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SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND POVERTY REDUCTION IN NIGERIA: EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN ABUJA METROPOLIS

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of social entrepreneurship on poverty reduction, specifically analyzing the Women of Vision NGO in Abuja, Nigeria. Unemployment, a significant contributor to poverty, remains a pressing issue in developing nations, prompting global dialogue aimed at finding effective solutions. The research investigates how social entrepreneurship can effectively address these challenges, with primary objectives centered on understanding the relationship between social innovation and income generation, the role of social capital in individual empowerment, and the influence of social change initiatives on beneficiaries' living standards. The population for the study consisted of 129 respondents, including beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, community leaders, and board members. A sample size of 98 was determined using the Taro Yamane formula, ensuring a 95% confidence level and a 5% error tolerance for reliability. Findings shows that social innovation has significant impact on income generation (R-value of 75.3%; p-value < 0.05). Additionally, the study found that social capital accounted for (60%; p-value < 0.05) of the variance in empowerment. The study concludes that social innovation is vital for income generation and emphasizes the role of social capital. Based on the findings, it recommends that the Women of Vision NGO enhance their efforts by leveraging social innovation strategies and strengthening social support networks to improve poverty reduction outcomes.

Keywords: Social entrepreneurship, Social innovation, Social capital, Poverty, Empowerment

Introduction

Entrepreneurship has increasingly been held out as an alternative to traditional economic development strategies and policies. Globally, social entrepreneurship has emerged as a critical mechanism for addressing poverty, inequality, and exclusion beyond the capacity of governments and traditional markets. In Africa, where structural poverty and inequality remain entrenched, social entrepreneurship plays a unique role in bridging institutional gaps. Over 40% of Africa's population lives in extreme poverty, and unemployment rates especially among youth and women are among the highest globally (World Bank, 2022). Social entrepreneurs in Africa address local challenges by leveraging indigenous knowledge, frugal innovation, and community networks to provide scalable solutions in agriculture, microfinance, renewable energy, and digital services (African Development Bank, 2022). For example, ventures like M-Pesa in Kenya revolutionized financial inclusion, while agricultural cooperatives empower smallholder farmers through collective bargaining and market access. Nigeria, Africa's most populous country and largest economy, presents both significant opportunities and pressing challenges for social entrepreneurship.

Despite its vast resources, Nigeria has the highest number of people living in multidimensional poverty in Africa 133 million Nigerians (63% of the population) (National Bureau of Statistics [NBS], 2022). Rising youth unemployment (over 40% among young people) intensifies poverty and social vulnerability (International Labour Organization, 2021). With this, social entrepreneurship has become an essential pathway for poverty reduction. Nigerian social enterprises such as LifeBank (improving healthcare supply chains), Rensource (providing renewable energy solutions), and Farmcrowdy (linking smallholder farmers to markets and investors) illustrate how innovation addresses systemic development gaps. Social enterprises also serve as vehicles for women's empowerment by supporting female-led cooperatives, microcredit schemes, and skills training, which strengthen both livelihoods and household resilience (United Nations Development Programme, 2021).

Women-centric NGOs in Nigeria also harness social innovation, introducing community credit schemes, digital learning platforms, and cooperative farming models to empower marginalized women (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014). However, Nigerian social enterprises face systemic challenges, including weak infrastructure, limited access to finance, regulatory bottlenecks, and macroeconomic instability (Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria, 2021). Strengthening policy support, impact investment, and ecosystem-building institutions such as incubation hubs is essential to unlocking the potential of social entrepreneurship for large-scale poverty reduction. Similarly, entrepreneurship in Nigeria faces structural and institutional barriers that constrain its potential to drive inclusive growth and poverty reduction. One of the foremost challenges is poor infrastructure, particularly unreliable electricity, inefficient transport networks, and inadequate digital connectivity. According to the World Bank (2022), Nigerian businesses experience frequent power outages, forcing many entrepreneurs to rely on costly private generators, which significantly raise operational costs and reduce competitiveness. Poor road networks and logistics bottlenecks also undermine supply chains, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in rural areas that depend on timely access to urban markets (African Development Bank, 2022).

