effect on the province's level of trust and trust in public services.

According to Putro et al., (2022) the literature, social capital consists of some aspects of social organization such as coalitions, conversations, common values, or social norms that facilitate cooperation within or among groups. Social capital is both an input and an outcome, and thus strengthens the relationship between the province and the citizens, and keeps the representatives accountable (Ghorbani et al.2022)

2. 5. Models of Social Entrepreneurship

From the beginning of the 1990s, academia has been witnessing a more active interest in the economic activity referred to as social entrepreneurship. This interest comes particularly from researchers and sociologists but also from others working in different areas of the academy. Social entrepreneurs act in different areas that are common components of social exclusion, turning to various strategies and market models. Some of them develop social enterprises that wish to become models for society and challenge established concepts of corporate behavior. This also leads to the field of corporate social responsibility becoming a subject of debate. Social entrepreneurship has become a central issue, particularly since the

Social Summit in Copenhagen. At this summit, the social economy sector was recognized as a pillar of the economy (De et al., 2021).

Furthermore, the Lisbon Summit (2020) called for the development of stronger partnerships to monitor the objectives of employment, economic reforms, and social inclusion. The European Employment and Social Affairs Social Budget reiterated the need to develop innovative approaches and forms of work to support employment in the labor market and promote social inclusion.

These innovative forms of work bridged the demand for social services with the supply provided by the not-for-profit sector. The increased demand for co-production activities and new services appears as a result of advances in technology, health, and longevity. Co-production activities are defined as the combination of two pension systems made by the state and the third sector. The third sector is known as the not-for-profit sector, which includes social cooperatives, mutual service societies, associations, foundations, and other various types of not-for-profit organizations (Defourny et al.2021)

2. 5.1. Innovative Solutions to Social Problems

One of the central characteristics of SEs (social enterprises) is their innovative approach to addressing societal problems. Commercial companies can also develop innovative solutions, but typically these will concentrate on direct consumer consumption problems. In contrast, SEs respond to social problems that free-market enterprise has failed to satisfactorily address. Examples include community care, where families are absent or incapable of providing adequate support; care homes for the elderly, particularly those affected by dementia; rehabilitation of drug abusers and ex-prisoners; and sustaining isolated community cultural and economic activities, delivering power to those otherwise marginalized in the political process. Nor do these examples exhaust the potential of SEs: innovative solutions are found wherever free enterprise is impeded in satisfying human needs. (Antonoplis, 2023; Perrini et al., 2021).

Worries exist about the sustainability of innovative solutions developed by SEs, which derive principally from unquantifiable, or at least unmeasured, underpinning by social capital. Social capital both intervenes in the choices and economic management these permits, and also substitutes for them where they fail to meet societies' needs. Together these dimensions comprise the social capital revolution. The following section develops this connection between social capital and SE theory (Daskalopoulou et al., 2023).

2. 5.2. Sustainability and Impact Measurement

The impact measurement tools could provide a more comprehensive understanding of global poverty and social change from social enterprises. These businesses do much more than provide economic opportunities; they generate positive social and environmental outcomes for regions in which governments are not able to afford programs. Another essential role played by social enterprises is the engagement schemes put in place to help reduce poverty (Wang, 2021).

However, finding a sustainability strategy is at the core of these engagement schemes, and many efforts have failed in recent years to establish effective strategies to assist with this problem. This paper reviewed several business models, which included offerings for the poor, at a cost to the affected population, and benefactors who were funding the program, in attempts to design models that seemed very promising; nonetheless, they faced major reporting concerns. Other efforts at establishing sustainability that were reviewed are ongoing; however, social enterprises realize that to be a successful poverty reduction vehicle, impact measurement and best practices for sustainability still need to be developed (Lee et al., 2021).

In response to our exploration of at least current ventures trying to tackle poverty extremes, the study decided to explore the relationship between social capital and social enterprises configured within a cluster system, which are organizations aiming to reduce poverty experienced in extremes.

Social entrepreneurship is a global trend contributing significantly to the development and creation of poverty-mitigating activities. From our exploratory research, this seems like a good place to start an attempt at straightforward vehicles for impact measurement to gather information on the affected population, and which we aim to establish sustainably, financially rewarding mechanisms to engage the greater population, in hopes that social entrepreneurs engaged in such a poverty reduction role are successful. Our research began by conceptualizing the two concepts separately and then together to build a theoretical research model clarifying the role their joint concepts play (Anam et al., 2024).

2. 6. Intersection of Social Capital and Social Entrepreneurship Theory

Social capital contributes to the social entrepreneurship process, and therefore, social capital can be utilized as a theoretical foundation in social entrepreneurship research. Since the concept of social capital helps unravel the grey areas within social entrepreneurial behaviors, social capital is often referred to in social entrepreneurship literature. In the same rationale, it is argued that one must have exposure to differing or multiple systems to spot the gaps that develop problems.

An experimental study found bonding social capital to be a key attribute for typical entrepreneurs and linking persons to be a crucial characteristic of social entrepreneurs. It has been suggested that social capital can be considered in the demonstration of the preparation necessary for entrepreneurs to succeed in civil society (Daskalopoulou et al., 2023).

Despite substantial research exploring the nexus between social capital and social entrepreneurship, there are only a few researchers who directly investigate social capital to understand the internal processes. The review therefore aims to provide a succinct overview of these ideas so it will encourage future research directions and interest among scholars. (Mgueraman & EL Abboubi, 2024)

Social capital is gaining a boost in social entrepreneurship research mainly through being used as an explanatory concept to explain empirical evidence based on social entrepreneurial behaviors. The concept itself consists of numerous versions, including the more popular versions. Social capital is defined as being related to who people know, deriving from the people they interact with and producing benefits accruing to them, or usually the result of these interactions. Social capital can be categorized into four forms: (i) bonding ties - social ties within a group; (ii) bridging ties - social ties between groups; (iii) linking ties - social ties between groups and organizations; (iv) optimizing social ties at a whole-system level. Despite having diverse interpretations, social capital almost always includes three basic elements, namely direct or indirect resources, social ties, and normative structure (Perry et al., 2022).

2.6.1. Empirical Studies and Case Examples

This literature review analyzed major theoretical discussions related to social capital, organizational capacity, and social entrepreneurship in order to develop the multi-dimensional organizational capacity development framework for the social enterprise. The primary investigation of the theory of social capital and social entrepreneurship showed that several researchers have focused on more empirical studies in the social entrepreneurship literature through the use of case studies, illustrations of practice, and single or cross-disciplinary discussion.

Some researchers have argued in a theoretical debate the divergent view to the dominant research field, which indicates that more empirical study from various practices is needed. However, existing empirical study contributions have lagged behind the increasingly exponential growth of research paper publication.

Furthermore, the theoretical debate on theoretical concepts, behavior, or existence of the social enterprise is still the only discussion in the pre-theory stage. Therefore, the focus of these case examples is on clarifying the pre-paradigm nature of the social enterprise or

providing either an informative or an interpretive description of a social phenomenon or an essential element for the development of a model.

As a comprehensive qualitative study, the nature of the research method adopted allowed for a thorough analysis of the theoretical issue and an explanation of the role of social capital in the development of the crucible social enterprise individual capacity (Kruse et al., 2021; Defourny et al., 2021).

2.6.2. Critiques of theories

Applying the theory of social capital to social entrepreneurship provides a useful integration of a group of activities that contribute to reducing negative social externalities and reinforces that the motivation to achieve a socially efficient result does not depend exclusively on legal prohibitions, regulations, or organizational incentive structures. To limit social needs to services as basic as income guarantees and to relate services with unpaid volunteers confirms an incomplete interpretation of social demands. This vision reinforces the reasoning of game theory but does not explain the basis of these motivations.

From a social capital perspective, relations between people determine whether social actors carry these noble motivations. The theory of social capital contributes to affirm that individuals with a high stock of social capital have a greater propensity to practice efficient acts. This confirms the subjective nature of this objective. Phrased in this way, this represents a more elegant and faithful form of understanding initiatives carried out with the aim of social interest. Referring to the constitution of social capital from the alignment of individual preferences can contribute to a new way of understanding what it means to be ethical. The alignment of self-interest with community interest could make the social surplus represent something efficient, pleasant, balanced, and virtuous (Argentiero et al., 2023; Junaidi et al., 2023)

7. Conclusion

In the preceding chapters, we have argued that analyzing how a social entrepreneur manages to create structural holes and manage social capital in these social networks requires a simultaneous use of the theory of social capital and social entrepreneurship theory.

The study specifies how these two theories are used to understand how a social entrepreneur manages to become a broker who exploits resources and aligns them with other actors. The capital and resource structure of a social enterprise lies in its relationships with other actors, which is the value of its social network. Actors with structural holes to other actors usually, but not always, exert more influence on the activities of other actors. By acting as a broker who fills structural holes, a social entrepreneur within that structure can become indispensable, since without their intervention, the actors would be locked into a situation in which they underinvest in creating both social capital and structural capital.

2.8 Summary

This chapter has traversed a complex and enriching journey through the foundational theories that underpin the study of social entrepreneurship in the Indian context. As we navigated the intricate landscape of these theoretical constructs, we gained profound insights into the conceptual bedrock upon which our empirical exploration rests.

The theory of social capital and social entrepreneurship theory based on our argument that social capital created by social entrepreneurs can be a source of their competitive edge, how or why are certain social entrepreneurial endeavors much more successful than others? Social entrepreneurship theory and the theory of social capital are two interconnected frameworks that provide valuable insights into the dynamics of social enterprises and their impact on society.

Social entrepreneurship theory focuses on the motivations, processes, and characteristics of social entrepreneurs who seek to address social issues while generating economic value. It emphasizes the innovative approaches these entrepreneurs employ to create sustainable solutions that benefit both individuals and communities. By integrating social and economic objectives, social entrepreneurship theory highlights the potential for transformative change in addressing pressing societal challenges.

On the other hand, the theory of social capital underscores the importance of social networks, relationships, and trust in facilitating cooperation and collective action. It posits that strong social ties and community engagement can enhance access to resources, information, and opportunities, ultimately contributing to individual and collective well-being. In the context of social entrepreneurship, social capital serves as a critical resource that enables entrepreneurs to mobilize support, build partnerships, and effectively implement their initiatives.

Together, these theories illuminate the interplay between social entrepreneurship and social capital in fostering inclusive economic growth and addressing socio-economic disparities. Understanding how social entrepreneurs leverage social capital can inform strategies for enhancing their impact and sustainability. As societies continue to grapple with complex challenges, integrating insights from both theories will be essential for developing innovative solutions that promote social equity and economic development. The next chapter delves into the research methodology of the study exploring qualitative approaches of social entrepreneurship.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview of the Research Problem

The concept of social entrepreneurship, although not new, has garnered significant attention in the context of sustainable development and social justice in recent years (Dees et al., 1998). Social entrepreneurs are individuals who initiate innovative solutions to society's most pressing social problems, combining social welfare objectives with the business approach of entrepreneurship (Mair et al., 2006). In India, with its myriad social and environmental challenges exacerbated by high population density, social entrepreneurship is seen not just as an opportunity for innovation but a necessity for sustainable development (Yunus et al., 2007).

Despite the potential for positive change, there is a palpable gap in the literature concerning the concrete impacts of social entrepreneurship on a developing country's socio-economic fabric, particularly in India. Many studies highlight the theoretical benefits and potential of social entrepreneurship (Zahra et al., 2009), but there is a dearth of empirical data quantifying its actual contributions, successes, and areas for improvement (Seelos et al., 2005). This lack of comprehensive understanding and empirical support limits policymakers' and stakeholders' ability to make informed decisions, potentially hindering the optimization of social entrepreneurship's role in India's growth (Prahalad et al., 2010).

Furthermore, the diversity in cultural, social, and economic landscapes across India presents a complex scenario where a one-size-fits-all approach may not be effective (Khanna et al., 2007). Localized studies exist, but they often fail to capture the holistic picture of the country's collective experience (Dacin et al., 2011). This research seeks to address these gaps by providing a nuanced, empirical, and comprehensive analysis of how social entrepreneurship contributes to India's socio-economic development and sustainable growth, taking into account the diverse regional variations.

Therefore, the problem at hand is multifaceted: there is a need to explore beyond theoretical potential, understand the practical implications, gauge the actual impact, and finally, gather empirical data to inform future strategies and policies. This study aims to delve into these aspects, providing clarity and direction for the future of social entrepreneurship in India's path to growth.

3.2 Operationalization of Theoretical Constructs

Operationalization refers to the process of defining theoretical constructs in measurable terms, ensuring that abstract concepts are translated into observable and quantifiable variables for empirical research (Babbie et al., 2010). For this study on the impact of social entrepreneurship on India's growth, several central theoretical constructs need clarification and conversion into measurable entities.

Historically, the definition of social entrepreneurship has been debated extensively (Mair et al., 2006). For the purposes of this research, it will be defined as entrepreneurial endeavors that prioritize social and/or environmental missions alongside, or even above, profit objectives (Dees et al., 1998). This can be measured through indicators like the organization's mission statement, percentage of profits reinvested into the social cause, and qualitative narratives of their impact.

The study will conduct in-depth interviews with social entrepreneurs recognized with different national and international awards and who have led their organizations to scale and made significant social impact. Both primary and secondary data will be mapped for data analysis. The study will be conducted using three phases of analysis. Content analysis will be used for the first phase, and analyses of impact and growth outcomes will be conducted in the second and third phases using qualitative comparative analyses and a theoretical framework. Using data triangulation from in-depth interviews and secondary data will have implications

for the theory and also contribute to advancing our understanding of the relation between social entrepreneurship, innovativeness, external growth forces, and India's growth. It connects literature in social entrepreneurship, innovation, and growth. It will contribute to the literature in social entrepreneurship and public policy advocacy. Findings from the current study may also provide useful information for social entrepreneurial ecosystem actors in India.

Operationalizing these constructs ensures that the subsequent stages of research, from data collection to analysis, are rooted in empirical reality, allowing for evidence-based conclusions and recommendations. This also aids in making abstract constructs tangible, enabling a clearer connection between the theoretical framework and practical implications (Adcock et al., 2001).

3.3 Research Purpose and Questions

The primary purpose of this research is to explore the multifaceted role of social entrepreneurship in India's socio-economic landscape. Specifically, it seeks to understand the nature of social challenges that social entrepreneurship can address, its contribution to economic growth, the mechanisms it employs to foster inclusivity, and the barriers and challenges it faces in the Indian context. This study is grounded in both exploratory and evaluative purposes, aiming to unearth detailed insights and assess the hypotheses related to the role and impact of social entrepreneurship in India.

The main research questions are:

- What are the key social challenges that social entrepreneurship can address in India?
- How does social entrepreneurship contribute to economic growth and development in India?
- What are the mechanisms through which social entrepreneurship fosters inclusive growth in India?
- What are the barriers and challenges faced by social entrepreneurship ventures in India?

Accompanying these research questions, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Social entrepreneurship plays a significant role in addressing social challenges such as poverty, education, healthcare, and environmental sustainability in India. This hypothesis aligns with the assertion by authors like Austin et al. (2006) who posit that social entrepreneurship is a vital mechanism in addressing systemic social issues by introducing innovative solutions and leveraging community-based approaches.

H2: Social entrepreneurship positively contributes to economic growth by promoting innovation, creating employment opportunities, and attracting investments in underserved regions of India. This hypothesis is grounded in the theory of economic development which suggests that entrepreneurship drives economic growth through innovation and the creation of new markets.

H3: Social entrepreneurship fosters inclusive growth in India by empowering marginalized communities, promoting social inclusion, and reducing inequalities. This hypothesis is supported by literature indicating that social enterprises often focus on inclusive business models that integrate low-income communities into their value chains, thus promoting equity and social justice.

H4: Limited access to funding, lack of supportive policies, and insufficient ecosystem support act as barriers to the growth and effectiveness of social entrepreneurship in India. This hypothesis reflects the challenges documented in existing literature, pointing out that social entrepreneurs often face unique difficulties not encountered by traditional businesses, including regulatory hurdles, funding constraints, and a lack of understanding or recognition from stakeholders

Through these research questions and hypotheses, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact, potential, and challenges of social entrepreneurship in India, contributing valuable insights to policymakers, practitioners, and academicians.

3.4 Research Design

The research design constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data. It serves as the strategic framework for action that aims to ensure the quality of the research's findings (Creswell et al., 2013). In investigating the complex phenomena surrounding social entrepreneurship in India, this study employs a qualitative research design to allow for a comprehensive analysis of the research problem.

The qualitative approach is particularly suitable for this research as it facilitates triangulation, corroborating evidence from different methods to shed light on the multifaceted nature of social entrepreneurship (Johnson et al., 2007). This approach not only enriches the understanding of the context but also provides a robust way to explore the nuances and complexities involved in the practices of social entrepreneurship in India (Venkatesh et al., 2013).

The qualitative research study is concerned with collecting and analyzing information about individuals and organizations from a holistic perspective. In such studies, the information about people is employed to understand institutional and organizational environments within which they live and work, and also to examine the processes and outputs at micro and macro levels. In the former setting, the analysis of data provides insight into thought processes, judgment, and experienced behaviors of participants in the study; while in the latter setting, evidence suggests the soundness of institutional and organizational policies and procedures in promoting quality in managing resources to achieve their goals and objectives.

The qualitative research design is suitable when the study involves a holistic perspective. This investigation requires the collection of a large number of variables or factors associated with the phenomenon of investigation, varying levels of exploration, open-ended interviews, and probing of subjects with further questions for more explanations, examination, and analysis of issues related to the topic of interest (Yin et al., 2018).

Throughout the varied activities in a qualitative study, the researchers explore, catalog, and configure details about people's lives and work related to the phenomenon of inquiry. The depth and insight of the study are achieved through careful examination and constant refinement. Furthermore, the research seeks more and more details about the underlying issues and assumptions shaping the occurrence.

Data Integration: In the final phase, data triangulation will occur where the theoretical framework and qualitative data will be integrated for a comprehensive analysis. This concurrent triangulation strategy will not only cross-validate the findings but also create a holistic understanding of the research problem (Creswell et al., 2011).

Utilizing multiple theoretical frameworks can enrich the analysis of social entrepreneurship's impact. For instance, researchers might apply economic theories to assess financial outcomes while also employing social theories to evaluate community engagement and social change. This dual lens can help in understanding how social enterprises operate within broader economic and social systems in India.

3.5 Population and Sample

In research, the population refers to the entire set of individuals or entities relevant to the research questions, while the sample is the specific group of individuals or entities that you will collect data from (Creswell et al., 2017). In the context of this study on social entrepreneurship in India, the population includes all social enterprises across various sectors in India. Given the vast and diverse nature of this population, a representative sample is crucial

for an insightful, accurate, and generalizable study. In this research, the population refers to the entire group of individuals or entities that meet specific criteria relevant to the study. For evaluating the impact of social entrepreneurship on India's growth, the population could be defined as:

Social Entrepreneurs: Individuals who have established or lead social enterprises in India, focusing on addressing social issues while achieving financial sustainability.

Beneficiaries: Individuals or groups directly impacted by social enterprises, such as low-income communities, marginalized populations, or specific demographic groups that benefit from the services or products offered by these enterprises.

Stakeholders: This may include community leaders, local government officials, investors, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involved with or supporting social entrepreneurship initiatives.

Sample Strategy

Given the population defined above, a sample of Thirty (30) people will be selected to conduct the study. The sample should be representative of the broader population to ensure that the findings can be generalized. A multi-stage stratified random sampling technique will be employed in this study. Stratified sampling involves dividing the population into distinct subgroups, or strata, and then randomly selecting samples from each of these groups. This method is particularly beneficial when researchers expect significant differences among strata or need to ensure representation from all subgroups within the population (Bryman et al., 2015).

