



Social Entrepreneurship as a Catalyst for Social Change: An Empirical Study on Global Perspective

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Abstract

Social entrepreneurship has emerged as a major force behind innovation and the development of creative solutions in a setting where traditional economies struggle to effectively address environmental, social, and economic issues. It demonstrates its commitment to its purpose by prioritising environmental and social impact over profit maximisation and reinvesting an important segment of any surplus into its mission. Social entrepreneurship is necessary for human development because it fosters long-term social change and the development of creative answers to societal problems. The goal of this study is to examine how social entrepreneurship contributes to social and economic advancement and how it affects societal change. Thirty-five diverse countries have been chosen for this study across the six continents worldwide. To evaluate the connection between social entrepreneurship and societal transformation, a multivariate regression analysis was performed. The Human Development Index (HDI) was employed as the dependent variable to gauge social change, while the independent variables included social enterprise per capita, average turnover per social enterprise, average jobs per social enterprise, and women-led social enterprises. The analysis revealed that the social enterprise per capita, average turnover per social enterprise, average jobs per social enterprise, and the percentage of women-led social enterprises significantly influenced the HDI. This confirms the role of social entrepreneurship in promoting positive societal change.

Keywords: *Economic Development; Social Change; Social Development; Social Entrepreneurship; Social Problem*

Introduction

Bowen (2013) proposed the terms “social entrepreneur” and “social entrepreneurship” in 1953 in his book ‘Social Responsibilities of the Businessman’. These terms gained broader recognition during the 1980s and 1990s, largely due to the efforts of figures like Bill Drayton and Charles Leadbeater. In a context where traditional charitable and voluntary sectors have faced criticism for being bureaucratic and change-resistant and public sector resources are often strained, social entrepreneurship has evolved as a novel initiative to meet the unmet socioeconomic needs (Leadbeater, 1997; Mulgan & Landry, 1995). The practice of social entrepreneurship, which entails seeking out innovative solutions to societal problems, is the art of converting hurdles into opportunities. They are doing so by adapting and learning along the way, and, committed to creating and sustaining social value, social entrepreneurs constantly seize opportunities that fit their mission. They draw upon wisdom from both the for-profit and non-profit worlds and practise their craft in a wide array of organisations, large or small, new or established, secular or sacred, in the non-profit and profit industries.

Social entrepreneurs apply the principles of entrepreneurship to solutions that benefit a society, and therefore this makes them a powerful additional force for the better in the various areas of society, the economy and the environment. They innovate new business models and strategies, yielding a financial return as well as a social return (Turyakira *et al.*, 2025). By blending their business ventures with social goals, these entrepreneurs also make a substantial contribution to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Since the SDGs aim to improve the quality of life for an individual, it is natural that social entrepreneurship is highlighted as an important strategy to lead development (Al-Qudah *et al.*, 2022; Mendez-Picazo *et al.*, 2021; Alvord *et al.*, 2004). They not only support the implementation of gender-inclusive practices and equality but also provide space for partnership between business and government on initiatives connected to SDGs. Social enterprises are often around SDG 3, SDG 8 and SDG 10 but also pay emphasis to SDG 4, SDG 11 and SDG 12 (WEF, 2024).

By tackling social issues through creative solutions and fostering sustainable development, social entrepreneurship significantly contributes to human development and drives the society towards a positive social change. Social entrepreneurs conduct operations in various sectors, including education, healthcare, agriculture, renewable energy, human rights, environmental issues, etc., by playing an essential key role in the advancement of human development. This industry integrates social and environmental goals into its business strategy, empowering marginalised groups, creating jobs, and expanding access to essential services (Ganesh *et al.*, 2018).

Theoretical Framework

In the 17th and 18th centuries, the word “entrepreneur” first appeared in French economics. An entrepreneur is someone who launches a large business or endeavour and fosters economic expansion by developing creative and more effective ways to accomplish tasks (Dees, 1998). Social entrepreneurship has gained popularity in recent years. In the social sector, social entrepreneurs are changemakers who strive to add value to society. “Any private activity conducted in the public interest, organised with an entrepreneurial strategy, but whose main purpose is not the maximisation of profit but the attainment of certain economic and social goals, and which has the capacity for bringing innovative solutions to the problems of social exclusion and unemployment” (OECD, 1999). Social entrepreneurship demonstrates how commercial businesses can generate profit while pursuing a social mission (Singh & Inbanathan, 2018). The keys to success of a social enterprise include self-efficacy, leadership, emotional intelligence, empathy, problem-solving abilities, inventiveness, entrepreneurial resilience, and strategic thinking (Ramadani *et al.* 2022). Social entrepreneurship is a journey that, rather than being dominated by immediate financial gains for the entrepreneurs, solves significant social problems and sparks social change. Unlike other forms of business, social entrepreneurship places more emphasis on advancing social benefit than financial gain (Mair & Marti, 2006). The social entrepreneurs have emerged as important players in dealing with social issues and channel the society towards a constructive social transformation. Some individuals can even create their own organisations to solve societal problems rather than waiting for the government to take action. Social entrepreneurship has been considered an important device for social change because of its impact on the economy as well as society. Social entrepreneurship is able to solve social problems neglected by the government and simultaneously benefit commercial businesses (Daru & Gaur, 2013; Hietschold *et al.*, 2023). The organisation plays a pivotal role in empowering communities in human rights, fair trade, education, health care, sustainable agriculture, environmental challenges, and gender issues. This sector makes contributions to the welfare of disadvantaged groups, creates jobs, and increases access to necessary services by adopting an environmental and social lens (Ganesh *et al.*, 2018).