Another major constraint is limited access to finance. Despite the existence of microfinance institutions and government credit schemes, many Nigerian entrepreneurs especially women and youth struggle to secure affordable capital due to high interest rates, stringent collateral requirements, and underdeveloped venture capital markets (SMEDAN, 2021). The World Bank (2020) estimates that over 60% of Nigerian SMEs cite financing as their most critical obstacle to growth. This financing gap discourages innovation and scalability, forcing many businesses to operate informally and at subsistence levels. Regulatory and bureaucratic challenges also significantly hinder entrepreneurship in Nigeria. Complex registration processes, high tax burdens, and inconsistent policy enforcement increase the cost of doing business and discourage formalization. Not only that, fluctuating exchange rates, high inflation, and periodic recessions erode purchasing power and raise input costs, making it difficult for SMEs to plan and expand (National Bureau of Statistics, 2022). For example, inflation surpassed 18% in 2022, which disproportionately affected small enterprises reliant on imported raw materials. These macroeconomic shocks exacerbate unemployment and weaken the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Additionally, sociocultural and educational barriers present unique challenges which entrepreneurship requires not only access to capital but also human capital development. Nigeria's education system has been criticized for insufficiently promoting entrepreneurial skills, creativity, and innovation (Aluko et al., 2019). Cultural expectations, particularly gendered norms, also limit women's participation in entrepreneurship, despite their central role in poverty alleviation initiatives. This constrains the inclusivity of entrepreneurial development and limits the broader social impact that enterprises could achieve.

Social entrepreneurs design ventures that directly address societal problems such as poverty, unemployment, poor healthcare, lack of education, or environmental degradation. For example, social enterprises in Nigeria like LifeBank (improving access to blood and medical supplies) and Farmcrowdy (linking smallholder farmers with investors) focus on meeting critical social needs while remaining financially viable. However, Profit-driven entrepreneurship, sometimes referred to as commercial entrepreneurship, is primarily oriented toward financial return and wealth creation. Its success is measured mainly by traditional business metrics such as profit margins, market share, growth, and return on investment. While such ventures may produce social or environmental benefits, these are often secondary outcomes rather than core objectives (Lechterman & Mair, 2024). By contrast, social entrepreneurship defines success through the extent of its social impact, focusing on how effectively it addresses societal needs and improves well-being. For example, whereas a profit-driven entrepreneur

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might innovate to capture new market segments, a social entrepreneur innovates to solve systemic social issues, even if this requires hybrid business models or trade-offs with profitability.

Noticeably, the private sector plays a pivotal role in entrepreneurship development by providing both the environment and resources necessary for entrepreneurial ventures to thrive. Unlike the public sector, which focuses primarily on regulation, infrastructure, and policy frameworks, the private sector drives innovation, competition, and investment. (Naudé, 2022). Beyond resource provision, the private sector also shapes entrepreneurship development through market creation and demand stimulation. Established companies generate opportunities for startups by outsourcing services, forming supply chain linkages, or adopting innovations from smaller firms. This symbiotic relationship supports entrepreneurial growth while simultaneously boosting private sector competitiveness. Thus, the private sector not only acts as a financier but also as a collaborator and enabler in the entrepreneurial ecosystem (Acs et al., 2023).

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria is facing persistent poverty even as economic growth continues, largely because growth has not translated into sufficient job creation or decent work for youth and women. The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), highlight entrepreneurship and innovation as core strategies to reduce poverty and foster inclusive development (United Nations, 2015). Youth unemployment in Nigeria remains high: in 2023 about 10.17 % of the labour force aged 15-24 were unemployed (Macrotrends, 2025). Moreover, approximately 25.9 % of youth in the region were neither in education, employment, or training (NEET), amounting to some 62 million young people in 2023. (Nairametrics, 2024). These figures show that even formally educated or labour-force-eligible youth struggle to find opportunities. Women, often marginalised by restrictive norms, fewer resources, and less access to markets or finance, tend to suffer worse outcomes.