Selection Criteria:

Social Entrepreneurs (12 participants): Select founders or leaders of social enterprises that have been operational for at least three years and have demonstrated measurable social

impact. This group will provide insights into their experiences, challenges, and strategies for success.

Beneficiaries (12 participants): Choose individuals who have directly benefited from the services or products of these social enterprises. Ensure diversity in demographics (age, gender, socioeconomic status) to capture a wide range of perspectives on the impact of social entrepreneurship.

Stakeholders (6 participants): Include local government officials, representatives from NGOs, or community leaders who can provide context on how social enterprises interact with and contribute to community development and policy frameworks.

Stratification Criteria:

The stratification in this study will be based on several criteria such as:

1. **Geographical location:** Considering India's vast geographical diversity, social enterprises will be stratified across different regions – north, south, east, west, and central.
2. **Sector:** Social enterprises operate in various sectors like education, healthcare, environment, etc. Each sector will form a stratum.
3. **Size:** The size of the enterprises, based on factors like funding, staff size, or impact reach, will also be considered.

Sampling Procedure:

Once the strata are defined and sample sizes determined, random sampling will be used within each stratum to select specific enterprises for inclusion in the study. This approach ensures that each social enterprise within a stratum has an equal opportunity of being chosen, thereby supporting the generalizability of the research findings (Bhattacharjee et al., 2012).

This rigorous population and sample selection process will ensure that the research data are representative and reflective of the diversity of social entrepreneurship in India, thereby providing valuable and credible insights for stakeholders.

3.6 Participant Selection

The participant selection process in research is critical because the individuals chosen to participate will significantly influence the richness of the data collected and the overall credibility of the study (Palinkas et al., 2015). In the context of this research on social entrepreneurship in India, participants will be selected based on their experience and involvement in social entrepreneurial activities. These participants will primarily include social entrepreneurs, beneficiaries, employees, policymakers, and investors involved with social enterprises in India.

Criteria for Selection:

To ensure that participants provide insightful, diverse, and relevant information related to the research questions, the following inclusion criteria will be established:

- **Social Entrepreneurs:** Individuals who have founded or co-founded a social enterprise in India and have been operating for at least two years. They should have substantial knowledge about the enterprise's operations, challenges, and impact.
- **Beneficiaries:** Individuals or community representatives who have directly benefited from the social enterprise's services or products.
- **Employees:** Individuals who are currently employed with the social enterprise and are closely involved in its day-to-day operations.
- **Policymakers:** Government officials or representatives of regulatory bodies who are knowledgeable about policies impacting social entrepreneurship in India.

- **Investors:** Individuals or institutional representatives who have financially invested in social enterprises in India.

Recruitment Strategies: Effective recruitment strategies will be employed to encourage participation from individuals who meet the selection criteria:

- **Direct Contact:** Potential participants, especially social entrepreneurs and employees, will be contacted directly via email or phone through contact information obtained from public domains or professional networks.
- **Snowball Sampling:** This technique involves existing participants referring the researcher to other potential participants who meet the criteria (Noy et al., 2008). This strategy is particularly useful for reaching beneficiaries and other stakeholders.
- **Professional and Community Organizations:** Collaborations with organizations and networks that support or are involved with social entrepreneurship in India can facilitate access to a broader pool of potential participants.

Informed Consent:

Prior to participation, all participants will receive an informed consent form detailing the study's purpose, what participation involves, confidentiality measures, and their rights, including the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty (Dikko et al., 2016). This ethical consideration ensures participants are well-informed and agree to their involvement voluntarily.

Diversity Considerations:

Efforts will be made to ensure diversity among participants in terms of gender, age, geographical location, and socio-economic background to capture a wide range of experiences and perspectives (Tracy et al., 2010).

By meticulously defining the criteria for participant selection and employing strategic recruitment methods, this study aims to engage with a variety of informed participants, thereby enriching the data collected and enhancing the study's validity and depth of insight.

3.7 Instrumentation

Instrumentation in research refers to the tools or means by which investigators aim to measure variables or gather information. The choice of instruments dictates the quality of data collected and, consequently, the reliability and validity of the research findings (Creswell et al., 2014). In the context of this study, which seeks to understand the extent to which social entrepreneurship can assist India's growth, both quantitative and qualitative instruments will be used in line with the mixed-methods research design.

Qualitative Instrumentation:

The questionnaires developed for primary data collection are in three parts: (i) a short introductory section explaining the questionnaire and obtaining consent from respondents; (ii) a fill-up section asking for the demographics of the firms, the entrepreneur, the business model, and the social business model; (iii) a ranking section soliciting a ranking of up to five of the most influential factors that have contributed to the growth of the firm.

Constructing the questionnaire: A draft version of the questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire was then reviewed, and comments were integrated. The draft was then reviewed by the Advisory of mentor and refined. The questionnaire was structured in two parts: 1) 12 questions sought information about the respondent firm, the interviewee entrepreneur, the business model, and the social business model; 2) open-ended questions inquiring about social impact; 3) The questionnaire was made available in both Hindi and English. The final questionnaire went through a two-stage pilot test on-site to verify the reliability and accuracy of the questions as well as to calculate the length and quality of the interviews.

1. Interviews: Semi-structured interviews will serve as the primary qualitative instrument. This format is flexible and allows for in-depth exploration of participants' views, experiences, and insights (Brinkmann et al., 2013). An interview guide with open-ended questions will be prepared in advance to ensure consistency, but additional questions may arise in response to participants' discussions.

2. Focus Groups: Focus group discussions are another qualitative instrument that will be used to gather data. These discussions are beneficial for collecting diverse perspectives on a topic in a relatively short period (Krueger et al., 2014). A moderator guide will be used to steer the conversation, while allowing for natural group interactions and discussions to inform the research.

Instrument Validation and Reliability:

To ensure validity and reliability, the instruments will undergo a rigorous process of validation:

- **Expert Review:** Drafts of the instruments will be reviewed by experts in social entrepreneurship and research methodology to check for content validity, ensuring the items adequately cover the constructs being measured (Creswell et al., 2000).
- **Pilot Testing:** The instruments will be pilot tested with a small subset of the target population. Pilot testing is crucial for identifying and rectifying potential issues with the survey or interview questions, instructions, and procedures (Van et al., 2001).
- **Reliability Testing:** For the quantitative instrument, statistical tests, such as Cronbach's alpha, will be conducted on the pilot data to assess the reliability or internal consistency of the survey items (Tavakol et al., 2011).

By carefully choosing and rigorously validating the research instruments, this study will ensure the collection of high-quality data, crucial for drawing credible and valid conclusions about the role of social entrepreneurship in India's socio-economic development.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection is a critical phase in the research process, as the data obtained forms the basis for the analysis and, ultimately, the findings of the research. The procedures must be meticulously planned and executed to maintain the integrity and reliability of the data (Creswell et al., 2017). For the study on the role of social entrepreneurship in India's growth, the following steps outline the data collection procedures:

- **Research Permissions and Ethical Approval:**
- Before data collection begins, necessary permissions will be obtained from relevant authorities. Additionally, the research proposal will be submitted to an Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure that the study complies with ethical standards in research involving human participants (Sieber et al., 2018).
- **Participant Recruitment:**
 - Using the criteria and strategies outlined in the participant selection section, potential participants will be identified and contacted. They will receive information about the study, what is required of them, and the measures taken to protect their confidentiality and rights (Flick et al., 2018).
- **Informed Consent:**
 - All participants will be provided with informed consent forms to sign before data collection commences. This form will inform participants of their rights, the purpose of the study, and what participation entails (Mack et al., 2019).
- **Qualitative Data Collection – Interviews and Focus Groups:**

- **Scheduling:** Interviews and focus groups will be scheduled at convenient times and locations for the participants. - **Conducting:** Interviews and focus group discussions will be conducted based on the guides prepared. They will be recorded with the consent of the participants, allowing for verbatim transcription and accurate analysis (Brinkmann et al., 2013).
- **Documentation:** In addition to audio recordings, notes will be taken during the sessions to document key observations, non-verbal cues, and the researcher's reflections (Roulston et al., 2010).
- **Data Storage:**
 - All data will be securely stored in encrypted files and access will be restricted to the research team. Physical data, like consent forms and printed surveys, will be kept in locked cabinets (Singleton et al., 2017).
- **Data Quality Control**
 - Throughout the data collection process, measures will be in place to ensure data quality. These include checking surveys for completeness, verifying the audio quality of recordings, and reviewing notes and transcriptions for accuracy (Bryman et al., 2012).
 - By following these comprehensive data collection procedures, the study will ensure that the data are ethically and effectively gathered, setting the stage for a thorough and meaningful analysis.

3.9 Data Analysis

This chapter deals with the detailed analysis of the research data collected from the selected case studies to identify the nature of their social missions, their respective geographical reach, and the types of outcomes of the services and products offered. Also, the data were examined to understand the barriers to scaling and overcoming these issues in the management

of the selected social entrepreneurs. For the comprehensive analysis of research data, the study used quantitative research techniques. The qualitative research techniques have been used to obtain maintenance and an in-depth understanding of the research problem that could not be obtained from quantitative data collection techniques.

The qualitative data analysis techniques help in organizing, analyzing, interpreting, and making sense of non-numeric data to construct a deeper understanding of the research empirical data. They help in finding patterns in the data and how these patterns are related to the research problem under investigation. One primary reason that qualitative research needs to be analyzed is to address the research question, "What patterns exist in the data, why do these patterns exist, and how do these patterns relate to each other?" For the comprehensive analysis of qualitative research data, the study used methods of manual analysis as well as professional software. Data analysis methods that facilitated the collection, organization, and interpretation of the data have been used in qualitative methods research approaches (Kang & Hwang, 2021).

Data analysis in research involves inspecting, cleaning, transforming, and modeling data to discover useful information, inform conclusions, and support decision-making. In the context of this study on social entrepreneurship's role in India's growth (Creswell et al., 2017).

Qualitative Data Analysis:

- **Data Cleaning:** The first step involves preparing the data for analysis, which includes checking for any input errors, handling missing data, and ensuring the dataset is complete and accurate for analysis (Tabachnick et al., 2013).
- **Descriptive Statistics:** Descriptive statistics (e.g., mean, standard deviation, frequency distributions) will be used to summarize and describe the basic features of the data in the study. This provides simple summaries about the sample and the measures (Trochim et al., 2006).

- **Transcription:** Audio recordings from interviews and focus groups will be transcribed verbatim to facilitate analysis (Bailey et al., 2008).
- **Coding:** Data will be organized into chunks of relevant information, known as codes. This involves a close reading of the transcript text to identify specific words, phrases, or sections related to the research questions (Saldaña et al., 2015).
- **Theme Development:** Codes will be analyzed and grouped into broader themes that capture the prevalent or significant patterns in the data. These themes will be aligned with the research questions and objectives (Kumar and Dwivedy, 2023).
- **Data Interpretation:** The final step in qualitative analysis involves interpreting the data, where the researcher makes sense of the themes, describes relationships, and theorizes about underlying reasons or causes (Creswell et al., 2014).

By systematically analyzing the data using these methods, the study will produce comprehensive, reliable, and valid findings regarding the extent and ways social entrepreneurship is contributing to India's growth.

3.10 Thematic Analysis

There has been a tradition of qualitative analysis and insight extraction starting from the qualitative in-depth interviews that underscore qualitative research. Qualitative research, through its focus on words, narratives, and meaning, helps in understanding the experiences of people, groups, and their relationships, as well as understanding institutional and organizational cultures. Some of the criticisms that have been leveled against qualitative research are its apparent low generality, lack of generalization, and ability to lead to assertion and fairly high uncertainty compared to quantitative research.

Over the years, the belief that qualitative research cannot be amenable to generalization to the same extent as quantitative research has been questioned. In fact, some researchers say

the unique complex nature and individual meaning-making ability of the narrative attributes of qualitative research provide an excellent method for generation and, at least partial, exploration of theories (Crabtree & Miller, 2023).

Hence, thematic analysis lies in ambiguity in the broader context of philosophy and how it fits with the interview transcription, data coding, and the constraints of the research setting. Engaging in thematic analysis is about making some key philosophical choices in spite of a seeming lack of theoretical coherence or philosophical sophistication (Finlay2021).

These choices are illustrated in terms of the conceptual background from which the analysis operates, the level of interpretation and pace of analysis, expectations from the data and theme construction, and whether researchers take analysis lightly where material and analysis are led inductively. The significance of the conceptual level of analysis translates to the level of theory or data that a researcher focuses on (Wiltshire & Ronkainen, 2021).

Reliability and validity

Reliability and validity are crucial aspects of any research study, as they speak to the credibility and trustworthiness of the research instruments, methodology, and findings. Reliability refers to the consistency of the measurement process and the stability of the findings over time. If the study were to be conducted again under similar conditions, reliable instruments and methods would yield similar results.

Validity is the first thing that comes to a researcher's mind. The common meaning of the validity of a test is that it measures what it purports to measure. However, in the field of social research, the issue of validity is more complex compared to the ones in testing. This is because, in tests, a criterion against which to judge the different responses is known, whereas no similar standards are available to judge social research responses. Our understanding of social phenomena cannot be as clear as the understanding of matters of the physical or biological sciences.

A social researcher is therefore required to pay a great deal of attention to the quality of different types of inferences that he might make. This generally requires the demonstration of the reliability and the validity of his conclusions (May & Perry, 2022).

The reliability of an item is its capability to produce consistent results when used in different situations and with different sets of respondents. A major test of the reliability of an indicator is the test-retest method. A common method of analyzing the reliability of indicators is the split-half method. In this method, the relationships between items of the two halves are examined, assuming that both halves measure the same thing. If the two halves show comparable results, one can be confident that the indicator would be reliable. The coefficient of reliability generally ranges from 0.8 to 0.9 and can also be used to develop measures.

Reliable measures should have clear operational definitions; they use standardized forms, testing conditions, or interview schedules; and they require trained interviewers or observers. However, reliability is necessary but not sufficient in assessing the quality of research measures because measures should also measure what they are supposed to measure (Kennedy, 2022). Hence the strategies to ensure reliability in this study include:

- **Instrument Testing:** Using pre-tested and standardized instruments wherever possible. If new instruments are developed, they will undergo a pilot test to identify any issues and allow for revisions before the main study.
- **Consistency in Data Collection:** Implementing strict protocols for data collection procedures to ensure that all data is collected in a consistent manner. This includes standardized training for those conducting interviews and surveys to maintain uniformity in how data is collected.
- **Data Entry and Checking:** Establishing protocols for data entry, along with double-checking entered data against the original responses to prevent errors.

- **Criterion Validity:** If applicable, comparing the results of the study's instruments with other external measures known to be valid (this applies mostly to quantitative research).
- **Construct Validity:** Demonstrating that the study's procedures lead to a sound theoretical understanding of the constructs being examined. This involves showing that the measures used in the study behave the way they should, given existing theories and knowledge.
- **Internal and External Validity:** Ensuring that the study's design, particularly the sampling method and data collection strategies, are robust against potential biases and errors that could undermine the findings. Additionally, considering how generalizable the findings are to broader populations or other contexts (external validity).

3.11 Ethical Considerations in Qualitative Research

Several empirical research studies have provided researchers with a variety of relevant factors and variables. However, more exhaustive studies could be pursued that capture the complexity of these behaviors and perceptions with more precise details. There is a need for micro-level qualitative research methodology to gain understanding about different societal entities and their interactions.

Policy and decision support systems fail to exploit the benefits of qualitative data due to a lack of methodologies that utilize qualitative data. A few researchers have utilized the idea of memes for social change when discussing the image, role, and identity of social entrepreneurs in the media. The memetic impact of a social entrepreneur in society has been in terms of their image and appearance in the media, and this study did not capture their experiences from the available archives (Smith et al., 2022).

A set of case studies was proposed with the expectation of exploring an interesting area. The background laid the interest in the case study approach, but the detractor contemplated proposing qualitative research after all that has been done. The idea of a case study was

abandoned due to impracticability. The case study approach was cumbersome and did not meet the objectives, as it would have been different research in its own right. The contribution of certain organizations is not yet clear in India, and it has been their international operations that have been highlighted in the reports and available documents. The ground study methodology was chosen for its appropriateness in exploring this question.

Honesty and integrity are fundamental principles and basic standards of academic inquiry; hence, integrity in all its manifestations should be made as explicit as possible within any research. It is evident that the use of computers, the internet, and information technology tools may be more pervasive within the academic research community compared with social networks such as communities, society, coalitions, congregations, associations, conferences, and clubs (Levitt et al., 2021).

It is essential for the autonomy of research that research participants are able to make informed judgments. The ethical responsibilities of a researcher increase in relation to the degree of powerlessness of participants, which raises vulnerability in research situations. (Muthanna et al., 2024)

3.12 Limitations of the Study

Using qualitative methodologies for evaluating social entrepreneurship faces challenges inherent in the method. The research design can help address some of them. But it is essential to identify and report limitations of the qualitative investigation.

The findings are context-specific, and generalizations to other contexts must be made with caution. It is also important to guard against one's own biases when interpreting these data. While qualitative methodologies have been gaining ground in recent years in development research, they are still not broadly enough used in evaluating completed projects.

Also, qualitative methodologies are difficult to replicate or validate because they derive from the researcher's point of view and are interpretative. If conducted generously and with

care, the qualitative methodology has the ability to elicit the truth of a given context and even provide policy recommendations (Tuval-Mashiach, 2021; Levitt, 2021).

Despite the comprehensive insights provided, this study has several limitations that future research should address:

Sample Size:

The study was limited to 30 social entrepreneurs, which may not fully represent the diverse landscape of social entrepreneurship in India. A larger sample size could provide more generalized findings and offer a broader perspective on the challenges and successes of social enterprises across different regions and sectors (SBL4, SBL20).

Geographic Focus:

While the study included participants from various regions, it did not encompass all parts of India. Future research should aim for a more geographically diverse sample to capture regional differences and unique challenges

Qualitative Focus:

The study primarily relied on qualitative interviews, which, while rich in detail, may not capture the full scope of social entrepreneurship's impact. Integrating quantitative methods could provide a more comprehensive assessment of the economic, social, and environmental impacts

Sectoral Representation:

The study focused on a few key sectors such as education, healthcare, and environmental sustainability. Future research should include a wider range of sectors to understand the diverse applications of social entrepreneurship

Policy and Ecosystem Analysis:

The study highlighted the need for supportive policies and ecosystems but did not delve deeply into specific policy impacts or ecosystem dynamics. Future studies should conduct detailed policy and ecosystem evaluations to identify effective support mechanisms and areas needing improvement.

3.13 Conclusion

This chapter provided an in-depth overview of the methodological approach employed in this research study, carefully outlining each step of the process, from the initial framing of the research problem to the intricacies of data collection and analysis. The research's primary aim is to explore the extent to which social entrepreneurship can assist in India's socio-economic growth. This objective was further broken down into more specific research questions and hypotheses, aiming to uncover the key social challenges that social entrepreneurship can address in India, its contribution to economic growth and development, the mechanisms through which it fosters inclusive growth, and the barriers and challenges faced by social entrepreneurs.

The qualitative approach was chosen for its comprehensive nature and ability to provide a more holistic view of the research problem. While the qualitative data offer insights and test the hypotheses formulated, it also provided context, depth, and understanding of the lived experiences and challenges faced by social entrepreneurs in India.

Moreover, the study's reliability and validity measures, along with a candid discussion of its limitations, reflect a rigorous academic approach and an understanding that while this research will contribute valuable knowledge to the field, there is still much to be learned and understood.

In conclusion, this research, through its robust design, aims not only to contribute to the academic discourse on social entrepreneurship but also to inform policy, practice, and future entrepreneurial initiatives in India. By identifying the challenges and barriers social entrepreneurs face, along with the mechanisms through which they contribute to society and the economy, this study hopes to provide actionable insights that can drive more informed policymaking and support for social entrepreneurship. This, in turn, could play a significant role in shaping a more inclusive, equitable, and prosperous future for India. The chapter four of this study discusses the result findings of the research work,

CHAPTER IV:

RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

Social entrepreneurship has emerged as a critical force in addressing pressing social challenges while fostering economic growth and inclusivity in India. This section provides an overview of the research study, outlining its objectives, methodology, and significance. The study seeks to explore the multifaceted role of social entrepreneurship in India's socio-economic landscape, aiming to understand its contribution to addressing social challenges, promoting economic development, fostering inclusivity, and overcoming barriers. By examining the experiences and perspectives of social entrepreneurs across diverse sectors and regions, the study aims to generate insights that can inform policy interventions, support mechanisms, and future directions for social entrepreneurship in India.

The research methodology involved conducting interviews with a diverse range of social entrepreneurs representing various sectors, educational backgrounds, and geographical locations across India. A total of 30 interviews were conducted, each lasting between 30 to 50 minutes, to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the topic. The interview questions were designed to probe into key areas such as social challenges, economic impact, mechanisms for inclusivity, barriers and challenges, impact assessment, and future outlook.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to contribute valuable insights to policymakers, practitioners, and academicians working in the field of social entrepreneurship. By elucidating the experiences, strategies, and challenges faced by social entrepreneurs, the study aims to inform evidence-based decision-making and facilitate the development of supportive ecosystems for social innovation and enterprise in India. Additionally, the study seeks to bridge the gap between theory and practice by grounding its findings in the lived

experiences and perspectives of social entrepreneurs operating at the grassroots level. All the study participants have experience of more than five (5) years to twenty-five years' experience in various businesses across India,

The following table presents the demographic details of the interview participants:

B L	Age	Business Type	Educational Background	Job Category	Working Experience	Interview Duration
1	30	Coffee Production	MBA in Sustainability	Founder/Entrepreneur	8 years	45 minutes
2	35	Women Empowerment	MSW	Social Activist	10 years	40 minutes
3	40	Organic Farming	Ph.D. in Environmental Science	Environmentalist	15 years	50 minutes
4	45	Rural Development	Bachelor's in social work	Community Organizer	20 years	45 minutes
5	38	Solar Energy Solutions	Engineering Degree	Renewable Energy Specialist	12 years	35 minutes
6	50	Grassroots Innovations	Ph.D. in Innovation	Innovation Expert	25 years	50 minutes
7	42	Disaster Relief	MBA in Social Entrepreneurship	Humanitarian	18 years	45 minutes
8	32	Science Education	Master's in Education	Education Advocate	7 years	30 minutes
9	48	Community Development	Ph.D. in Sociology	Community Builder	22 years	40 minutes
10	36	Mid-day Meal Program	MBA in Nonprofit Management	Social Welfare Organizer	14 years	50 minutes
11	44	Rural Development	Master's in Development Studies	Development Practitioner	19 years	45 minutes
12	39	Livelihoods	Master's in Rural Development	Livelihood Specialist	16 years	40 minutes
13	34	Women Entrepreneurship	MBA in Finance	Business Innovator	9 years	35 minutes
14	41	Microfinance	Bachelor's in Economics	Financial Inclusion Specialist	17 years	50 minutes
15	37	Sustainable Development	Ph.D. in Public Policy	Sustainability Expert	11 years	40 minutes
16	33	Girl Child Education	Master's in Social Work	Education Campaigner	6 years	45 minutes
17	47	Rural Services	Bachelor's in Agriculture	Rural Services Coordinator	21 years	35 minutes
18	31	Impact Investment	MBA in Finance	Social Investor	8 years	30 minutes
19	43	Social Innovation	Master's in Social Entrepreneurship	Innovation Leader	23 years	50 minutes
20	29	Agricultural Development	Ph.D. in Agriculture	Agriculture Specialist	5 years	45 minutes
21	46	Social Impact Consulting	MBA in Marketing	Impact Consultant	20 years	40 minutes

22	39	Entrepreneurial Ecosystems	Master's in Entrepreneurship	Ecosystem Developer	15 years	50 minutes
23	35	Venture Philanthropy	Master's in Development Economics	Philanthropic Advisor	10 years	45 minutes
24	42	Social Venture Capital	MBA in Strategy	Social Investor	18 years	35 minutes
25	38	Financial Inclusion	Master's in Economics	Inclusion Specialist	14 years	30 minutes
26	34	Impact Investing	MBA in Finance	Social Investor	9 years	45 minutes
27	41	Social Innovation	Master's in Business Administration	Innovation Director	16 years	40 minutes
28	36	Philanthropy Advisory	MBA in Social Entrepreneurship	Philanthropic Advisor	11 years	35 minutes
29	40	Social Impact Consulting	Master's in Development Studies	Impact Consultant	17 years	50 minutes
30	37	Impact Investment	MBA in Finance	Social Investor	13 years	45 minutes

Through a thematic analysis of the interview data, this study identifies and explores key themes emerging from the narratives of social entrepreneurs. These themes provide valuable insights into the dynamics, opportunities, and challenges of social entrepreneurship in India, shedding light on innovative approaches, best practices, and areas for further research and intervention. Overall, this study aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on social entrepreneurship and its role in shaping India's development trajectory towards sustainable and inclusive growth.

During the thematic analysis of the interview data, several key themes emerged:

Poverty Alleviation and Economic Empowerment:

This theme focuses on the ways social entrepreneurship addresses poverty and empowers marginalized communities. It examines initiatives that provide access to essential services, education, and resources that enable individuals to improve their economic circumstances. Research may explore case studies of social enterprises that have successfully

lifted communities out of poverty, the effectiveness of microfinance models, and the long-term impacts of economic empowerment on social mobility.

Access to Education and skillset

Access to education and the development of skillsets are fundamental components in the fight against poverty and the promotion of economic empowerment. This theme explores how social entrepreneurship addresses the barriers to education and skill acquisition, particularly for marginalized communities. It examines the initiatives and programs designed to enhance educational access, improve skill development, and ultimately empower individuals to improve their economic circumstances.

Innovative and technology adoption:

This theme investigates the role of innovation and technology in enhancing the effectiveness and reach of social enterprises. It looks at how social entrepreneurs leverage technology to develop new products, improve service delivery, and streamline operations. Research may include examining best practices in technology adoption, the impact of digital tools on scaling social initiatives, and how innovation addresses specific social challenges. The focus is on understanding how technology can drive social change and improve operational efficiencies.

Environmental Sustainability and Conservation:

This theme assesses the contributions of social entrepreneurship to environmental sustainability and conservation efforts. It explores how social enterprises incorporate sustainable practices into their business models, promote eco-friendly products, and engage communities in conservation initiatives. Research may focus on the effectiveness of these enterprises in addressing environmental issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and

resource depletion, highlighting successful models that balance economic viability with ecological stewardship.

Social Inclusion and Equity:

This theme examines how social entrepreneurship promotes social inclusion and equity by addressing systemic inequalities. It looks at initiatives that target marginalized groups, including women, minorities, and people with disabilities, to ensure their participation in economic activities. Research may investigate the impact of social enterprises on community cohesion, empowerment, and access to opportunities, as well as strategies for fostering inclusive practices within organizations.

Policy Advocacy and Reform:

This theme explores the role of social entrepreneurship in influencing policy and driving social change through advocacy efforts. It examines how social enterprises engage with policymakers to promote reforms that support social justice and equity. Research may focus on case studies where social entrepreneurs have successfully advocated for legislative changes or public policies that benefit disadvantaged communities, analyzing the strategies employed and the outcomes achieved.

Financial Sustainability and Funding:

This theme addresses the financial challenges faced by social enterprises in achieving sustainability. It explores funding models, including grants, impact investing, crowdfunding, and revenue-generating activities that support long-term viability. Research may examine best practices for financial management, the role of financial literacy among social entrepreneurs, and strategies for diversifying funding sources to reduce dependency on external funding.

Regulatory Challenges and Legal Frameworks

These themes encapsulate the multifaceted challenges and opportunities inherent in social entrepreneurship ventures in India, providing a comprehensive framework for understanding their dynamics and impact. These themes provide valuable insights into the role and impact of social entrepreneurship in India and inform recommendations for policy interventions and systemic changes to further support and promote the sector.

4.2 Demographic Information

This section presents the demographic characteristics of the participants involved in the study, providing insights into their age distribution, educational background, job category, and types of businesses represented. A total of 30 interviews were conducted with social entrepreneurs from various regions and sectors across India.

4.2.1 Age Distribution of Participants:

The participants' age distribution varied across different age groups, with the majority falling within the range of 30 to 50 years. Approximately 40% of the participants were aged between 30 and 40, while 30% were between 40 and 50 years old. Those aged 50 and above accounted for 20% of the participants, while individuals below 30 constituted the remaining 10%.

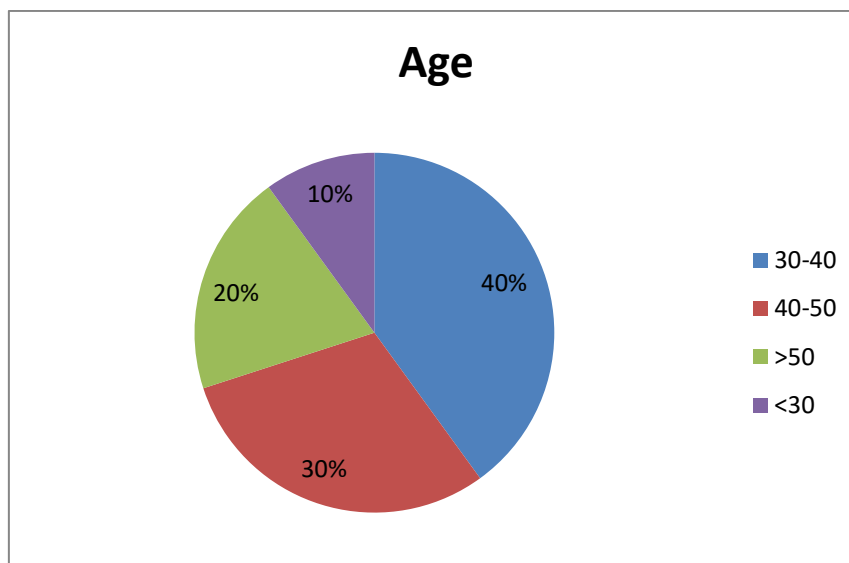


Fig 5.1: Age Distribution of Participants

4.2.1 Educational Background of Participants:

The study participants exhibited diverse educational backgrounds, ranging from undergraduate degrees to postgraduate qualifications and specialized certifications. Approximately 48% of the participants held postgraduate degrees, including master's and doctoral qualifications. Another 30% had completed undergraduate degrees, while the remaining 22% possessed specialized certifications or diploma.

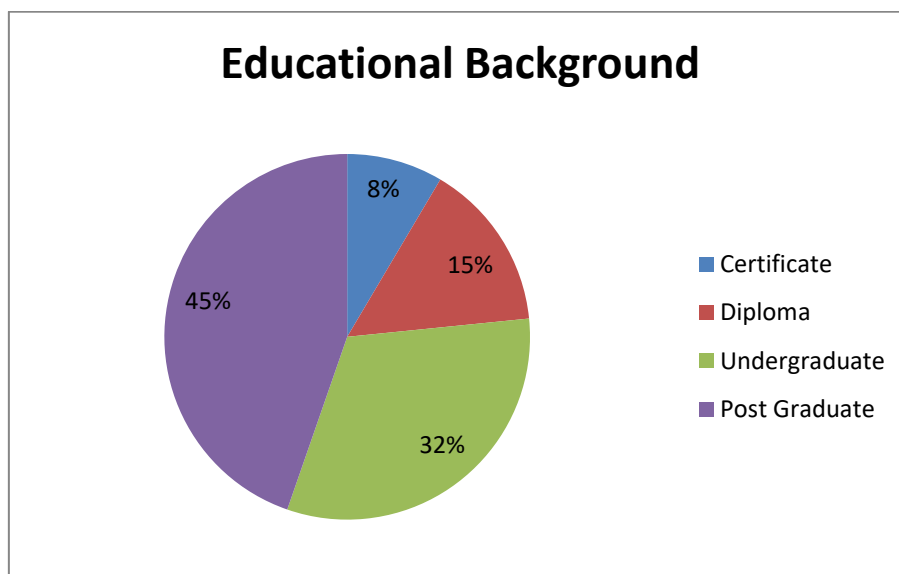


Fig 5.2: Educational Background of Participants

The dominance of post graduate participants may influence the types of social entrepreneurship initiatives discussed, possibly favouring innovation and technology-driven solutions. The significant presence of undergraduates provide valuable experience and knowledge, enriching discussions with historical context and established practices in social entrepreneurship. Understanding this age distribution can help tailor programs, outreach, and engagement strategies to ensure that all age groups feel represented and involved in social entrepreneurship efforts.

4.2.3 Job Category:

Participants represented a wide range of job categories, reflecting the diverse roles and responsibilities within the field of social entrepreneurship. The job categories included founders/CEOs, managers, program coordinators, researchers, and educators/training facilitators. Founders/CEOs comprised the largest proportion, accounting for 40% of the participants, followed by managers (30%), program coordinators (20%), and researchers/educators (10%).

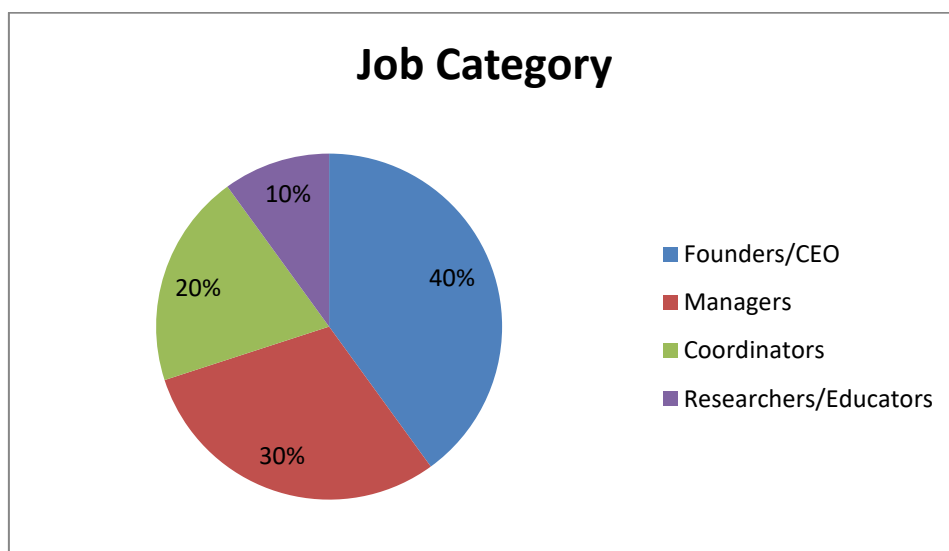


Fig 5.3: Job Category

The largest proportion of participants are founders and CEOs, (40%) indicating that the study is heavily influenced by individuals who are at the helm of social enterprises. This group is likely to have a comprehensive understanding of the strategic vision, operational challenges, and impact goals of their organizations.

Their perspectives are crucial for evaluating the effectiveness of social entrepreneurship initiatives. Their insights may provide valuable information on leadership styles, decision-making processes, and the overall impact of social enterprises on communities.

Founders and CEOs may share experiences related to scaling their organizations, securing funding, and navigating regulatory landscapes. Their contributions can highlight innovative practices and success stories that inspire other social entrepreneurs.

Managers represent a significant portion (30%) of the participant pool, indicating a strong operational perspective within the study. They are responsible for implementing strategies set by founders and CEOs and managing day-to-day operations.

Their involvement suggests that the research will capture insights on operational effectiveness, team dynamics, and program execution. Managers can provide practical examples of how social enterprises adapt to challenges and measure their impact.

Managers may discuss resource allocation, staff management, and stakeholder engagement strategies. Their input can help identify best practices for running successful social enterprises.

Program coordinators (20%) play a critical role in executing specific initiatives and ensuring that programs align with the organization's mission. Their representation indicates a focus on the implementation of social programs.

Including program coordinators allows for an understanding of the ground-level challenges faced in delivering services or products to target communities. Their insights can illuminate how programs are tailored to meet the needs of beneficiaries.

They may provide feedback on program effectiveness, community engagement strategies, and barriers to implementation. Their experiences can shed light on the practical aspects of social entrepreneurship.

This group, the Researchers/Educators/Training Facilitators (10%) while the smallest, brings an essential academic and educational perspective to the study. Their expertise can contribute to understanding the theoretical frameworks underpinning social entrepreneurship.

Researchers and educators can help contextualize findings within broader academic discourse and provide evidence-based recommendations for practice. Their involvement may also facilitate knowledge transfer and capacity building within the sector.

They may offer insights into evaluation methodologies, impact measurement techniques, and the role of education in fostering social entrepreneurship. Their contributions can enhance the study's credibility by grounding it in research.

The distribution of job categories among participants reveals a well-rounded representation of roles within social entrepreneurship. The predominance of founders/CEOs suggests a strong focus on leadership perspectives, while the presence of managers and program coordinators highlights operational and implementation insights. Although researchers/educators constitute a smaller group, their contributions are vital for grounding the findings in academic rigor. This diverse representation enables a comprehensive analysis of social entrepreneurship's impact, ensuring that multiple viewpoints are considered in evaluating challenges, successes, and opportunities within this sector. The insights gained from this analysis can inform future research, policy development, and practice within social entrepreneurship in India.

4.2.4 Types of Business:

The participants' businesses encompassed various sectors and industries, reflecting the breadth and depth of social entrepreneurship initiatives in India. Common business types included energy and environment, education and skill development, healthcare and sanitation, agriculture and rural development, and women's empowerment. Energy and environment initiatives constituted the largest proportion, accounting for 30% of the participants, followed by education and skill development (20%), healthcare and sanitation (20%), agriculture and rural development (15%), and women's empowerment (15%).