Meanwhile, social innovation is made up of novel ideas (products, services, models, organizational forms, processes) that more effectively meet social needs than existing alternatives, and which generate social value often including empowerment, inclusion, sustainability, and systemic change. Key traits include being context-driven, participatory, adaptive, capable of scaling, and often combining economic and social objectives. For women-centred NGOs, social innovation is especially relevant because its tailored solutions to gendered constraints. Women face specific constraints such as unequal access to finance, caretaking responsibilities, limited mobility etc. Social innovations can design around these constraints (for example, flexible working models, mobile finance, women-only cooperatives) rather than applying one-size-fits-all entrepreneurial models. Women's NGOs can push for innovations that build both economic and social empowerment. Women-centred NGOs often are closer to the ground, understand local norms and needs, and can co-create with communities. This enables social innovation that is culturally sensitive and more likely to be adopted and sustained. Due to the fact that formal sector support often overlooks women's groups, NGOs can pilot social innovations which, if successful, can be scaled via linking to government, donors or private sector partnerships (Howaldt & Schwarz, 2023).

Nonetheless, social capital is the stock of networks, relationships, norms of reciprocity, trust and mutual aid that exist among people (and between people and institutions). It is often categorized into bonding social capital; closing ties among similar individuals or groups, family, close friends, neighbours. These ties provide emotional, social, and informal financial support; help to share risk; provide safety nets in times of crisis. And, bridging social capital ties that connect people across different social groups' different communities, ethnicities, economic classes. These connections open up access to new information, opportunities (e.g. for markets, education), and broaden norms. In women's cooperatives, bonding capital may allow members to pool resources, share labour or credit informally, offer social support during shocks, reduce cost of living via collective sharing, thus helping survive poverty. When women connect beyond their immediate group, they can learn new skills, access new markets, attain better information (e.g. about prices, technologies). Bridging networks can also allow cooperatives to collaborate, share best practices. Having access to formal finance, training, institutional support,

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certification, market regulation, supply chain linkages is often possible only through linking capital. Women's NGOs/cooperatives often need linking capital to scale innovations.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose was to investigate social entrepreneurship and poverty reduction in women of vision NGO, Abuja. Specifically, the study were to:

1. examine the effect of social innovation on the income generation of NGOs in Abuja;
2. assess the impact of social capital on the empowerment of NGOs in Abuja;

Research Questions

From the above statement of research problem, the following questions are generated.

1. How does social innovation affect income generation of NGO in Abuja?
2. What is the impact of social capital on empowerment of NGO in Abuja?

Hypotheses

From the above objectives the followings research hypotheses were formulated:

1. Social innovation has a significant effect on income generation of NGOs in Abuja.
2. Social capital significantly impacts the empowerment of NGOs in Abuja.

Review of Related Literature

Entrepreneurship

The definition of entrepreneurship is as diverse as the different functions of the entrepreneur. Entrepreneurship is an art which involves recognizing a business opportunity, mobilizing resources and persisting to exploit that opportunity (Onyebueke & Ochonogo, 2022). Akanwa and Akpanabia (2023) describes entrepreneurs as those who have insatiable desire for accomplishment of anything that fascinates their minds (idea) which requires single mindedness and an obstinate refusal to give up, even when the situation looks impossible.

Social entrepreneurship

Most scholars converge on social entrepreneurial as entrepreneurial action primarily oriented to creating social value often by addressing problems that markets and governments underserve while drawing on market-based mechanisms and innovation to sustain impact (Santos, 2012); and as organizing that blends nonprofit and commercial logics to achieve dual social–economic goals (Battilana & Lee, 2014).

Social innovation

Social innovation refers to new ideas, practices, services, or models that address unmet social needs and create social value, often through collaborative and participatory processes. Unlike purely technological or business innovations, SI emphasizes inclusivity, sustainability, and systemic change (Phills et al., 2008; Mulgan, 2019).

Social capital

Social capital refers to the resources and benefits that individuals, groups, or organizations gain through their social networks, trust, and norms of reciprocity (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1993). Unlike financial or human capital, social capital is embedded in relationships, shared values, and social structures, making it intangible but highly influential in shaping outcomes across communities, organizations, and societies.

Poverty

Poverty has been defined as the inability to attain a minimum standard of living. Aluko et al. (2019) refers to poverty as a lack of command over basic consumption needs, which mean, in other words, that there is an inadequate level of consumption giving rise to insufficient food, clothing and/or shelter, and moreover, the lack of certain capacities, such as being able to participate with dignity in society. While Olayemi (2019), refers to the poor as those having no access to the basic necessities of life such as food, clothes and economic obligation, they lack skillful employment, have few, if any economic assets and sometime lack self-esteem (McCloskey, 2020).