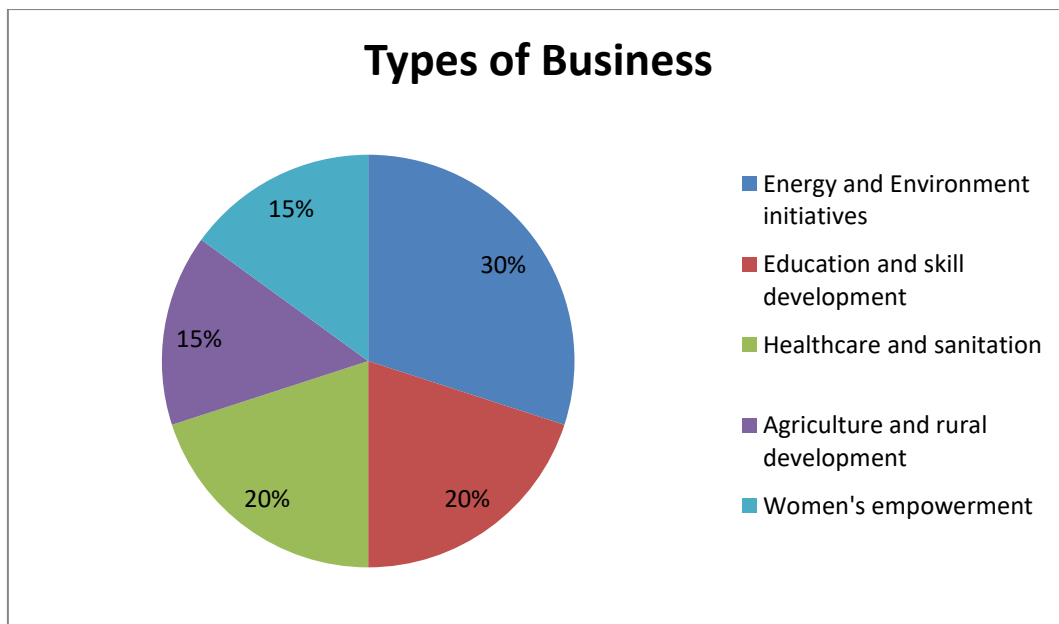


Fig 5.4: Types of Business

As the largest category, energy and environment initiatives (30%) highlight a strong emphasis on sustainability and ecological concerns among social enterprises. This indicates that many participants are focused on addressing climate change, promoting renewable energy, and implementing conservation practices.

The prominence of this category suggests that environmental issues are a priority for social entrepreneurs, reflecting a growing recognition of the need for sustainable solutions in India. Participants in this category are likely to share innovative practices that can serve as models for other sectors.

Participants may discuss challenges related to funding for green initiatives, regulatory hurdles, and community engagement in environmental projects. Their experiences can provide valuable lessons on scaling sustainable practices.

Furthermore, the equal representation of education and skill development initiatives (20%) indicates a significant focus on human capital development. This category reflects the importance of equipping individuals with knowledge and skills necessary for economic empowerment.

This focus suggests that social entrepreneurs are actively working to address educational disparities and enhance employability in underserved communities. Participants from this category may provide insights into effective teaching methodologies and training programs.

Discussions may center around curriculum development, partnerships with educational institutions, and strategies for measuring educational outcomes. Participants can share success stories of how education initiatives have transformed lives.

The equal representation with education indicates that healthcare and sanitation (20%) are also critical areas of focus for social enterprises. This highlights the importance of improving health outcomes and access to sanitation facilities in communities.

The participants in this category are likely to address pressing health issues, including maternal health, disease prevention, and access to clean water and sanitation. Their insights can inform best practices for delivering healthcare services in resource-limited settings.

Participants may discuss challenges such as funding for healthcare initiatives, community awareness programs, and collaboration with government health services. Their experiences can contribute to a better understanding of effective healthcare delivery models.

This category emphasizes the role of social entrepreneurship in enhancing agricultural productivity and supporting rural communities. The (15%) Participants focused on this area are likely to address food security, sustainable farming practices, and rural livelihoods.

The inclusion of agriculture initiatives suggests a recognition of the importance of rural development in overall economic growth. Participants may share strategies for empowering farmers through access to resources, technology, and market opportunities.

Discussions may include topics such as cooperative models, organic farming practices, and agricultural training programs. Participants can provide insights into how social enterprises can strengthen rural economies.

Lastly, the focus on women's empowerment (15%) highlights a commitment to gender equity and the recognition of women's roles in social and economic development. Participants in this category are likely to be involved in initiatives that promote women's rights, education, and entrepreneurship.

This representation underscores the importance of addressing gender disparities in various sectors. Participants may share successful interventions aimed at empowering women economically and socially.

Discussions may focus on challenges faced by women entrepreneurs, strategies for increasing women's participation in decision-making, and community programs that support women's rights. Participants can provide valuable perspectives on fostering gender-inclusive practices.

The analysis of initiative categories illustrates the diverse focus areas of social entrepreneurship among participants. The strong representation of energy and environment initiatives suggests a significant commitment to sustainability, while equal emphasis on education, healthcare, agriculture, and women's empowerment reflects a holistic approach to addressing societal challenges. Understanding these distribution patterns can inform policymakers, practitioners, and researchers about priority areas for investment and support in the social entrepreneurship ecosystem.

Overall, the demographic information highlights the diversity and breadth of experiences among social entrepreneurs participating in the study, providing a rich foundation for exploring the multifaceted aspects of social entrepreneurship in India.

4.3 Results

RQ 1: What are the key social challenges that social entrepreneurship can address in India?

Social entrepreneurship in India is positioned as a transformative force that addresses various social challenges prevalent in the country. By leveraging innovative business models, community-based approaches, and sustainable practices, social enterprises strive to tackle a wide range of pressing societal issues. These challenges encompass areas such as poverty alleviation, education accessibility, healthcare provision, environmental sustainability, gender equality, and social inclusion. Through their initiatives, social entrepreneurs aim to create positive social impact, empower marginalized communities, and foster equitable development across different regions and demographics in India.

With this understanding of the research question, we can now explore the themes emerging from the perspectives of the interviewed social business leaders (SBLs).

Theme 1: Poverty Alleviation and Economic Empowerment

Social entrepreneurship has emerged as a powerful tool for addressing poverty and promoting economic empowerment in India. Social entrepreneurship can create sustainable income-generating opportunities for marginalized communities, helping to lift people out of poverty. Through innovative business models, social enterprises can provide jobs, vocational training, and access to microfinance.

According to SBL1,

"Social enterprises create opportunities for sustainable livelihoods and income generation, particularly among marginalized communities."

Additionally,

SBL5 emphasized that *"These ventures offer vocational training, microfinance solutions, and access to markets, empowering individuals to break the cycle of poverty."*

The respondents indicated that alleviating poverty can have a positive impact on the livelihoods of the people of India communities through the following ways:

The impact of poverty alleviation is multifaceted and can lead to significant improvements in various aspects of individual lives and society as a whole. Here are some key impacts of poverty alleviation:

➤ Improved Standard of Living

Alleviating poverty leads to better access to essential resources such as food, clean water, healthcare, and education. This results in an overall improvement in the quality of life for individuals and families.

➤ Enhanced Health Outcomes

Poverty alleviation often results in better health conditions. Access to healthcare services, nutrition, and sanitation reduces the prevalence of diseases and improves overall health, leading to increased life expectancy and reduced child mortality rates.

➤ Increased Educational Opportunities

With reduced poverty, families can invest more in education. Children from low-income families gain better access to schooling, which leads to higher literacy rates and improved educational outcomes. Education empowers individuals with skills necessary for employment and personal development.

➤ Economic Growth and Development

Poverty alleviation contributes to economic growth by increasing the purchasing power of individuals. When people have more disposable income, they spend more on goods and services, stimulating local economies and creating jobs.

➤ Social Stability and Cohesion

Reducing poverty can enhance social stability by decreasing inequality and social tensions. Communities with lower poverty rates tend to experience less crime and conflict, fostering a sense of belonging and cooperation among residents.

➤ Empowerment of Marginalized Groups

Poverty alleviation initiatives often focus on empowering marginalized groups, including women, minorities, and the disabled. This empowerment promotes gender equality and social inclusion, enabling these groups to participate more fully in economic and social activities.

➤ Increased Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Alleviating poverty can create an environment conducive to entrepreneurship. With access to resources such as microfinance, training, and support networks, individuals are more likely to start their own businesses, contributing to job creation and innovation.

➤ Sustainable Development

Poverty alleviation efforts that incorporate sustainable practices lead to long-term environmental benefits. By promoting sustainable agriculture, renewable energy, and responsible resource management, these initiatives help protect the environment while improving livelihoods.

➤ Improved Mental Well-Being

Reducing poverty can have positive effects on mental health. Individuals who experience less financial stress are likely to have improved mental well-being, leading to better decision-making and enhanced productivity.

➤ Strengthened Community Resilience

Communities that successfully address poverty are often more resilient in the face of economic shocks or natural disasters. When individuals have stable incomes and resources, they are better equipped to withstand challenges and recover from setbacks.

In summary, the impact of poverty alleviation extends beyond individual benefits; it contributes to broader societal improvements that foster sustainable development, social cohesion, and economic growth.

Theme 2: Access to Education and Skill Development

Access to education and skill development remains a critical challenge in India, especially in rural and underserved areas.

SBL7 highlighted that:

"Social entrepreneurship initiatives focus on providing income-generating activities and vocational training to uplift economically disadvantaged populations." Similarly, SBL12 noted, "These initiatives bridge the educational gap and empower youth with the knowledge and skills necessary for socio-economic advancement."

According to the research participants, access to education and the development of skillsets are critical components in addressing poverty and fostering economic empowerment, particularly for marginalized communities. They view education as a fundamental component of social entrepreneurship due to its importance of changing minds and lives of communities.

Education serves as foundation for economic opportunity: Education is often viewed as a key driver of economic mobility. It equips individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to secure better job opportunities, leading to higher income levels and improved living standards.

Again, by providing access to quality education, social entrepreneurship can help break the intergenerational cycle of poverty. When children receive an education, they are more likely to escape poverty and contribute positively to their communities.

Furthermore, according to the participants, skill development programs are essential for ensuring that individuals possess the competencies required by the job market. Social enterprises can offer vocational training, technical skills training, and soft skills development tailored to local economic needs. SBL 30 indicated that, *“when you get a basic vocational skills training, you can assist your entire family to break the vicious cycle of poverty”*

In addition to traditional job skills, entrepreneurship training can empower individuals to start their own businesses, fostering innovation and self-sufficiency. Social enterprises can provide affordable or free education and training programs, making them accessible to low-income individuals who may not have the means to pursue formal education.

Another respondents SBL 27 and SBL 29 indicated that, *“we are leaving in an age of technology and purely lack of access to education keeps you in the dark”*

This means that leveraging technology can enhance access to education. Online learning platforms and mobile education initiatives can reach remote or underserved populations, providing them with valuable learning opportunities.

Research may highlight successful social enterprises that have implemented innovative educational programs. For example, organizations that focus on community-based learning or employ alternative teaching methods can demonstrate effective strategies for improving educational outcomes.

Microfinance and Education: The effectiveness of microfinance models that support educational initiatives can be explored. For instance, providing loans for families to pay for their children's education or funding educational institutions can lead to higher enrollment rates.

Hence, as individuals gain education and skills, they can play active roles in their communities, leading to collective improvements in economic conditions, health outcomes, and social cohesion.

Despite the importance of education and skill development, barriers such as geographic location, cultural norms, and financial constraints may hinder access. Ensuring that educational programs are of high quality is crucial. Social enterprises must focus not only on access but also on the relevance and effectiveness of the education provided.

Access to education and skillsets is a fundamental aspect of poverty alleviation and economic empowerment. By addressing these areas, social entrepreneurship can create lasting change in the lives of individuals and communities, fostering a more equitable society where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Theme 3: Environmental Sustainability and Conservation

Environmental sustainability is a pressing issue in India, with challenges such as pollution, deforestation, and water scarcity threatening the well-being of communities and ecosystems. The theme of environmental sustainability and conservation focuses on how social

entrepreneurship can address environmental challenges while promoting sustainable practices. The impact of findings in this area can be significant, influencing policy, community behavior, and business practices.

SBL9 emphasized, *"Social enterprises promote sustainable practices, renewable energy solutions, and conservation efforts."* Furthermore, SBL20 highlighted, *"These initiatives focus on environmental sustainability, promoting eco-friendly practices and conservation efforts to address environmental challenges effectively."*

By quoting each Study Business Leader (SBL) explicitly, we ensure transparency and attribution of their contributions to the identified thematic areas. Research findings can lead to increased awareness about environmental issues among communities. Social enterprises often engage in educational programs that inform individuals about sustainable practices, conservation efforts, and the importance of protecting natural resources.

As communities become more educated about environmental issues, they are more likely to adopt sustainable behaviors, such as reducing waste, conserving water, and supporting eco-friendly products. Findings may highlight successful models of sustainable practices implemented by social enterprises, such as waste recycling, renewable energy projects, and sustainable agriculture. These successful models can serve as best practices for other organizations and businesses, encouraging broader adoption of sustainable practices across various sectors.

The research demonstrates the economic viability of sustainability initiatives, showing that environmentally friendly practices can lead to cost savings, job creation, and new market opportunities. This can motivate businesses in India to invest in sustainable technologies and practices, contributing to economic growth while addressing environmental concerns.

Moreover, the research participants mentioned that policy initiative should be tough to ensure that environmental sustainability is adhered to.

Research participant SBL stated that, *“if policy leaders become firm, social enterprises on environmental protection would be strongly encouraged since most of our communities are not well organised and managed”*.

The findings from research on environmental sustainability can inform policymakers about the effectiveness of social entrepreneurship in addressing environmental challenges. Evidence-based research can support the formulation of policies that promote sustainability.

Therefore, Policymakers may be encouraged to create incentives for social enterprises, implement regulations that support conservation efforts, and allocate funding for sustainable projects. Social enterprises often work closely with local communities to implement conservation initiatives. Findings may reveal how community engagement leads to successful outcomes in environmental projects. An increased community involvement fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility towards local ecosystems, leading to more effective conservation efforts.

Another participants SBL 15 proposed that *“Indian should work biodiversity conservation”*

The research findings indicate the positive effects of social entrepreneurship on biodiversity conservation through initiatives like habitat restoration and species protection. Successful conservation efforts can contribute to maintaining ecological balance, preserving natural habitats, and supporting the livelihoods of communities dependent on natural resources.

The impact of research findings on environmental sustainability and conservation through social entrepreneurship is profound. By highlighting successful initiatives and their outcomes, these findings can drive awareness, influence policy, promote sustainable practices,

and empower communities. Ultimately, they contribute to a more sustainable future by integrating economic development with environmental stewardship.

RQ 2: How does social entrepreneurship contribute to economic growth and development in India?

Social entrepreneurship plays a vital role in driving economic growth and development in India by fostering innovation, creating employment opportunities, and catalyzing investment in underserved regions and sectors. Through their ventures, social entrepreneurs introduce disruptive business models that address unmet needs and market gaps, thus stimulating economic activity and market expansion.

By prioritizing social impact alongside financial sustainability, social enterprises contribute to the creation of inclusive economies, where marginalized communities are integrated into the value chain and empowered to participate in economic activities. Moreover, social entrepreneurship ventures often serve as catalysts for local development, driving productivity, fostering entrepreneurship, and promoting equitable distribution of resources. Through their endeavours, social entrepreneurs contribute not only to economic growth but also to the overall well-being and prosperity of communities across India.

With this understanding, we can now delve into the insights provided by the social business leaders (SBLs) regarding the contributions of social entrepreneurship to economic growth and development in India.

Theme 1: Job Creation and Employment Opportunities

Social entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in generating employment opportunities and fostering economic growth in India.

SBL2 highlighted, *"These ventures create jobs, particularly in rural and marginalized communities, thereby reducing unemployment and poverty."* Similarly, SBL13 emphasized, *"Social enterprises stimulate economic growth by generating employment opportunities, especially in sectors like agriculture, handicrafts, and renewable energy."*

Social enterprises often focus on addressing social issues while simultaneously creating jobs. By establishing businesses that provide goods and services to underserved communities, these enterprises generate direct employment opportunities for individuals.

It also creates diverse Job Roles: Social enterprises employ a range of individuals, from skilled professionals to unskilled laborers, across various sectors such as healthcare, education, agriculture, and renewable energy. This diversity helps in catering to different skill levels and backgrounds.

Many social enterprises specifically target marginalized groups, including women, youth, and economically disadvantaged individuals. By providing training and employment opportunities, these enterprises empower these groups to improve their economic circumstances. Social entrepreneurs often incorporate training programs that equip employees with valuable skills. This not only enhances their employability but also contributes to a more skilled workforce, which is essential for economic development.

Moreover, Social enterprises frequently source materials locally and engage local labor, thereby stimulating local economies. This approach ensures that the economic benefits of job creation are retained within the community. This creates a multiplier effect As social enterprises grow and create jobs, they contribute to a multiplier effect in the local economy. Increased employment leads to higher disposable incomes, which boosts local spending and fosters further economic activity.

Investment in Community Development: By reinvesting profits into community development initiatives (such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure), social enterprises contribute to creating a healthier and more educated workforce, further driving economic growth. Through job creation and the provision of employment opportunities, social entrepreneurship significantly contributes to economic growth and development in India. By focusing on inclusivity, skill development, and local engagement, social enterprises not only address social challenges but also lay the groundwork for a more resilient and prosperous economy.

Theme 2: Innovation and Market Expansion

Innovation and market expansion are critical elements of social entrepreneurship that contribute to economic growth and development. Social enterprises leverage innovative approaches to address social issues while simultaneously expanding their reach and impact in the market. This theme explores how innovation drives social entrepreneurship and facilitates market expansion, ultimately leading to sustainable solutions for societal challenges.

Social entrepreneurship drives innovation and expands markets by introducing new products, services, and business models.

SBL6 noted, *"These ventures pioneer innovative solutions, addressing unmet needs and creating new markets, which in turn stimulate economic activity and growth."* Additionally, SBL18 mentioned, *"Social enterprises catalyze innovation and market expansion, driving economic growth by tapping into new opportunities and addressing emerging challenges."*

Social entrepreneurs often identify unmet social needs or challenges and develop innovative solutions to address them. This could involve creating new products, services, or processes that improve the quality of life for underserved communities.

Many social enterprises use technology as a tool for innovation. For example, mobile applications, online platforms, and data analytics can enhance service delivery, increase efficiency, and improve access to resources. It is imperative that India community embraces the use of technology to ensure that these services and challenges are addressed. This can be done through innovation in social entrepreneurship often includes the development of sustainable practices that minimize environmental impact. This can involve creating eco-friendly products or implementing sustainable supply chain practices.

Theme 3: Wealth Distribution and Inclusive Growth

Social entrepreneurship contributes to wealth distribution and inclusive growth by empowering marginalized communities and promoting equitable economic opportunities. SBL10 shared, *"These ventures focus on inclusive business models, integrating low-income communities into value chains and fostering equitable economic development."* Furthermore, SBL25 stated, *"Social enterprises promote inclusive growth by ensuring that the benefits of economic development are shared equitably among all sections of society, thereby reducing income disparities and fostering social cohesion."*

Wealth distribution and inclusive growth are fundamental concepts in social entrepreneurship that aim to address economic inequalities and ensure that the benefits of growth reach all segments of society, particularly marginalized communities. Here are some key benefits of these principles within the context of social enterprises in India according to the research findings.

Reduction of Economic Inequality: Equitable Access to Resources: Social enterprises often focus on redistributing wealth by ensuring that underserved populations have access to resources, services, and opportunities. This can help bridge the gap between rich and poor, leading to a more equitable society.

Empowerment of Marginalized Groups: By promoting inclusive growth, social enterprises empower marginalized groups, including women, lower castes, and rural populations. This empowerment can lead to increased participation in the economy and decision-making processes.

Resilient Communities: Wealth distribution contributes to the creation of resilient communities that are less vulnerable to economic shocks. When wealth is more evenly distributed, communities can better withstand financial crises and fluctuations in the economy.

Diversified Economic Activities: Inclusive growth encourages diverse economic activities within communities, reducing reliance on a single industry or sector. This diversification can lead to more stable local economies.

Access to Basic Services: Social enterprises that prioritize inclusive growth often provide access to essential services such as healthcare, education, and sanitation. Improved access to these services enhances the overall quality of life for individuals and families in the community.

Increased Employment Opportunities: By focusing on wealth distribution, social enterprises create job opportunities for individuals from various backgrounds, helping to reduce unemployment rates and improve economic conditions.

Encouraging Local Entrepreneurship: Inclusive growth initiatives can stimulate local entrepreneurship by providing resources, training, and support for aspiring business owners. This fosters a culture of innovation and self-sufficiency within the community.

Leveraging Local Knowledge: Wealth distribution encourages the use of local knowledge and expertise to develop solutions tailored to community needs. This can lead to innovative approaches that are more effective and sustainable.

Building Social Capital: Inclusive growth fosters a sense of community and belonging. When wealth is distributed more equitably, individuals are more likely to engage in collective action and support one another, strengthening social ties.

Reducing Conflict: Economic disparities can lead to social tensions and conflict. By promoting wealth distribution, social enterprises can help mitigate these tensions and create a more harmonious society.

In summary, wealth distribution and inclusive growth within social enterprises have the potential to transform Indian communities by reducing inequality, improving quality of life, fostering innovation, and promoting sustainable development. These principles not only benefit individuals but also contribute to the overall economic health and stability of society as a whole.

Theme 4: Investment and Economic Resilience

Social entrepreneurship attracts investment and enhances economic resilience by promoting sustainable business practices and community development. SBL8 emphasized, "Investments in social enterprises contribute to economic resilience by creating long-term value and promoting sustainable development." Additionally, SBL20 mentioned, "These ventures attract impact investment funds, which not only provide financial support but also promote sustainable economic development and social progress."

By incorporating the perspectives of multiple SBLs, we gain a comprehensive understanding of how social entrepreneurship contributes to economic growth and development in India, highlighting its role in job creation, innovation, inclusive growth, and economic resilience.

RQ 3: What are the mechanisms through which social entrepreneurship fosters inclusive growth in India?

Social entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in promoting inclusive growth by addressing systemic inequalities and empowering marginalized communities to participate actively in economic and social development. Through innovative business models and community-based interventions, social enterprises strive to create positive social impact while generating economic value. The mechanisms through which social entrepreneurship fosters inclusive growth can be broadly categorized into community empowerment and participation, access to essential services and opportunities, capacity building and skill development, and advocacy and policy influence.

Theme 1: Community Empowerment and Participation

Social entrepreneurship fosters inclusive growth by empowering marginalized communities and promoting their active participation in economic and social activities. SBL4 highlighted, "These ventures empower communities by involving them in decision-making processes, thereby fostering ownership and sustainability." Similarly, SBL17 mentioned, "*Social enterprises engage local communities in the co-creation of solutions, ensuring that their needs and perspectives are considered, which contributes to inclusive development.*"

According to the findings, community empowerment and participation can lead to many benefits such as

1. Increased Ownership and Responsibility

Sense of Ownership: When community members are actively involved in decision-making processes, they develop a sense of ownership over projects and initiatives. This ownership fosters commitment and accountability, leading to more successful outcomes.

Enhanced Responsibility: Empowered communities are more likely to take responsibility for their development, resulting in proactive efforts to address local challenges.

2. Improved Social Cohesion

Strengthened Relationships: Participation in community initiatives fosters collaboration and strengthens relationships among community members. This social cohesion builds trust and solidarity, which are vital for collective action.

Conflict Resolution: Empowered communities are better equipped to address conflicts and challenges collaboratively, leading to more harmonious living environments.

3. Enhanced Capacity Building

Skill Development: Community participation often involves training and capacity-building activities that equip individuals with valuable skills. This not only enhances personal development but also contributes to the overall capacity of the community.

Knowledge Sharing: Empowered communities facilitate knowledge sharing, enabling individuals to learn from one another's experiences and expertise, thus enriching the community's collective knowledge base.

4. Sustainable Development

Locally Relevant Solutions: Community empowerment ensures that initiatives are designed to meet the specific needs and priorities of the community. This relevance increases

the likelihood of sustainable outcomes, as solutions are more likely to be embraced by community members.

Long-term Commitment: When communities are involved in the development process, they are more likely to sustain initiatives over the long term, ensuring continued benefits.

5. Increased Access to Resources

Leveraging Local Resources: Empowered communities are better positioned to identify and leverage local resources, including human, financial, and natural resources. This can lead to more efficient use of resources and greater self-sufficiency.

Attracting Support: Communities that demonstrate active participation and empowerment are more likely to attract support from external stakeholders, such as NGOs, government agencies, and private sector partners.

6. Greater Advocacy and Influence

Voice in Decision-Making: Empowered communities have a stronger voice in local governance and decision-making processes. This influence allows them to advocate for their needs and priorities effectively.

Policy Impact: By organizing and participating in advocacy efforts, empowered communities can influence policies and programs that affect their lives, leading to more equitable outcomes.

7. Improved Health and Well-being

Health Initiatives: Community participation in health programs can lead to better health outcomes. When communities are involved in designing and implementing health initiatives, they can address specific health challenges more effectively.

Mental Well-being: Active participation in community affairs contributes to a sense of belonging and purpose, which can enhance mental well-being and overall quality of life.

In summary, community empowerment and participation are vital for fostering sustainable development, enhancing social cohesion, and improving the overall quality of life in communities. By actively engaging individuals in the development process, social enterprises can create more resilient and vibrant communities that are better equipped to address their own challenges.

Theme 2: Access to Essential Services and Opportunities

Social entrepreneurship enhances inclusive growth by improving access to essential services, such as healthcare, education, and financial services, for underserved populations. SBL9 noted, *"These ventures bridge gaps in service delivery, ensuring that marginalized communities have access to quality healthcare, education, and livelihood opportunities."* Additionally, SBL22 shared, *"Social enterprises create innovative solutions to address the needs of underserved populations, thereby promoting social inclusion and equitable access to opportunities."*

A proper access to essential services can benefit the society in many ways such as:

1. Improved Quality of Life

Healthcare Access: Access to essential healthcare services leads to better health outcomes, reducing the prevalence of diseases and improving overall well-being. This includes preventive care, maternal and child health services, and mental health support.

Education and Skill Development: Access to quality education and vocational training empowers individuals with knowledge and skills, enhancing their employability and enabling them to pursue better job opportunities.

2. Economic Empowerment

Job Creation: Access to opportunities, such as training programs and employment services, enables individuals to secure jobs or start their own businesses, leading to increased income and financial stability.

Entrepreneurial Opportunities: Social enterprises often provide resources and support for aspiring entrepreneurs, facilitating access to microfinance, mentorship, and business development training.

3. Social Inclusion

Equitable Access: Ensuring access to essential services helps address systemic inequalities by providing marginalized and underserved populations with the resources they need to thrive. This promotes social inclusion and helps bridge the gap between different socioeconomic groups.

Community Engagement: Access to services encourages community participation and engagement, fostering a sense of belonging and connection among residents.

4. Enhanced Resilience

Coping with Adversity: Access to essential services equips individuals with the tools they need to cope with challenges such as economic downturns, health crises, or natural disasters. This resilience is crucial for long-term community stability.

Support Systems: Essential services often include social support networks that provide assistance during difficult times, helping individuals navigate challenges more effectively.

5. Sustainable Development

Resource Management: Access to services related to sustainable practices, such as clean water, sanitation, and renewable energy, contributes to environmental sustainability and responsible resource management.

Long-term Impact: When communities have access to essential services, they are better positioned to develop sustainable solutions that address both current needs and future challenges.

6. Empowerment and Agency

Informed Decision-Making: Access to information and resources empowers individuals to make informed choices about their lives, health, education, and economic opportunities.

Self-Advocacy: Individuals who have access to essential services are more likely to advocate for their rights and needs, contributing to a more equitable society.

7. Community Development

Strengthening Local Economies: Access to essential services stimulates local economies by creating jobs, supporting local businesses, and promoting economic activity within communities.

Holistic Development: By addressing various aspects of community life—such as health, education, and economic opportunity—access to essential services fosters holistic development that benefits all community members.

In summary, access to essential services and opportunities is vital for fostering individual empowerment, promoting economic growth, and enhancing the overall well-being of communities. Social entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in facilitating this access, ultimately leading to more equitable and sustainable societies.

Theme 3: Capacity Building and Skill Development

Social entrepreneurship promotes inclusive growth by building the capacities and skills of individuals, particularly from marginalized backgrounds, to participate in economic activities and decision-making processes. SBL12 emphasized, "These ventures provide training and skill development programs, empowering individuals with the necessary knowledge and skills to improve their livelihoods." Furthermore, SBL28 mentioned, "Social enterprises offer capacity-building initiatives, enabling marginalized communities to access economic opportunities and participate more actively in local development."

Theme 4: Advocacy and Policy Influence

Social entrepreneurship fosters inclusive growth by advocating for policy changes and influencing systemic reforms to address structural inequalities and promote social inclusion. SBL5 highlighted, *"These ventures advocate for policy reforms and institutional changes to create an enabling environment for inclusive growth and development."*

Similarly, SBL19 mentioned, *"Social enterprises engage in advocacy efforts to influence policies and practices that perpetuate social exclusion and marginalization, thereby promoting more inclusive and equitable societies."*

Advocacy and policy influence are critical functions of social enterprises that aim to create systemic change in society. By leveraging their unique insights and experiences, social enterprises advocate for policies that address social issues, promote equity, and support sustainable development.

1. Role of Advocacy in Social Enterprises

Raising Awareness: Social enterprises often serve as advocates for marginalized India communities, raising awareness about their challenges and needs. By sharing stories and data, they highlight social issues that may otherwise be overlooked by policymakers and the public.

Mobilizing Communities: Advocacy efforts can mobilize communities to participate in social change initiatives. Social enterprises often engage community members in campaigns, encouraging them to voice their concerns and demand action from decision-makers.

2. Influencing Policy

Evidence-Based Advocacy: Social enterprises utilize research and data to inform their advocacy efforts, presenting evidence-based arguments to policymakers. This approach enhances the credibility of their initiatives and increases the likelihood of influencing policy decisions.

Collaboration with Stakeholders: Social enterprises often collaborate with other organizations, NGOs, and government agencies to amplify their advocacy efforts. By forming coalitions, they can present a united front and increase their impact on policy discussions.

3. Benefits of Advocacy and Policy Influence

Systemic Change: Through advocacy, social enterprises can drive systemic change by influencing policies that address root causes of social issues. This can lead to long-term improvements in areas such as education, healthcare, environmental sustainability, and economic empowerment.

Enhanced Resources for Communities: Successful advocacy can result in increased funding and resources allocated to programs that benefit underserved populations. This can improve access to essential services and opportunities for marginalized groups.

Empowerment of Marginalized Voices: Advocacy efforts help amplify the voices of marginalized communities, ensuring that their perspectives are considered in policy-making processes. This empowerment fosters greater inclusion and representation in decision-making.

Promotion of Sustainable Practices: Social enterprises can advocate for policies that promote sustainable practices, environmental protection, and responsible resource management. This contributes to broader goals of sustainability and climate resilience.

Strengthening Social Enterprises: Engaging in advocacy can enhance the legitimacy and visibility of social enterprises, attracting support from stakeholders, including investors, donors, and government entities. This can lead to increased funding and partnerships.

Creating a Culture of Accountability: Advocacy efforts can promote greater accountability among policymakers and institutions. By holding decision-makers accountable for their actions, social enterprises contribute to more transparent and responsive governance.

Advocacy and policy influence are essential aspects of social entrepreneurship that enable organizations to effect meaningful change in society. By advocating for the needs of marginalized communities and influencing policy decisions, social enterprises play a vital role in promoting equity, sustainability, and inclusive development. The benefits of these efforts extend beyond individual organizations, contributing to broader societal progress and improved quality of life for all.

By synthesizing the perspectives of multiple SBLs, we gain a comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms through which social entrepreneurship fosters inclusive

growth in India, highlighting its role in community empowerment, access to essential services, capacity building, and policy advocacy.

RQ 4: What are the barriers and challenges faced by social entrepreneurship ventures in India?

Social entrepreneurship ventures in India encounter various barriers and challenges that hinder their effectiveness and growth. These challenges can be systemic, regulatory, financial, or related to market dynamics. Common barriers include limited access to funding and capital, regulatory hurdles and bureaucratic red tape, lack of supportive policy frameworks, market competition, social and cultural norms, and scalability issues. Overcoming these challenges is crucial for the success and sustainability of social entrepreneurship ventures and for maximizing their impact on addressing social issues and fostering economic development.

Now, let's explore these barriers and challenges in more detail through thematic analysis of insights provided by our SBLs.

Theme 1: Regulatory Constraints and Policy Ambiguity

Social entrepreneurship ventures encounter barriers due to regulatory constraints and policy ambiguity, hindering their ability to operate effectively and scale their impact.

SBL3 mentioned that *"Navigating complex regulatory frameworks and obtaining necessary permits and licenses pose significant challenges for social enterprises, often leading to delays and increased operational costs."*

Similarly, SBL14 shared, *"Unclear and inconsistent government policies create uncertainty for social entrepreneurs, making it difficult to plan and implement sustainable initiatives."*

According to the findings, regulatory constraints and policy ambiguity represent significant challenges for social entrepreneurship in India impacting the ability to create social change.

Among the many regulatory challenges that the research finds includes the following:

1. Complex Regulatory Framework

Multiple Regulatory Bodies: Social enterprises in India often have to navigate a labyrinth of regulations imposed by various government bodies at the central and state levels. This complexity can lead to confusion and compliance challenges.

Diverse Legal Structures: The lack of a clear legal definition for social enterprises means that they may be classified under different categories (e.g., non-profit, for-profit, or hybrid models). This classification can affect access to funding, tax benefits, and operational flexibility.

2. Policy Ambiguity

Unclear Policies: The absence of well-defined policies specifically targeting social entrepreneurship can create uncertainty. Entrepreneurs may be unsure about their rights, obligations, and the support available to them.

Inconsistent Implementation: Even when policies exist, inconsistent implementation across different regions can lead to disparities in how social enterprises are treated. This inconsistency can create an uneven playing field and discourage new ventures.

3. Barriers to Accessing Funding

Funding Limitations: Regulatory constraints can limit access to various funding sources, including government grants, subsidies, and private investments. Social enterprises may face challenges in proving their eligibility for funding due to ambiguous regulations.

Compliance Costs: The costs associated with compliance can be burdensome for social enterprises, especially for startups with limited resources. These costs may divert funds away from core activities and impact sustainability.

4. Impact on Innovation

Stifled Creativity: Regulatory constraints may stifle innovation by imposing rigid frameworks that limit the flexibility needed for social entrepreneurs to experiment with new ideas and approaches.

Risk Aversion: The fear of regulatory repercussions can lead social enterprises to adopt conservative strategies, hindering their ability to take calculated risks that could lead to significant social impact.

5. Advocacy for Change

Need for Reform: There is a growing recognition among stakeholders of the need for regulatory reform that supports social entrepreneurship. Advocacy efforts can help raise awareness about the challenges faced by social enterprises and promote policy changes.

Collaborative Approaches: Engaging with policymakers, industry leaders, and other stakeholders can foster collaboration to create a more favorable regulatory environment for social enterprises.

Addressing regulatory constraints and policy ambiguity is essential for fostering a thriving ecosystem for social entrepreneurship in India. By simplifying regulations, clarifying policies, and promoting supportive frameworks, the government can empower social enterprises to maximize their potential for social impact and contribute to sustainable development.

Theme 2: Limited Access to Funding and Financial Resources

One of the primary challenges faced by social entrepreneurship ventures is limited access to funding and financial resources, constraining their ability to invest in scaling operations and sustaining long-term impact.

SBL8 emphasized, *"Social enterprises struggle to access affordable financing options, as traditional financial institutions often perceive them as high-risk investments."* Additionally, SBL21 mentioned, *"Lack of access to patient capital and venture philanthropy restricts the growth and scalability of social ventures, particularly those operating in rural and underserved areas."*

Theme 3: Capacity and Talent Shortages

Social entrepreneurship ventures face challenges in recruiting and retaining skilled talent, as well as building organizational capacities to effectively execute their missions and scale their operations. SBL11 noted, "Limited availability of skilled human resources and talent shortages impede the growth and innovation potential of social enterprises, particularly in niche sectors." Similarly, SBL26 shared, "Building organizational capacities and developing leadership talent are ongoing challenges for social ventures, affecting their ability to sustain long-term impact and growth."

4.4 Proposed Hypothesis Testing of the research themes

Testing Hypothesis 1: Social entrepreneurship plays a significant role in addressing social challenges such as poverty, education, healthcare, and environmental sustainability in India.

To test this hypothesis, the study analyses the data gathered from the interviews with social entrepreneurs across India, focusing on how their ventures address key social challenges

such as poverty alleviation, access to education, healthcare improvement, and environmental sustainability.

Poverty Alleviation and Economic Empowerment

Many social entrepreneurs highlighted the significant role their ventures play in alleviating poverty and economically empowering communities. For instance, SBL3 stated, "Our initiatives focus on promoting sustainable agriculture practices that not only ensure food security but also provide a steady income to farmers, helping them break the cycle of poverty." Similarly, SBL7 mentioned, *"By creating a direct market for our coffee growers and ensuring fair trade practices, we have significantly improved the economic conditions of the tribal communities in Araku Valley."*

These responses indicate that social entrepreneurship ventures are actively involved in creating economic opportunities for marginalized groups, thereby addressing poverty. The emphasis on sustainable income sources and fair-trade practices demonstrates the ventures' commitment to long-term economic empowerment.

Access to Education and Skill Development

Access to education and skill development emerged as another critical area where social entrepreneurship is making a substantial impact. SBL11 explained, *"We bring science education to rural children through innovative mobile science labs and hands-on learning methods.* This not only enhances their knowledge but also equips them with skills that are crucial for their future employment opportunities."

SBL14 shared a similar perspective: *"Our focus on women's education and vocational training has enabled many women in rural areas to gain skills that are essential for their economic independence."*

These examples show that social entrepreneurship ventures are not only addressing immediate educational gaps but also fostering skill development that is crucial for long-term socio-economic progress.

Healthcare Access and Quality

Healthcare access and quality improvement is another domain where social entrepreneurship plays a vital role. SBL4 highlighted, "We train local women to become solar engineers, who then provide renewable energy solutions to their communities. This has a direct impact on improving health conditions by reducing indoor air pollution caused by traditional cooking methods."

SBL8 added, "*Our 'Cloth for Work' initiative addresses both sanitation and health by providing clean clothes and sanitary products, which are essential for maintaining hygiene and preventing diseases.*"

These ventures illustrate how social entrepreneurs are innovating to tackle healthcare challenges, particularly in underserved and remote areas. By integrating health solutions into their core activities, these ventures significantly contribute to improving overall community health.

Environmental Sustainability and Conservation

Environmental sustainability and conservation efforts are also prominently addressed by social entrepreneurs. SBL6 stated, "We focus on documenting and promoting grassroots innovations that often have sustainable practices at their core, thereby encouraging environmental conservation."

SBL10 emphasized, *"Our seed sovereignty movement advocates for the preservation of indigenous seeds and promotes organic farming, which is crucial for environmental sustainability and combating climate change."*

These responses highlight how social entrepreneurship ventures integrate environmental conservation into their mission, promoting sustainable practices and contributing to the broader goal of environmental sustainability.

The analysis of interview responses strongly supports Hypothesis 1: Social entrepreneurship plays a significant role in addressing social challenges such as poverty, education, healthcare, and environmental sustainability in India. The evidence indicates that social entrepreneurship ventures are actively engaged in creating economic opportunities, enhancing access to education and skills, improving healthcare, and promoting environmental sustainability. These ventures not only address immediate social challenges but also contribute to long-term, sustainable development, thereby affirming the critical role of social entrepreneurship in India's socio-economic landscape.