Relationship between Social Entrepreneurship and Poverty Reduction

Social entrepreneurship (SE) provides innovative, market-based solutions to address poverty by creating opportunities for income generation, access to essential services, and social inclusion. Unlike traditional aid or philanthropy, SE leverages entrepreneurial principles, innovation, and sustainability to empower marginalized groups (Santos, 2012; Zahra et al., 2009).

Social enterprises address market and government failures by providing affordable health care, education, clean energy, and housing in underserved areas (Seelos & Mair, 2005). This inclusion enables poor communities to participate in decision-making and benefit from shared resources (Austin et al., 2006).

Theoretical Framework

A few theories consistent with Social Entrepreneurship and Poverty Reduction were reviewed.

Institutional Theory

This theory was propounded by Meyer and Rowan in 1977. Using Institutional Theory, external pressures influencing business performance and decision-making have been identified. This perspective focuses on how social entrepreneurship operates within the institutional environment to address poverty. Institutions, including government policies, cultural norms, and legal frameworks, shape the actions and strategies of social entrepreneurs. (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Social entrepreneurs navigate these institutional constraints and opportunities to create innovative solutions for poverty reduction (Dacin et al., 2020).

Implications to the Study

Institutional theory highlights how social entrepreneurship initiatives are influenced by the broader institutional environment, including government policies, cultural norms, and regulatory frameworks. This theory helps shed light on how social entrepreneurs can engage with existing institutions to address poverty and enact sustainable change.

Resource Dependency Theory

Wernerfelt and Jay Barney first proposed the concept of RBV in 1986, and it describes how a company's internal resources might provide it a competitive edge (DeSilva & Seneviratne, 2020). The resource-based theory proves that organizations that have high capacity of strategic resources are prone to have a competitive advantage over organizations.

Implications to the Study

This theory emphasizes the importance of resources for social entrepreneurship initiatives aimed at poverty reduction. Social entrepreneurs often rely on external resources, such as funding, expertise, and networks, to implement their solutions effectively. Resource dependency theory suggests that successful poverty reduction efforts by social entrepreneurs involve strategic resource acquisition and management.

Empirical Review

The empirical experience of the application of social entrepreneurship has been conducted to encounter the impacts of crisis in Jordan and Lebanon (Sidlo & Al-Jafari, 2019). The result of research conducted by Sidlo & Al-Jafari (2019) explains particularly to the segment working with refugees, of which result is relatively not developing yet, non-structured and non-organized. Social capital is often correlated with economic gains by reduced transaction costs but also by enhancement of factors conducive to economic growth, such as entrepreneurship. A World Bank study (Grootaert, 2001), across countries, has shown that increased levels of local associational life do help the poor and contribute to poverty alleviation. High social capital characterized by heterogeneity of ties was shown to have a positive effect on the welfare at the household level through knowledge exchange and pooling of risks, and higher returns were observed for the poor than the rich. Furthermore, social capital was shown to reduce the probability to be poor. In Tanzania (Narayan, 1997), higher levels of social capital were translated into higher household income through better public services, greater use of modern agriculture, more community activity, and greater use of credit in agriculture. In Ghana (Lyon, 2000), trust built between traders and resource-poor farmers allowed both parties to enter new markets and increase income. In summary, higher social capital is associated with lower poverty. At the household and the level of communities, it contributes to improved welfare, improved income and greater access to resources.

Many developing countries continue to struggle with how to reduce poverty. These countries are often stuck in some poverty trap such as those described by Kraay and McKenzie (2019) that are behavior or geographic in nature, but have the same outcome of keeping millions in poverty. To break these traps, and raise income levels, economic development and scalable entrepreneurship are seen as the best tools (Alvarez & Barney, 2019). The problem statement and research questions were created from the gap related to a quantitative study that examined Social Entrepreneur and Poverty Reduction in Abuja. It builds on the current knowledge about economic development, entrepreneurship, and poverty. For this study, the problem to be examined is whether the levels of poverty in Abuja had been significantly impacted by the activities of corporations and the level of entrepreneurship in its localities. The research questions leverage independent variables related to activity and entrepreneurship, which have been researched in case studies, but not together in one quantitative study in Nigeria.

Methodology

The research design chosen for the study is the survey research. The survey research of knowledge at its best can provide very valuable data. It involves a careful design and execution of each of the components of the research process. The population for this study comprises all individuals associated with Women of Vision NGO in Abuja, including staff, volunteers, beneficiaries, and stakeholders. From this population, a sample of 129 respondents was selected, consisting of 80 beneficiaries, 30 staff members and volunteers, 15 community leaders, and 4 board members. This study adopted random sampling techniques, which makes it possible for all the workers to have equal opportunity of being selected as the representative sample. Based on the sample size of ninety-eight (98) inhabitants, a normal confidence level of 95% and error tolerance of 5% was used. Interview held were cross checked through the questions in the questionnaire as a confirmation of the responses received in either case. Primary source of data was adopted using structured questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale to acquire data from the targeted respondents. Meanwhile, validity was assessed through expert review, where professionals in the relative field evaluated the questionnaire to confirm that it adequately captured the study’s variables. Their feedback helped refine the wording, structure, and relevance of the questions, ensuring that they effectively measured access to credit, financial literacy, alternative financing, government support, and business expansion indicators. Reliability was tested using the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient, which measures the internal consistency of the questionnaire items. A reliability coefficient of 0.7 or higher was considered acceptable, indicating that the instrument produced stable and consistent results. Quantitative data collected were analyzed, presented and interpreted using descriptive statistics. For advanced analysis, the study used multiple regression method which evaluated the effect contribution of each latent variables. This was tested at a significance level of 5% or 0.05 with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The data were analyzed and presented to validate and test the stated hypotheses. As stated earlier, multiple regressions was used to test the hypotheses.

Results

Hypotheses One: Social innovation has no significant effects on income generation among beneficiaries of Women of Vision NGO, Abuja.

Table 1: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.868[a]	0.753	0.745	1.72781

- Predictors: (Constant), New Product, New Practice, and New Process

Source: SPSS output, 2025

Table 1 above gives us the R-value, which represents the correlation between the observed value and predicted value of the dependent variable which gives 86.8 percent. This shows that there is an adequate level of relationship between income generation and social innovation. The R^2 value which

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is an indication of the coefficient of determination from the model summary is .753 which indicates that 75.3 percent of income generation is stimulated by the social innovation while the remaining 24.7 percent of income generation is stimulated by other unidentified variables.

Table 2: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	8.862	1.812		4.890	0.000
	New Product	2.182	0.135	0.880	16.127	0.000
	New Practice	0.163	0.112	0.087	1.459	0.048
	New Process	0.225	0.134	0.101	1.684	0.096

a. Dependent Variable: Income Generation

Source: SPSS output, 2025

The table of coefficients above demonstrated how new product, new practice, and new process influence income generation value. Table 2 shows that every increase in new product, and new practice, results in 88.0%, and 8.7%, loss in income generation, respectively. Also, for every decrease in new process, results in a 10.1% increase in income generation. Furthermore, the probability and [t-statistics] values of.000 and [16.127], .000 and [1.459], and .096 and [-1.684] indicate that the association between new product, new practice, and new process is significant, since the alpha level of 0.05 is smaller than the p-value except for new process.

Hypotheses Two: Social capital has no significant impact on empowerment of individuals associated with Women of Vision NGO, Abuja.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.775[a]	0.600	0.586	2.29847

Predictors: (Constant), Individual Trust, Social Support, and Social Participation.
Source: SPSS output, 2025

Table 3 demonstrates that the R-square value of 0.600 indicates that 60.0% of the variability in empowerment is accounted for by these social capital factors. The Adjusted R-square of 0.586, which adjusts for the number of predictors in the model, is very close to the R-square value, suggesting that the model is well-fitted and the predictors included are highly relevant.

Table 4: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	3.610	2.764		1.306	0.000
	Individual Trust	0.688	0.126	0.458	5.474	0.000
	Social Support	0.356	0.332	0.093	1.073	0.006
	Social Participation	2.320	0.329	0.541	7.057	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Empowerment

Source: SPSS output, 2025

Table 4 above reveal the individual contributions of each predictor to the model. Social Participation emerges as the most influential predictor, with a standardized beta coefficient of 0.541 and a highly significant p-value (p < 0.000). This indicates that Social participation has a strong and positive impact

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on empowerment. In contrast, Social Support has a much smaller but still statistically significant positive effect on empowerment ($\beta = 0.093$, $p = 0.006$), suggesting that while trust plays a role, it is less impactful than social participation. Individual Trust, More so, significantly predict empowerment ($p = 0.000$), as indicated by its positive beta value and sufficient statistical significance.