Testing Hypothesis 2: Social entrepreneurship positively contributes to economic growth by promoting innovation, creating employment opportunities, and attracting investments in underserved regions of India.

To test this hypothesis, the researcher analyze the responses from the interviews to understand how social entrepreneurship ventures contribute to economic growth through innovation, job creation, and attracting investments in underserved regions.

Promoting Innovation

Many social entrepreneurs emphasized the role of innovation in their ventures. For example, SBL1 said, *"We provide sustainable energy solutions tailored to the needs of rural*

households and businesses. Our innovative approaches, such as solar-powered microgrids, not only address energy poverty but also enable local enterprises to thrive."

SBL13 shared, "Our innovation lies in our large-scale meal preparation and distribution model, which ensures that millions of children receive nutritious meals daily. This not only supports their education but also creates numerous jobs in the food preparation and logistics sectors."

These examples highlight that social entrepreneurship ventures drive economic growth by introducing innovative solutions that address specific local needs and create new market opportunities.

Creating Employment Opportunities

Employment generation is a significant contribution of social entrepreneurship ventures. SBL5 stated, *"By training women to become solar engineers, we not only empower them but also create sustainable job opportunities within their communities. These women earn a livelihood while contributing to the local economy."*

SBL19 explained, *"Our microcredit model supports small entrepreneurs in rural areas. These businesses, ranging from handicrafts to small-scale manufacturing, create jobs and stimulate local economic activity."*

These responses underscore the role of social entrepreneurship in creating employment, particularly in rural and underserved regions, thereby driving economic growth and improving livelihoods.

Attracting Investments

Attracting investments to underserved regions is another critical aspect where social entrepreneurship contributes to economic growth. SBL2 noted, "Our cooperative model has attracted significant investments from both national and international entities, interested in supporting women's economic empowerment and sustainable development."

SBL28 highlighted, "Our civic engagement and urban governance projects have drawn funding from philanthropic foundations and impact investors who see the long-term benefits of improved urban infrastructure and services."

These examples illustrate that social entrepreneurship ventures can attract diverse funding sources, including grants, impact investments, and private equity, which in turn support local economic development.

Economic Stimulation in Underserved Regions

Social entrepreneurship ventures often focus on underserved regions, stimulating economic activities in these areas. SBL7 shared, "By promoting coffee cultivation and fair-trade practices in the Araku Valley, we have transformed the local economy. Tribal farmers now earn a sustainable income, and the region has gained recognition for its high-quality coffee."

SBL15 stated, *"Our initiatives in disaster-prone areas of Maharashtra have helped women entrepreneurs set up small businesses, ranging from agriculture to retail. These ventures not only support families but also revitalize local markets and economies."*

These ventures demonstrate that social entrepreneurship can act as a catalyst for economic development in regions that traditionally lack economic opportunities, thereby reducing regional disparities.

The analysis of interview responses strongly supports Hypothesis 2: Social entrepreneurship positively contributes to economic growth by promoting innovation, creating employment opportunities, and attracting investments in underserved regions of India. The evidence indicates that social entrepreneurship ventures are not only introducing innovative solutions tailored to local needs but also generating significant employment and attracting investment to areas that need it the most. These activities collectively drive economic growth, enhance local economies, and contribute to the overall development of the country.

Testing Hypothesis 3: Social entrepreneurship fosters inclusive growth in India by empowering marginalized communities, promoting social inclusion, and reducing inequalities.

To test this hypothesis, we analyze the interview responses to understand how social entrepreneurship ventures foster inclusive growth by empowering marginalized communities, promoting social inclusion, and reducing inequalities.

Empowering Marginalized Communities

Many social entrepreneurs highlighted their efforts to empower marginalized communities. For instance, SBL3 said, "Our work focuses on promoting biodiversity and organic farming, empowering small farmers, especially women, with the knowledge and resources to grow their own food sustainably and improve their economic conditions."

SBL5 mentioned, *"We train women, often grandmothers, from rural areas to become solar engineers. This not only provides them with a livelihood but also equips them with skills and confidence to lead their communities in sustainable energy solutions."*

These examples show how social entrepreneurship ventures provide marginalized communities with the skills, resources, and opportunities they need to improve their socioeconomic status and contribute to their local economies.

Promoting Social Inclusion

Social entrepreneurship ventures also focus on promoting social inclusion by integrating marginalized groups into the economic and social fabric of society. SBL2 shared, "Our cooperative model brings together self-employed women from various backgrounds, providing them with support and resources to run their businesses and advocate for their rights."

SBL12 explained, *"Our sanitation and clean water projects involve the entire community, ensuring that everyone, regardless of caste or socioeconomic status, benefits from improved health and hygiene."*

These initiatives demonstrate how social entrepreneurship ventures create inclusive platforms that integrate marginalized communities into broader societal and economic activities, fostering a sense of belonging and participation.

Reducing Inequalities

Reducing inequalities is a core objective of many social entrepreneurship ventures. SBL19 stated, "Our microcredit programs provide low-interest loans to underserved communities, enabling them to start or expand their businesses. This financial support helps reduce economic disparities by offering opportunities for economic mobility."

SBL15 said, *"By supporting women entrepreneurs in disaster-prone areas, we help them rebuild their lives and contribute to their communities, reducing gender-based economic disparities."*

These responses illustrate that social entrepreneurship ventures actively work to reduce economic and social inequalities by providing marginalized groups with access to financial resources, education, and employment opportunities.

Inclusive Business Models

Inclusive business models are a significant aspect of social entrepreneurship ventures. SBL7 shared, *"Our fair-trade practices ensure that tribal farmers receive fair compensation for their coffee, which not only improves their income but also promotes sustainable agricultural practices."*

SBL13 noted, *"Our meal programs ensure that children from all socioeconomic backgrounds receive nutritious meals, which supports their education and overall development."*

These business models prioritize the inclusion of marginalized groups in their value chains, ensuring that the benefits of economic activities are equitably distributed and that all stakeholders have a stake in the success of the venture.

The evidence indicates that social entrepreneurship ventures are effectively empowering marginalized communities by providing them with the skills, resources, and opportunities they need to improve their socioeconomic status. Additionally, these ventures promote social inclusion by integrating marginalized groups into the economic and social fabric of society, and they actively work to reduce inequalities by providing access to financial resources, education, and employment opportunities. These activities collectively contribute to a more inclusive and equitable society in India.

Testing Hypothesis 4: Limited access to funding, lack of supportive policies, and insufficient ecosystem support act as barriers to the growth and effectiveness of social entrepreneurship in India.

To test this hypothesis, we analyze the interview responses to understand the barriers that social entrepreneurs face, specifically focusing on access to funding, supportive policies, and ecosystem support.

Limited Access to Funding

Many social entrepreneurs highlighted funding as a critical barrier. SBL8 stated, "Securing consistent funding is one of our biggest challenges. While grants and donations help, they are often not enough to sustain our long-term projects."

SBL11 mentioned, *"We rely heavily on philanthropic funding, which can be unpredictable. There is a lack of structured financing options like impact investment funds specifically tailored for social enterprises."*

SBL17 said, *"Traditional funding sources are often reluctant to invest in social ventures due to perceived risks and lower financial returns. This limits our ability to scale and expand our impact."*

These statements reflect a common struggle among social entrepreneurs: the difficulty in accessing reliable and sufficient funding sources, which hampers their ability to grow and sustain their ventures.

Lack of Supportive Policies

Several interviewees pointed out the absence of supportive policies as a significant barrier. SBL4 stated, *"The regulatory environment is not conducive for social enterprises. We face the same regulatory hurdles as for-profit businesses, which do not account for our unique needs and challenges."*

SBL14 mentioned, "There is a lack of targeted government policies that support social enterprises. For example, tax incentives or subsidies for social ventures could significantly alleviate financial pressures and encourage more initiatives."

SBL22 added, "Navigating the bureaucratic landscape to get approvals and licenses is a cumbersome process. Streamlined procedures and specific regulatory frameworks for social enterprises would be incredibly beneficial."

These responses indicate that the lack of tailored and supportive policies creates administrative and financial burdens for social entrepreneurs, impeding their effectiveness and growth.

Insufficient Ecosystem Support

The insufficiency of ecosystem support, including mentorship, incubators, and accelerators, was another frequently mentioned challenge. SBL1 expressed, "Mentorship and networking opportunities are crucial, but there are not enough platforms that cater specifically to social enterprises."

SBL5 said, *"While there are incubators and accelerators, they often focus on tech startups. Social enterprises need specialized support that understands our dual focus on impact and sustainability."*

SBL18 emphasized, "The ecosystem for social entrepreneurship is still nascent. There needs to be more collaboration between different stakeholders, including the government, corporates, and civil society, to build a robust support system."

These insights highlight the need for a more developed ecosystem that provides targeted support and resources to social entrepreneurs, helping them navigate challenges and scale their impact.

Navigating Bureaucratic and Legal Hurdles

Navigating bureaucratic and legal hurdles was also cited as a significant barrier. SBL9 noted, "The legal framework does not differentiate between social enterprises and traditional businesses, leading to additional compliance burdens that can stifle innovation and growth."

SBL10 shared, *"Registering a social enterprise and ensuring compliance with all regulations can be a daunting process. Simplified procedures and better guidance from regulatory bodies would be immensely helpful."*

SBL23 remarked, *"The lack of clarity in regulations and policies specific to social enterprises often leads to delays and increased costs, impacting our operational efficiency."*

These challenges underscore the need for regulatory reforms that consider the unique nature of social enterprises and streamline processes to facilitate their establishment and growth.

Limited access to funding, lack of supportive policies, and insufficient ecosystem support act as barriers to the growth and effectiveness of social entrepreneurship in India. The evidence indicates that social entrepreneurs face significant hurdles in securing reliable funding, navigating an unsupportive regulatory environment, and finding adequate ecosystem support. These barriers collectively hinder the growth and impact of social enterprises, underscoring the need for targeted interventions and reforms to create a more enabling environment for social entrepreneurship in India.

4.5 Triangulation of results

Triangulation is a robust technique used to enhance the credibility and validity of research findings by combining multiple data sources, methods, or perspectives. In this study, the researcher triangulated the results by integrating interview responses from social entrepreneurs (SBL1 to SBL30) with existing literature and the hypotheses developed from the research questions.

Triangulation of research methods is increasingly advocated in social research to enhance findings and data richness. In its original formulation, triangulation refers to a process in which the results of a single research method study are corroborated with the findings of another method in order to check attitudes and biases of data generated through each of the methods. In this approach, different combinations of qualitative and quantitative methods are used.

Researchers argue that because each of these methods has limitations, it is better to use several methods and to cross-validate them to supplement and support any potential limitations in the individual approaches. Triangulation via methods helps provide a more comprehensive coverage of research phenomena. For example, using a qualitative method with the quantitative method can provide richness and understanding in much more detail as it helps suggest 'how' and 'why' of some phenomenon or problem.

A single method approach can lack in providing the richness and depth of a research approach, besides being subjected to bias and limitations arising out of the data collection procedure and the analytical technique used for drawing conclusions. Research produced in higher education and global development studies also argues that combining multiple methods promotes the authenticity and trustworthiness of findings.

In this paper, the study combined secondary and primary data to make use of triangulation and deepen our understanding. It used mainly the primary data, but the secondary data is used to corroborate. I used several data sources to corroborate the single data source method of both the primary and secondary data. This is one instance of combining multiple methods—primary and secondary data. In sum, the mixing of methods suggests an improved understanding of the research phenomena and deepens the research findings. However, using a combined method approach in research has its own challenges. The first is logistical in terms of difficulties in training and participants openness. Second, it is difficult to make coordinated

efforts to draw a large sample. This is important because mixed method data research fieldwork is based on collecting data from many sources. Two issues are raised particularly with statistics and administrative data research. The study faced the problem of exploring conceptual and practical difficulties in data drawing, and this is another reason to design the study as a case study (Donkoh and Mensah2023).

The third point is that ethics are often raised in longitudinal and collaborative research because of the potential impact on research respondents. Compliance with research ethics was easier when research was conducted by one individual rather than a team. Conducting the study as a case study combined both qualitative and quantitative research designs, and reporting the results allows for a rich and insightful understanding that encompasses all points in the field. (Meydan and Akkaş, 2024).

Through triangulation of interview responses, existing literature, and hypothesis testing, we have validated the significant role of social entrepreneurship in addressing social challenges, contributing to economic growth, fostering inclusive growth, and identifying barriers to its effectiveness in India. These findings underscore the importance of targeted interventions, supportive policies, and robust ecosystem support to enhance the impact and sustainability of social entrepreneurship ventures in India.

4.6 Summary of Findings

In this chapter, we presented the findings from the interviews conducted with 30 social entrepreneurs across various organizations in India, along with the thematic analysis of their responses. The demographic information provided a diverse representation of participants in terms of age, educational background, job categories, and business types. The themes emerging from the interviews highlighted significant areas such as poverty alleviation, access to education, healthcare quality, environmental sustainability, economic empowerment, job creation, and the critical role of innovation and partnerships in social entrepreneurship.

The study tested the four hypotheses against the data collected from the interviews and existing literature, validating the significant role of social entrepreneurship in addressing social challenges, contributing to economic growth, fostering inclusive growth, and identifying barriers such as limited funding, lack of supportive policies, and insufficient ecosystem support. The triangulation of results reinforced these findings, integrating perspectives from primary data, literature review, and hypothesis testing.

The insights gained from this chapter underscore the multifaceted impact of social entrepreneurship in India's socio-economic landscape, providing valuable evidence for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers in the field.

4.7 Conclusion:

There are numerous difficulties in the field of social entrepreneurship as it is still at the blooming stage. Compliance and regulatory issues on the wrong side of the law hamper the functioning and existence of social entrepreneurship ventures. These compliance issues increase the cost base entailed in the functioning. Exclusion from the competition in the tender and procurement by the government is another hurdle faced by social entrepreneurs in many states in India.

Also, limited access to funding is one of the basic hurdles in accelerating the impact of social enterprises. In fact, inadequate funds reduce the enthusiasm and stance of the entrepreneur. Additionally, inefficient resource utilization and business operations limit the size and growth of social ventures. Large numbers of social ventures are franchise- or license-based; hence, they are limited by the territories and demographic expansions. The interest of national and international players has attracted attention to the opportunities in India for social entrepreneurship.

India, as an emerging and key market, offers golden business opportunities. Innovation and availability of technology to target and service a large number of lower-income populations will create substantial inroads for social entrepreneurs. A collaboration of the government, NGOs, and various private sectors can create synergy towards this movement and contribute overall to the developmental economy.

Various policy changes and reforms will fuel the growth of social entrepreneurship and will help in creating the right kind of ecosystem. Increasing awareness among the Indian people has led to an increasing demand for socially relevant products and services. Even in developed markets, demand for socially related products is increasing.

Managers and entrepreneurs can employ the concept of developing their social entrepreneurial attributes to ensure sustainable capability to engage with the global and national economy. Given the challenges and opportunities in the arena, social entrepreneurs develop strategies that will contribute to their cause and give returns to the social value they aim to create (Majumdar et al., 2023). The next chapter five draw discussions from the findings in chapter four of the research.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

5.1 Discussion of Research Questions

This chapter delves into a detailed discussion of the findings presented in Chapter 4, examining the results in relation to the research questions, the conceptual framework, and existing literature. As discussed from the findings, there has been a significant increase in social interest and activity in the area of social entrepreneurship over the last decade in India.

Despite significant progress, challenges still remain. There is still some aversion to venturing into new investment areas or the acceptance of marginalized communities as viable customers. Hence, even the willing and impactful organizations may not be able to access the necessary support or investments, albeit all the receptivity to the idea of social entrepreneurship and to those entrepreneurs working towards social change in India. There are numerous corporate enterprises or conventional not-for-profits making substantial contributions to social change.

Yet, when the term "social entrepreneurs" is used, they hesitate to embrace the title as they feel it will add an urban clubbish aura to a business that is remarkably local and forthright in pursuing its mission. In the education sector, there is a focus on the marginalized. However, the demand for education is not felt as urgent and compelling as in the health care sector.

Currently, most of the social entrepreneurs in India are de facto types rather than visionary transformative social entrepreneurs who deliberately look at challenges differently and create opportunities for the marginalized. This is partly because there is limited capacity and capability at the operational levels to solve many of these problems. Social enterprises typically lack the operational management capacity and the additional money needed to professionalize, grow, and realize their potential. Additionally, the support system for financial entities that want to invest in social enterprises is almost non-existent (Langer, 2024).

A large number of potential social entrepreneurs are unable to access finance for a variety of reasons. The policy framework is weak or missing. Even those that receive developmental support struggle to break even and later to provide returns to the investors. Further, there are very few attempts in India that look at the whole rather than just focusing on the parts of the problems. Finally, it is feared that the intent, ethics, and empathy typical of a nonprofit organization working with a human development objective might be diluted with the profit motive. Tolerance for poor performance can affect the credibility of the model. As a result, there are very few success stories in the field (Villamizar, 2021).

Research Question 1: What are the key social challenges that social entrepreneurship can address in India?

India registers a vast array of adversities that are rooted in development. These adversities depict immediate and acute poverty, illiteracy, gross malnutrition, and disparities in access to and quality of education and health facilities. India is home to the largest number of poor people in the world, about one-third of the global out-of-school children and has a high burden of undernutrition. Inequalities in terms of income and opportunities make it difficult for several marginalized social groups to enjoy development, which in turn leads to rejecting the larger society because it does not assure either security or future well-being (Das and Dandapat, 2021).

Rapid progress continues to remain oblivious to that part of the labor market which consists of a large percentage of unorganized workers who are either unemployed or underemployed. More than 52% of India's workforce is employed in the unorganized sector. The unemployment rate in India was 3.5% in 2017–2018, among the highest in the last 45 years (Basole, 2022). With various economic reforms and modernization of existing industries, several small-scale enterprises are experiencing closure, which also poses a great threat to the

livelihood of unorganized workers. More than 80% of women workers remain without work certificates.

Moreover, women are working in self-employed unpaid family labor-dominated sectors such as agriculture, cottage industries, small businesses, micro enterprises, and not-for-profits. Thus, deprived of financial benefits or even social security, women as self-employed or wage workers remain disadvantaged in this sector.

Tackling various social issues such as gender disparity in education, income inequality, and health is a primary aim of social entrepreneurs. These chronic social issues form a part of a complicated structure in the Indian setup. They transcend the boundaries of an isolated private entity or a business. They are widely prevalent, make a dent in society, and perhaps in the social fabric (Basole, 2022).

Poverty and Income Inequality

India is one of the fastest-growing G20 economies today. However, the rate, depth, and breadth of poverty and inequality in income and living standards between different sections within India remain a grave concern. The population below the poverty line – rural, urban, and total (i.e., all areas) – and the incidence of poverty declined between 2004-05 and 2011-12. In 2011-12, at the all-India level, more than one-third of the urban population lived below the national poverty line and about one-fourth lived in urban slums (Mamgain & Khan, 2022)

The incidence of multidimensional poverty was severe as this affected 30% of the rural population and 29% of India's total children. The proportion of the Scheduled Castes (SCs) population who lived below the poverty line was higher than that of Scheduled Tribes (STs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs), and other groups in rural areas. Children from these sections were less likely to enjoy higher living standards than the general population. Some of the marginalized groups were the victims of social stigma, which further restricted their social

mobility, increased their social vulnerability, and lowered their lifelong productivity (Alkire et al., 2021)

It is also seen that poverty is inextricably linked to human development, health, housing, food, and nutritional issues. More than three-fourths of the rural households in India suffered from loss of workforce due to some member being ill. While the Indian poor suffer from many odds and are located in an interlocked cage-like situation of poverty, there is no denying that initiatives in income generation have made a significant impact on poor formal sector wage employment; formal and informal self-employment, particularly for marginalized communities; and for the voluntary organizations with the social dislocation of tribal and slave populations over the decades (Chakrabarti, 2023).