Discussion of Findings

This section discusses the empirical results for the study. There were 90 copies of structures questionnaire administered to the targeted respondents and all questionnaires were dully filled and returned by the respondents and also all of these were used for computation. The subsequent paragraphs reflect the findings of this study with respect to information given out by the respondents.
The findings from the first hypothesis reveal that social innovation plays a significant role in income generation among beneficiaries of the Women of Vision NGO, Abuja. The R-value of 86.8% indicates a strong positive relationship between social innovation and income generation, with the R-square value showing that 75.3% of the variance in income generation is explained by social innovation initiatives. This aligns with the study of Rosenbuch, Brinckmann, and Bausch (2019) who adopted a meta-analysis to aggregate prior empirical research on entrepreneurial performance relationship. Rosenbuch et al. (2019) found that adopting an innovation orientation had a greater positive effect on firm performance than generating innovation process results.

The second hypothesis examines the influence of social capital on the empowerment of individuals associated with the NGO. The model summary indicated that social capital components; Individual Trust, Social Support, and Social Participation explain 60.0% of the variance in empowerment, demonstrating a very strong model fit. This finding is consistent with studies of Price, Stoica, and Boncella (2018) who examined the relationship between innovation and knowledge in the family versus non-family businesses about performance.

Theoretical Implications

Social entrepreneurship broadens traditional entrepreneurship theory by prioritizing social value over profit. It shows that entrepreneurial activity is not only about wealth creation but also about addressing institutional voids and social inequalities (Santos, 2012). It supports the idea that institutional voids (failures of market and government) can be filled by hybrid organizations, strengthening institutional theory's application in developing contexts (Mair & Martí, 2006). The poverty reduction impact of SE highlights the importance of non-financial resources (social capital, trust, and networks) as critical assets in improving livelihoods of the poor (Austin et al., 2006). Social entrepreneurship aligns with Amartya Sen's capability approach, as it expands people's choices and freedoms (education, health, and financial inclusion), showing poverty as more than lack of income (Seelos & Mair, 2005).

Practical Implications

Policymakers should support social enterprises through enabling environments (tax incentives, funding, and legal recognition) as complementary actors in poverty alleviation. Successful Social entrepreneurship models (e.g., microfinance, renewable energy cooperatives) can be replicated and scaled in low-income communities to broaden impact. SE initiatives provide access to microcredit, savings, and affordable financial services, directly enabling entrepreneurship among the poor. By generating employment and vocational training, social enterprises empower disadvantaged populations to escape the poverty cycle. It promotes participatory solutions, ensuring poor communities are co-creators of solutions, not passive recipients of aid. Practically, SE contributes directly to the UN Sustainable Development Goal 1 (No Poverty) by creating long-term, self-sustaining solutions rather than short-term aid dependency. Meanwhile, practitioners must adopt robust impact assessment tools (e.g., Social Return on Investment, SDG indicators) to ensure that SE efforts truly reduce poverty and not just provide temporary relief.

Conclusion

Based on the findings above, the study drawn the following conclusions:

The first objective focused on the impact of social innovation strategies on income generation among the beneficiaries. The analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between social innovation and income generation, with 75.3% of the variance in income generation explained by social innovation initiatives. The findings indicated that while certain types of innovations, such as new processes, positively influence income generation, others, like new products and practices, may have a less favorable impact. The overall model was found to be statistically significant, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and affirming that social innovation significantly affects income generation. The second objective assessed the impact of social capital on the empowerment of individuals associated with the NGO. The analysis demonstrated that social capital, particularly social support, plays a critical role in empowerment, with 60.0% of the variance in empowerment explained by the social capital variables. Social support emerged as the most significant predictor, while individual trust had a minor yet significant effect, and social participation was found to have no significant impact. The model was statistically significant, confirming the importance of social capital in the empowerment process and leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Recommendations

Based on the aforementioned conclusion, the study recommends that:

1. Women of Vision NGO and other relevant NGO's should place greater emphasis on process innovation to support income generation. This strategy will increase overall empowerment by optimising the financial gains for the women they assist.
2. The NGO can improve the social capital that is essential for successful empowerment by supporting community-building initiatives, mentorship programs, and safe spaces for interaction and cooperation.

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