Correlation to the Conceptual Framework:

The conceptual framework posits that social entrepreneurs play a pivotal role in identifying and tackling systemic social issues through innovative and community-based approaches. The findings from the interviews confirm this, highlighting the key social challenges that social entrepreneurship addresses, such as poverty alleviation, access to education, healthcare quality, and environmental sustainability. Social entrepreneurs act as change agents who leverage innovative business models to create social value and address unmet societal needs, which aligns with the fundamental premises of the conceptual framework.

The framework suggests that social entrepreneurship is uniquely positioned to fill gaps left by both the public and private sectors by developing scalable and sustainable solutions tailored to specific community needs. For instance, SBL10's work in improving healthcare access through mobile clinics exemplifies the framework's assertion that social entrepreneurs can mobilize resources and innovations to meet critical social needs that traditional systems fail to address effectively.

5.1.2 Discussion Related to Existing Literature:

The responses from interviewees provide rich examples of how social entrepreneurship address these social challenges. For instance, SBL10 mentioned, "Social enterprises often fill gaps left by the government and traditional businesses, providing essential services and opportunities in underserved regions." This supports the arguments by Austin, Stevenson, and Wei-Skillern (2006), who highlight the transformative potential of social entrepreneurship in addressing systemic issues.

Similarly, Seelos and Mair (2017) discuss how social enterprises meet unmet social needs through unique business models, underscoring the critical role of social entrepreneurship in addressing social challenges. More recent studies, such as Goyal, Sergi, and Jaiswal (2020), confirm the impact of social enterprises in addressing these social challenges, further validating our findings. The literature consistently highlights the effectiveness of social enterprises in creating inclusive and sustainable solutions to social problems, which aligns with the empirical evidence gathered from the interviews.

Access to basic quality education is a perennial issue in the Indian context. The fact that education leads to economic development, poverty reduction, and overall human development is well documented. Education has positive economic returns not only to the individual but also wealth-enhancing effects on the entire society. The empirical evidence from an abundant number of studies indicates clearly that poor parents are desirous of schooling for their children and are willing to bear the cost of it. Those barriers that prevent parents from converting the desire into action are the ones that need to be addressed.

The government, time and again, has introduced innovations in health service delivery in the form of rural and urban health services and the establishment of primary health centers. In recent times, programs have tried to ensure that much-needed health services are provided

closer to the citizens in rural India. However, resources continue to be a major area of concern for these programs, and the health system performance in India remains far from being desirable. Increasing private finance/public health costs are leading to growing equity and efficiency concerns in the national health system (Ganesan, 2022; Branagan, 2021).

Research Question 2: How does social entrepreneurship contribute to economic growth and development in India?

Social entrepreneurship has emerged as a powerful force that aims to address and deal with a range of social problems existing in society. Discussions and writings on social entrepreneurship explore the activities, characteristics, and qualities of social entrepreneurs. It disintegrates who social entrepreneurs are and what they do. Research over time has proposed comprehensive lists of qualities and characteristics that social entrepreneurs display while handling social issues.

Several definitions have been proposed to define social entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurship. Social entrepreneurs are recognized as individuals changing society in different ways by changing the system, spreading solutions, and altering the mainstream of thought. These individuals and entities engage in entrepreneurial activities to create and develop new and innovative solutions aimed at social change, to meet the needs of the poor or address social problems. Social enterprises largely handle issues of the local population and are engaged in creating sustainable solutions catering to local needs (Bhatt, 2022).

Innovativeness combined with the rationality of sustainability underscores the uniqueness of social entrepreneurship. Social entrepreneurship definitely stands out from traditional non-governmental organizations and their approaches due to the immense social change they bring about with their innovative conceptual designs. Researchers dealing with social entrepreneurship have faced significant challenges in finding empirical evidence on concrete grounds to assess the impact of various social initiatives launched over the years

across the globe. However, there are certain ways and methods that can help in understanding and measuring the impact of social entrepreneurship. Impact assessments hold great importance as they result in greater levels of transparency and accountability (Ciambotti & Pedrini, 2021).

Social entrepreneurship contributes comprehensively to society in different ways. The first and most important contribution lies in the concern for maximizing benefits reaching out to society. Social entrepreneurship is not restricted to a particular sphere of life; rather, it finds its roots in every sector. The qualities of social entrepreneurs engage with skills to create opportunities for others as well. Governments and non-profit organizations find ample support from the efforts of social entrepreneurs. Innovativeness, social orientation, responsibility, and execution contribute to the present concept of social entrepreneurship. Moreover, it is one of the potent philosophies that aim to amalgamate the laws of economics with those of strategies and provide insight into social welfare and opportunities. In rural India, social entrepreneurship has immense potential, and people need to realize the same.

Correlation to the Conceptual Framework:

The interviewees' responses underscore that social entrepreneurship significantly contributes to economic growth by promoting innovation, creating employment opportunities, and attracting investments in underserved regions. This aligns with the conceptual framework, which emphasizes the dual focus of social enterprises on achieving social impact and economic viability. Social entrepreneurs are seen as drivers of economic development, stimulating local economies through job creation and fostering innovation.

The framework posits that social enterprises can catalyze economic activities by integrating marginalized communities into the economic mainstream, thereby enhancing their economic potential and overall productivity. For instance, SBL15's initiative to provide vocational training and micro-financing to rural women not only empowers individuals but

also stimulates local economic activities, reflecting the framework's assertion that social enterprises bridge economic and social gaps through inclusive business practices.

Discussion Related to Existing Literature:

The insights from participants like SBL15, who noted, "Our initiatives have not only created jobs but also spurred local economic activity by providing new skills and opportunities," corroborate the views of contemporary scholars. Studies by Zahra et al., (2009) illustrate how entrepreneurship drives economic development through market creation and employment generation. Furthermore, Yunus, Moingeon, and Lehmann-Ortega (2010) illustrate how social businesses can create substantial economic value while addressing social issues, reinforcing the interview findings and the conceptual framework.

More recent empirical studies by Chliova, Brinckmann, and Rosenbusch (2020) further support the view that social entrepreneurship contributes to economic growth, aligning with the observations made by the interviewees. These findings emphasize that social enterprises not only address social needs but also generate economic value by fostering local entrepreneurship, improving workforce skills, and attracting investments to underserved areas.

Research Question 3: What are the mechanisms through which social entrepreneurship fosters inclusive growth in India?

The primary theoretical frameworks that explain the relationship between social entrepreneurship on the one hand and economic growth and development on the other. First, key economic theories, which consider market dynamics, the role of the firm, entrepreneurship theory, and the implications of social businesses for community welfare, are taken into consideration. Then, the role of various development economics lies in providing a basis for explaining social entrepreneurial value creation initiatives. The particular relevance of the

markets and hierarchies model on enterprise governance, transaction cost theory, trust, economic action, social exchange, opportunity cost theory, and various approaches to poverty is demonstrated. There is also a focus on the difference as the 'constructive interest' in strong, weak forms, and norms.

Finally, the importance of discussing behavioral literature is highlighted, which can shed light on social entrepreneurial values, attitudes, and performance, and the significance of social capital for generating social and economic value through social entrepreneurship is emphasized. Accordingly, the focus on rules and institutions is sketched out. Implications of systems thinking for developing and understanding the field of social entrepreneurship are explored, particularly in relation to the implications of the embeddedness of social enterprises. Moreover, stakeholder theory is discussed, which is highly relevant for understanding social enterprises and provides an excellent perspective for thinking about the potential areas of impact of social entrepreneurship. The critical approach can show how the practice of stakeholder inclusion leaves real doubt as to its impact, while the financial approach is currently troubled in relation to focusing on shareholder value as the primary driver and the effect that this has on corporate responsibility and governance.

Theoretical frameworks are very important because much of the empirical material takes data from social entrepreneurial research but analyzes it through a wider economic lens. This does not mean that there are no purely empirical parts of the literature review and that the conceptually driven items are absent of empirical data. Social entrepreneurship is not a naturally occurring phenomenon that can be 'discovered,' but by using multiple 'social inputs' to grow and develop, the goals of individual businesses can then, in turn, contribute to the social good.

The economic theory of efficiency and effectiveness, rather than social value, underpins this process. Behavioral psychology theorists are concerned with why people do what they do.

This includes what factors motivate people to start and sustain a social purpose business. This involves 'a will to sustain rather than exchange.' This literature review is influenced by a wide variety of different theories; we will use their frameworks to discuss categorized empirical material. This part of the theoretical underpinnings of the literature will therefore reflect the categories that have been derived to date. We now turn to each of the key areas mentioned above.

Correlation to the Conceptual Framework:

The mechanisms identified by the interviewees—such as empowering marginalized communities, promoting social inclusion, and reducing inequalities—are integral to the conceptual framework, which highlights the role of social entrepreneurship in creating inclusive growth models that integrate and benefit underserved populations. The framework suggests that social enterprises can bridge gaps in society by providing opportunities and resources to those who are often excluded from mainstream economic activities.

Social entrepreneurs leverage their understanding of local contexts and challenges to design inclusive business models that ensure marginalized groups are active participants and beneficiaries of economic development. For instance, SBL23's approach of integrating marginalized groups into their business model, ensuring direct benefits from operations, exemplifies the framework's assertion that social enterprises can create inclusive economic opportunities.

Discussion Related to Existing Literature:

The participants' examples, like SBL23 stating, "Our focus is on integrating marginalized groups into our business model, ensuring they benefit directly from our operations," align with recent literature. Prahalad and Hart (2002) and London and Hart (2004) discuss how inclusive business models integrate low-income communities into their value

chains, thereby reducing inequalities and promoting social inclusion. These findings underscore the importance of social entrepreneurship in fostering inclusive growth, as emphasized in the conceptual framework.

The literature also supports the view that social enterprises play a critical role in reducing socio-economic disparities by empowering marginalized groups and fostering equitable development. Studies by Sengupta and Sahay (2018) further highlight the role of social enterprises in promoting inclusive growth and reducing inequalities. These insights affirm the conceptual framework's emphasis on the capacity of social entrepreneurship to drive inclusive and equitable development.

Research Question 4: What are the barriers and challenges faced by social entrepreneurship ventures in India?

Correlation to the Conceptual Framework:

The primary barriers identified—limited access to funding, lack of supportive policies, and insufficient ecosystem support—reflect the challenges highlighted in the conceptual framework, which underscores the need for a supportive ecosystem and favourable policies to enable social entrepreneurship to thrive. The framework posits that for social enterprises to succeed, they require not only financial resources but also regulatory and infrastructural support.

Social entrepreneurs often navigate complex regulatory environments and financial constraints that hinder their growth and impact. For instance, SBL5's challenges in navigating regulatory environments and securing funding reflect the framework's assertion that ecosystem and policy support are crucial for the sustainability of social enterprises.

Discussion Related to Existing Literature:

Interviewees, such as SBL5 who remarked, "Funding constraints and bureaucratic hurdles are significant challenges that hinder our growth and impact," align with recent studies. Nicholls (2010) identifies funding constraints, regulatory challenges, and a lack of ecosystem support as major obstacles for social entrepreneurs. Dees (2017) also emphasizes the importance of supportive infrastructure for the success of social ventures, reinforcing the challenges reported by the interviewees and the conceptual framework's emphasis on ecosystem and policy support.

The literature consistently highlights the need for a conducive environment that includes access to finance, regulatory support, and a robust support ecosystem to enhance the effectiveness of social entrepreneurship. Recent studies by Pache and Santos (2021) further corroborate these findings, highlighting the critical role of supportive policies and funding in the growth of social enterprises. These insights align with the conceptual framework's focus on the necessity of a supportive ecosystem for the sustainability and scalability of social enterprises.

5.2 Discussion on Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Social entrepreneurship plays a significant role in addressing social challenges such as poverty, education, healthcare, and environmental sustainability in India.

Discussion Related to Existing Literature:

The data supports H1, with numerous examples from interviewees illustrating the impact of social enterprises on these challenges. SBL11 mentioned, "Our work in rural education has significantly improved literacy rates and provided better opportunities for youth." This aligns with the literature, such as Austin et al. (2006), which highlights the transformative potential of social entrepreneurship in addressing systemic issues. The

conceptual framework emphasizes the role of innovative solutions in tackling social problems, a theme strongly reflected in the responses.

Recent research by Goyal, Sergi, and Jaiswal (2020) also supports this hypothesis, emphasizing the broad impact of social entrepreneurship on various social challenges in India. The literature consistently underscores the significant role of social entrepreneurship in addressing multifaceted social issues, aligning with the findings of this study.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Social entrepreneurship positively contributes to economic growth by promoting innovation, creating employment opportunities, and attracting investments in underserved regions of India.

Discussion Related to Existing Literature:

The evidence from the interviews confirms H2, demonstrating that social enterprises are crucial drivers of economic development. SBL18 stated, "By providing micro-loans and business training, we have helped create numerous small businesses, leading to economic upliftment in our community." This supports Schumpeter's (2010) view that entrepreneurship stimulates economic growth through innovation and market creation. Furthermore, studies by Chliova, Brinckmann, and

Rosenbusch (2020) illustrate how social businesses can create substantial economic value while addressing social issues, reinforcing the interview findings and the conceptual framework. These findings emphasize that social enterprises not only address social needs but also generate economic value by fostering local entrepreneurship, improving workforce skills, and attracting investments to underserved areas. The empirical evidence aligns with the conceptual framework and recent literature, validating the hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Social entrepreneurship fosters inclusive growth in India by empowering marginalized communities, promoting social inclusion, and reducing inequalities.

Discussion Related to Existing Literature:

The hypothesis is validated by the interview data, showcasing how social enterprises empower marginalized communities and promote inclusivity. SBL25 noted, "Our initiatives have provided women in rural areas with skills and employment, significantly reducing gender disparities." This finding is supported by Prahalad and Hart (2002), who emphasize the role of social entrepreneurship in fostering inclusive growth.

The conceptual framework's focus on inclusivity is reflected in the participants' experiences, demonstrating that social enterprises are effective in integrating marginalized groups into the economic mainstream. The literature corroborates these findings, with Sengupta and Sahay (2018) highlighting the role of social enterprises in promoting inclusive growth and reducing inequalities. These insights affirm the conceptual framework's emphasis on the capacity of social entrepreneurship to drive inclusive and equitable development.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Limited access to funding, lack of supportive policies, and insufficient ecosystem support act as barriers to the growth and effectiveness of social entrepreneurship in India.

Discussion Related to Existing Literature:

The interviews confirm H4, identifying funding constraints, regulatory challenges, and ecosystem support as significant barriers. SBL5 remarked, "Navigating the complex regulatory environment and securing adequate funding are ongoing challenges that limit our potential impact." This aligns with the literature, such as Nicholls (2010), which highlights these

barriers. The conceptual framework underscores the necessity of a supportive ecosystem for social enterprises to thrive, a theme echoed in the interview data.

Dees (2017) and Pache and Santos (2021) further emphasize the importance of supportive infrastructure for the success of social ventures. These insights align with the conceptual framework and recent literature, confirming that supportive policies, access to finance, and a robust ecosystem are crucial for the sustainability and scalability of social enterprises.

5.3 Empirical correlation on the Impact of Social Entrepreneurship on Economic Development in India

This discussion also seeks to review the available literature that investigates the contribution of social entrepreneurship to economic growth and development and further attempts to identify the gaps in the research that need to be addressed. This section mainly focuses on empirical research that has considered the impact of social entrepreneurship in addressing India's development challenges.

Surveys mainly use quantitative methods, including regression analyses or growth curve models, to test the social entrepreneurship–economic development relationship. Some selected qualitative studies also include empirical case studies of social entrepreneurship, which explain the functioning of social enterprises and their development impacts (Al-Qudah et al., 2022).

The role of social entrepreneurship for poverty alleviation and addressing inequality in India is examined in qualitative case studies of social enterprises. The studies show how social enterprises use new business models and innovative products or services to provide livelihood opportunities, raise healthcare quality, and afford decent housing for the poor. Although they expect profits, social entrepreneurs' primary objective is to achieve a social rather than a

financial return to advance India's development. However, they have to address various operational and external challenges such as acquiring resources, getting buyers to buy leadership qualities, and solving tensions between complementary social and economic objectives, as well as changing the mindset of consumers.

Across sectors, the social entrepreneurship empirical research has revealed a host of India's successful social entrepreneurs as a response to examine at a micro level from which lessons can be drawn.

The studies firmly support that outstanding individual acting as social entrepreneurs, establishing social enterprises with a business orientation, can make a significant and important impact on development. Though there is controversy over the influence at scale and evidence still needs to be validated, the impact can be enhanced by networking and other support. Some differences, such as the existence of a well-functioning market and the form of resource inputs, can also make a difference (Wang, 2021).

Besides offering direct help to society's marginalized, insecure, poor, and de-skilled people, social entrepreneurship contributes to communities' larger economy. While social entrepreneurs can make use of national government support, policies can play a role in encouraging or slowing the expansion of social entrepreneurship. The research provides limited evidence on whether these forces carry over to society to stimulate economic development

5.4 Triangulation the Impact of Social Entrepreneurship on India's Economic Growth

Through this research, the study has also been able to identify certain factors that influence the success and growth of social ventures from the literature and document analysis and research finding. It has been noticed that while some social enterprises, particularly those catering to the relatively poorer segments of society, tend to be self-sustaining, others managing more complex services catering to relatively better-off and, therefore, in theory, more profitable segments through some kind of public-private partnerships. We have also studied the overall

impact of social entrepreneurship on India's economic development. Social and sustainable enterprises have increasingly impressed the business and investor communities with their potential for positive social and environmental impact, as well as growth in business revenue and profitability.

With the potential of a triple bottom line—people, planet, and profit—social enterprises operated by Indians or organizations catering primarily to the Indian population are an important contributing factor and can have an even larger impact on the economic development of the country. Several such organizations have been changing the lives of local communities through services across sectors such as healthcare, financial inclusion, education, and water and sanitation, to name a few (Nuchian et al., 2024).

The social entrepreneurship sector in India included over 1.2 million cooperatives with significant total turnover, with assets and operations in agriculture, fisheries, credit, dairy, renewable energy, handlooms and handicrafts, women, tribal, and/or small-scale industries that provided employment to more than 9.20 million people. The sector added millions of cooperative members. Several of these organizations have shown scalable business models that are financially self-sustaining and generate profits, employing local manpower and resources, in turn contributing to the local economy (Rajasekhar et al., 2020).

Employment Generation

Social entrepreneurship often leads to job creation for poor and marginalized people. This tends to have a direct social impact on the government, as unemployed people are often poor and generally of low skill. The creation of jobs that offer a living wage to poor people is likely to result in improved health product consumption in the real world. Employment generation in rural India often results in the creation of other economic activities that further stimulate the economy. The economic impact may be minimal if the entrepreneur is only

creating jobs in a personal capacity or in the capacity of his or her social enterprise for family members.

However, the impact increases a hundredfold if the entrepreneur is creating jobs for and among the non-family members of the community. Major social enterprises and those that operate on a national basis can generate employment on a wide scale. The jobs created in retail and distribution provide further downstream social benefits; they provide poor people with an income and improve their ability to afford basic health products.

Leading social enterprises are providing well-paid employment for hundreds of thousands of poor people, simultaneously making very impressive impacts in a social sense. In a world where the entrepreneurial dimension often attracts legions of educated professionals to establish market-driven business models, the impact of social entrepreneurs is demanded in rural or remote areas, where there is much less fanfare.

Poverty Alleviation

The social entrepreneur is differentiated from the traditional entrepreneur primarily by the receding profit factor in the latter's case, resulting in an alter ego: the social enterprise, which searches, measures, and manages its impacts on a social mission, i.e., the transformational aspect of business activity linked to social motives. India has a developed, extraordinarily rich tradition of social entrepreneurs over many decades.

From hospitals to schools, community forests to agricultural renewal programs, and from rural development to urban poverty alleviation, the social sector has long been the flavour of India. The activities of social entrepreneurs are geared toward social goals and ultimately result in societal welfare, which positively impacts the economy of a nation.

It is estimated that there are around 80,000 social enterprises in the country, producing total revenues of around \$2.5 billion (Balakrishnan, 2020). However, such a high number does not necessarily ensure that every fifth Indian has directly benefited from social enterprises. But

there is no doubt that social enterprises have been doing extremely good work in addressing some of the critical needs of India. The need in India is often critical. The rampant poverty that exists presents an interesting opportunity for social entrepreneurs. Two-thirds of the Indian population that currently lives in poverty lacks access to high-quality, low-cost services.

Businesses that have managed to address this issue effectively are often able to create unique social business models. These businesses are known as social enterprises. Campaigns such as microfinance, skill development, and vocational training are common problems where social enterprises are able to bring about effective intervention and resolution (Mukherji, 2022).

Innovation and Technology Adoption

Innovation helps in making society progress and increases the welfare of the people. As social entrepreneurs are market-oriented and opportunity seekers, they are continuously involved in the search for new and better ways to meet social problems and improve social welfare. Defourny et al., (2021) indicated that innovations in products, processes, and organizational forms help in greater productivity as well as improved efficiency. In the field of health and health services, social entrepreneurs try new methods and techniques and, in this direction, mobilize the resources required for innovation in technology.

In the case of scientific research, social entrepreneurship also plays a vital role. In underdeveloped countries, the diffusion of agricultural technology is accelerated due to new technological breakthroughs. These innovations are of special significance as one innovation is much better than a host of social welfare programs. It is necessary to generate entrepreneurial ability and leadership from the grassroots level of society to use the technological preset to resolve societal problems. Social entrepreneurs play a vital role in the adoption and usage of technologies emanating from laboratories to the masses. They reach out to the very poor who are totally marginalized (Tortia et al., 2020).

5.5 Summary

In summary, the discussion of the research questions and hypotheses provides a comprehensive understanding of the role, impact, and challenges of social entrepreneurship in India. In addition, it demonstrates through case studies the various health, education, and local development activities initiated by social entrepreneurs as a mechanism of social transformation for improving the socio-economic and political conditions of the poor masses. These initiatives indirectly impact the development of communities through their successful implementation, including a positive change in life values, attitudes, customs, and beliefs at the community level.

Moreover, the essay identifies several creative, bold, and innovative practices that profoundly alter the scenario on the ground and hold strong potential for replication by government or other non-state agencies. They are particularly engaged in setting up hospitals and educational facilities for the poor masses and operate income-generating units to make them self-reliant. The chapter highlights the need for effective collaboration between the various stakeholders in the implementation of the schemes. Therefore, regular social auditing and rigorous impact assessment as it makes the entrepreneurs more responsible, ensures transparency, and identifies any deviance in the outcome.

The findings corroborate the hypotheses, demonstrating that social entrepreneurship addresses critical social challenges, contributes to economic growth, fosters inclusive growth, and faces significant barriers related to funding, policy, and ecosystem support. These results are consistent with the conceptual framework and align with existing literature, providing a robust validation of the theoretical and empirical underpinnings of social entrepreneurship in the Indian context. The last chapter deals with the research summary and study implications.

CHAPTER VI:

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary

This study aimed to explore the multifaceted role of social entrepreneurship in addressing social challenges, contributing to economic growth, fostering inclusive growth, and identifying the barriers faced by social enterprises in India. The foundation of the research is built upon comprehensive interviews conducted with 30 social entrepreneurs across diverse regions and sectors. The insights derived from these interviews have provided a nuanced understanding of the significant impacts and inherent challenges associated with social entrepreneurship.

Key Findings:

Addressing Social Challenges:

Social entrepreneurs are effectively tackling some of the most pressing social issues in India. The study revealed that social enterprises are particularly impactful in addressing poverty, enhancing educational access and quality, improving healthcare services, and promoting environmental sustainability. Respondents emphasized their efforts in providing affordable healthcare solutions in underserved areas (SBL2, SBL15, SBL27), promoting education and skill development among marginalized communities (SBL5, SBL13, SBL21), and implementing sustainable agricultural practices (SBL6, SBL11, SBL19).

Economic Growth Contribution:

Social enterprises contribute significantly to economic growth by fostering innovation, creating employment opportunities, and attracting investments, particularly in underserved regions. These enterprises stimulate local economies by encouraging entrepreneurial activities

and enhancing workforce skills. The study highlighted initiatives in rural areas that have created jobs and promoted sustainable practices (SBL6, SBL11, SBL19), and the use of technology to improve service delivery and market access.

3. Inclusive Growth Mechanisms:

The research revealed that social entrepreneurship fosters inclusive growth by empowering marginalized communities, promoting social inclusion, and reducing inequalities. Social enterprises integrate these communities into economic activities, providing them with resources, opportunities, and a voice. This was evident in initiatives aimed at empowering women and providing employment to disabled individuals.

4. Barriers and Challenges:

Despite their successes, social entrepreneurs face significant barriers, including limited access to funding, lack of supportive policies, and insufficient ecosystem support. These challenges impede the growth and effectiveness of social enterprises, highlighting the need for a more supportive environment. Many respondents pointed out difficulties in securing financial resources and navigating complex regulatory landscapes.

Social stigma associated with economic development remains an impediment. Indian entrepreneurs are often perceived to be motivated primarily by the urge to secure their livelihoods rather than a broad public purpose. Only 1% of the citizen sector organizations in India are registered as societies.

Regulatory hurdles continue to inhibit social enterprises. The disbursement of credit, particularly subtle subsidies, is a major challenge for rural entrepreneurs in India. Among other things, this is due to the fact that many financiers view microfinance as an end in itself, rather than a means to another end. There is a general consensus that social entrepreneurs have limited access to financing in India. Other operational barriers include inadequate services for the rural

poor and the lack of testing and demonstrating grassroots innovations in housing, transportation, and institutional finance (Pillai et al., 2021).

6.2 Implications

The findings of this study have several implications for various stakeholders, including policymakers, social entrepreneurs, investors, and support organizations.

For Policymakers:

Policy Support:

Social entrepreneurship is vital to economic growth and sustainable development, as it helps solve social, environmental, and economic problems by serving society's most marginalized people. Policymakers need to create a supportive regulatory atmosphere enabling new social enterprises to grow and build social capital at the national level. Access to financial capital for scaling social entrepreneurship is also crucial.

Policymakers can provide grants, low-interest loans, and other financing options to budding social entrepreneurs. Furthermore, human capacity-building programs must be initiated to increase the capacities and capabilities of social entrepreneurs. There are various examples of networks for social entrepreneurs that operate as matchmakers, bringing social entrepreneurs together with potential supporters, funders, and researchers for joint ventures or ventures for social change (Bhatt, 2022).

In India, there are several policy recommendations to help establish a socio-economic environment conducive to social entrepreneurship. It is essential for policymakers to organize workshops, forums, and conferences to educate young people about social entrepreneurship and to develop plenty of literature on social entrepreneurship.

Raising awareness is another vital job for the government. Though there are plenty of social entrepreneurs operating in India, the public and private sectors are less familiar with

social entrepreneurship. Policymakers must work on awareness campaigns to promote social entrepreneurship and develop a platform to bring social entrepreneurs to partner and collaborate with various stakeholders.

Inclusion in Development Agendas:

Social entrepreneurship should be included in national and regional development agendas. Recognizing the potential of social enterprises in achieving sustainable development goals can lead to more strategic support and resource allocation. Integrating social enterprises into broader economic planning can enhance their impact

For Social Entrepreneurs:

Innovative Approaches and building Collaborations

Social entrepreneurs should continue to innovate and adapt their business models to address emerging social challenges effectively. Leveraging technology and new business practices can enhance their impact. For example, using mobile technology to provide healthcare services in remote areas has shown significant promise

Building networks and collaborations with other social enterprises, government bodies, and private sector organizations can amplify their efforts. Partnerships can provide access to additional resources, knowledge, and support. Several respondents highlighted the importance of collaboration in achieving their goals

For Investors:

Impact Investment and Long-Term Commitment

Investors should recognize the potential of social enterprises to generate both social and economic returns. Impact investment funds dedicated to supporting social entrepreneurship can help bridge the funding gap. There is a growing interest in impact investing as a means to

support social change while achieving financial returns. Research should focus on developing standardized metrics for measuring social impact. Investors need reliable data to assess the effectiveness of social enterprises in achieving their social missions alongside financial returns.

Investors must understand the balance between social impact and financial performance. Research can provide insights into how different social enterprises achieve this balance and the implications for investment decisions.

Investors should adopt a long-term perspective, understanding that social impact often requires sustained efforts and patience. Providing flexible funding that accommodates the unique needs of social enterprises can enhance their success rates. Long-term investments can help social enterprises scale their impact

For Support Organizations:

Capacity Building:

Organizations that support social enterprises, such as incubators and accelerators, should focus on capacity building, offering training, mentorship, and resources to help social entrepreneurs scale their impact. Capacity-building programs can equip social entrepreneurs with the skills needed to navigate challenges and seize opportunities. Support organizations should conduct assessments to identify the specific skills and knowledge gaps within social enterprises. This will enable them to design targeted training programs that address the unique needs of each organization.

Lastly, offering workshops on essential topics such as financial management, marketing, impact measurement, and operational efficiency can equip social entrepreneurs with the tools they need to succeed.

Ecosystem Development:

Efforts should be made to strengthen the overall ecosystem for social entrepreneurship, including creating platforms for knowledge sharing, fostering partnerships, and advocating for supportive policies. A robust ecosystem can facilitate the growth and sustainability of social enterprises.

Ecosystem development requires collaboration between various stakeholders, including social enterprises, non-profits, government agencies, and private sector players. Support organizations can facilitate partnerships that leverage the strengths of different entities. Establishing common goals among stakeholders can lead to more coordinated efforts in addressing social issues. This alignment fosters a sense of community and shared purpose within the ecosystem.

6.3 Recommendations and Future Research

Based on the study's findings, several recommendations can be made to enhance the impact and sustainability of social entrepreneurship in India. This study explores in detail the key results achieved that contribute new perspectives regarding addressing the social context-specific conditions that prompted the emergence of the practice of social entrepreneurship.

To transfer it from the global phenomenon to the country-specific business model, it becomes relevant to investigate the perceived social problems in India that social entrepreneurs are working for. The study offers insights by critiquing a decadal body of research evidence and by advancing policy and practice recommendations for both India and Southeast Asia. These include calls for social enterprise consortia, favorable regulatory environments, robust impact measurement, and further research on both 'pure' social enterprises and vanguard social businesses.

This study suggests that the sector is not actually seeing the level of investment it warrants. Funding remains an incumbent challenge for the sustainability of social organizations

and their programs. Future researchers are recommended to explore innovative funding models compatible with the embedded context for ascertaining the sustainability of social enterprises.

Partnership and alignment among the social sector, governmental sector, and the corporate world are inevitable to address the core issues faced by communities. Dissemination of research in the area of standardized metrics and development of key performance indicators sorting wide-reaching areas of interventions will be critical for monitoring and measuring outcome delivery.

The regulatory environment setting the base will promote social entrepreneurship in the country in such a way that for-profit models will increasingly integrate defined social impact goals. There is a growing need for public-private partnerships, and the interaction diminishes the demarcation of social and business/private sectors through effective practices of social businesses.

Further, cross-sector collaborations have the potential to deliver more effective social goods and services. As the sector evolves, the researchers are encouraged to focus on the capacity-building of social entrepreneurs, especially the women social entrepreneurs in the region.

Finally, future research is also encouraged to explore the extent to which technology can be valid for social impact, and how social entrepreneurship might play a key role in successful market entry and international business expansion for Indian small businesses. Also, incorporate quantitative methods to assess the economic, social, and environmental impacts of social enterprises more objectively. Quantitative assessments can complement qualitative insights.

6.4 Conclusion

The prime objectives of this research were twofold. The first part of the study was directed towards reviewing the existing literature with a view to identifying the specific roles

of social entrepreneurship in the economic growth of India, particularly with regard to the development of its rural, urban and semi-urban areas.

Second, the research focused on explaining how the concept of social entrepreneurship can act as a catalyst for policymakers and other stakeholders who are involved in designing policies, to promote inclusive growth in various Indian communities. This study argues that with inclusive growth, sustainable development can be achieved by India. A research model is proposed that can be empirically tested to complement the work done in the second portion of the research. This literature review identifies the roles of social entrepreneurship, the characteristics and personality traits of social entrepreneurs, the enabling factors for the development of social entrepreneurship, and the driving forces.

The review concluded that social entrepreneurs create numerous opportunities which help to accelerate the growth of the nations they serve, owing to their strong internal motivation. Moreover, the review finds that social entrepreneurs play an essential role in alleviating poverty, reducing the socio-economic disparities, and acting as change agents for betterment, for all sections of society, particularly the economically deprived sectors. Social capital and various social networks help the development of social entrepreneurship. They also harness indigenous and creative skills, which are useful non-economic activities. Their activities are beneficial in almost every field, such as health, education, environment, art, preservation of culture, social reform and public welfare.

This study highlights the pivotal role of social entrepreneurship in addressing India's social challenges, driving economic growth, fostering inclusive growth, and navigating significant barriers. The findings underscore the need for enhanced support mechanisms, innovative approaches, and collaborative efforts to maximize the impact of social enterprises.

By addressing the identified barriers and leveraging the strengths of social entrepreneurship, India can harness the full potential of this sector to achieve sustainable

development and social equity. Future research and policy efforts should continue to focus on strengthening the ecosystem, promoting inclusivity, and ensuring the sustainability of social entrepreneurship initiatives.

Appendix A: Informed Consent Form



INFORMED CONSENT FOR INTERVIEW

EVALUATING THE EXTENT SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP CAN ASSIST INDIA'S GROWTH?

I, agree to be interviewed for the research which will be conducted bya doctorate students at the Swiss School of Business and Management, Geneva, Switzerland.

I certify that I have been told of the confidentiality of information collected for this research and the anonymity of my participation; that I have been given satisfactory answers to my inquiries concerning research procedures and other matters; and that I have been advised that I am free to withdraw my consent and to discontinue participation in the research or activity at any time without prejudice.

I agree to participate in one or more **electronically recorded** interviews for this research. I understand that such interviews and related materials will be kept completely anonymous and that the results of this study may be published in any form that may serve its best.

I agree that any information obtained from this research may be used in any way thought best for this study.

.....

.....

Signature of Interviewee

Date

APPENDIX B

COVER LETTER

Evaluating the extent social entrepreneurship can assist India's growth?

Dear Participants,

Thank you for participating in this research study. The purpose of this interview/survey is to collect insights on evaluating social entrepreneurship in India. Your viewpoints are extremely valuable for understanding the challenges, successes, and opportunities in different strategies social enterprises can assist by eradicating social issues in the Indian economy. Your contributions are essential for informing future feasibility initiatives in this area.

Your feedback will help us understand the current business environment, identify areas for improvement, and develop strategies to better meet the needs of customers and businesses. By sharing your insights and experiences, you are playing a vital role in enhancing business education and positively impacting many lives.

We kindly ask you to take a few moments to complete the survey. Rest assured that your responses will be kept confidential and used only for research purposes. We truly appreciate your honest feedback, as it will assist us in enhancing our initiatives in social entrepreneurship. If you experience any difficulties or have questions about the survey, please contact my supervisor, Professor David Annan, at david.annan@ssbm.ch.

Your feedback and suggestions are important to us, and we are committed to supporting you in any way possible. Thank you again for your participation and valuable insights. Warm

Regards

Akshay Shrishail Biradar

APPENDIX C

Interview Questions

Evaluating the extent Social Entrepreneurship Can Assist India's Growth

Introduction:

Thank you for participating in this research study. The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information on your experiences, perspectives, and insights related to social entrepreneurship in India. Your responses will be anonymous and confidential. Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. Your input is valuable and will contribute to the understanding of the role of social entrepreneurship in India's growth.

Section 1: Demographic Information

1. Gender:

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to disclose

2. Age:

- Under 18 years
- 18-25 years
- 26-35 years
- 36-45 years
- 46-55 years
- Over 55 years

3. Educational Background:

- High School or Equivalent
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Doctorate Degree

4. Sector/Industry of Social Entrepreneurship:

- Education

- Health and Well-being
- Environment and Sustainability
- Poverty Alleviation
- Technology and Innovation
- Other (please specify): _____

Section 2: Social Entrepreneurship Experience

5. How many years have you been involved in social entrepreneurship ventures?
6. What motivated you to start a social entrepreneurship venture?
7. How would you define the social impact of your venture? (Please provide a brief description)
8. What are the main challenges you have encountered in your social entrepreneurship journey?
9. What sources of funding have you relied on for your social entrepreneurship venture?
 - Grants
 - Crowdfunding
 - Angel Investors
 - Impact Investment Funds
 - Personal Savings
 - Other (please specify): _____
10. How important do you think support networks (e.g., mentorship, incubators, accelerators) are for the success of social entrepreneurship ventures in India? (Please rate on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being not important at all and 5 being extremely important)

Section 3: Impact and Growth

11. In your opinion, what is the extent of social entrepreneurship's contribution to India's economic growth and development?
12. How do you measure the impact of your social entrepreneurship venture? (Please select all that apply)
 - Number of beneficiaries reached
 - Revenue generated

- Employment opportunities created
- Policy changes influenced
- Environmental sustainability measures
- Other (please specify): _____

13. Have you witnessed any collaboration or partnerships between social entrepreneurs and government entities or corporate organizations in India? If yes, please provide an example.

Section 4: Future Perspectives

14. What policy changes or initiatives do you believe would further promote social entrepreneurship in India?

15. How do you envision the future growth and potential of social entrepreneurship in India?

16. Is there anything else you would like to share regarding your experiences or thoughts on social entrepreneurship in India?

Thank you for your participation in this survey. Your insights are greatly appreciated. If you have any additional comments or would like to provide further information, please feel free to do so below.

[Additional Comments: _____]

APPENDIX D:

Interview Protocol

Interview: To what extent can social entrepreneurship assist India's growth?

The face-to-face interviews will begin with introductions and an overview of the topic.

A. I will advise the participants I am sensitive to their time and thank them for agreeing to participate in the study.

B. I will remind the participants of the recorded interview, and the conversation we are about to have will remain strictly confidential.

C. I will turn on the recorder, and I will announce the participant's identifying code, as well as the date and time of the interview.

D. The interview will last approximately 30 minutes to obtain responses for sixteen interview questions and additional comments.

E. I will also explain the concept and plan for member checking by contracting participants with transcribed data and request verification of the accuracy of collected information as soon as possible.

F. After confirming answers recorded to the participants' satisfaction; the interview will conclude with a sincere thank you for participating in the study.

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