Social entrepreneurship has a high correlation with innovation and sustainable development (Mendez-Al-Qudah *et al.*, 2022; Picazo *et al.*, 2021). Social entrepreneurs take an opportunity that other people would have overlooked and create new structures and/or innovative solutions to the most challenging social problems. They have been playing a significant role in fostering economic prosperity, reducing poverty, environmental protection, employment generation, better governance, ending terrorism, promoting peace, etc., and thus help in fulfilling SDGs (Diab, 2019). Kamaludin *et al.* (2021), in their

study, proposed a conceptual framework that revealed the linkage between social entrepreneurship and sustainability. They developed the framework on social entrepreneurship based on four dimensions of sustainability, namely, social, economic, behavioural and governance. They found that if a social enterprise negates the essence of sustainability, it may live shortly. Further, a social enterprise adhering to the conceptual framework attains long-term sustainability.

Social entrepreneurship changes the quality of life, and the women beneficiaries have gained the most (Erpf, 2017). Social entrepreneurial leadership plays a crucial role in women's empowerment. Along with financial independence, women also need mental and emotional well-being. Social enterprises are encouraging women to advocate for themselves and seek gender and social justice (Dixit *et al.*, 2023; Fareeha & Tregua, 2025). By aligning entrepreneurial activities with social goals and fostering sustainable social development, social entrepreneurship significantly contributes to human development. Human development focuses on enriching people's lives and their potential and aiming to expand their opportunities and choices, rather than simply focusing on economic prosperity. The three main areas of human development – standard of living, education, and health and longevity – are measured by the Human Development Index (HDI), which assesses a nation's total progress. HDI combines these three elements into a single score using a geometric mean of normalised indices, which balances progress across all three dimensions (UNDP, 2024). Social enterprises enrich human life by enhancing the standard of living through economic and social development and contribute to positive societal change (Bhatia, 2018). Social entrepreneurship has an upper hand and plays a crucial role in social change. It helps in fostering the economy by creation of jobs, creation of social and financial capital, innovation and women's empowerment, which ultimately brings social change (Usmani & Shaikh, 2023; Rawal, 2018).

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the prevalence of social enterprises across the global regions.
2. To study how social enterprises contribute to economic and social development.
3. To assess the impact of social entrepreneurship on social change.

Research Methodology

The research study is descriptive and empirical, and it depends on secondary sources of data collected from a variety of sources, like newspapers, journals, articles, reports, and other publications by organisations such as the World Bank (World Bank Group, 2023), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 1999), the World Economic Forum database (WEF, 2024), UNDP Human Development Index Report (UNDP, 2024), the Ministry of Commerce and Industries, the Ministry of Social Justice, the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor reports, and other relevant websites.

The study explores how social entrepreneurship contributes to social and economic progress, as well as its impact on societal change. To achieve this, a diverse sample of 35 nations spanning six continents – Asia, Africa, Europe, North America, South America, and Oceania – has been chosen for this study from the World Economic Forum Database (WEF, 2024). Further, for some countries for which a few data were not available for the variables concerning the study, we have considered the global average for the same. Countries on these continents have been selected based on their social entrepreneurial intentions and the availability of relevant data.

The association between social entrepreneurship and social change has been evaluated using a multivariate regression analysis. The Human Development Index (HDI), a composite index reflecting a nation's overall progress towards three important dimensions – a long and healthy life, education, and a good quality of life – serves as the dependent variable for societal change. The HDI, evaluates a nation's overall human development by calculating the geometric mean of the normalised indices across these three key dimensions, with data sourced from the UNDP Human Development Index Report (UNDP, 2024). The independent variables included social enterprise per capita, average turnover per social enterprise, average jobs per social enterprise, and women-led social enterprises. Social enterprise per capita has been calculated by dividing the number of social enterprises by the population of that particular country. Population data has been sourced from the database of World Bank Group (2023).

In light of this, the research formulates the following hypothesis:

H1: There is a significant impact of social entrepreneurship on social change.

Results and Discussion

Number of Social Enterprises

This section analysed the number of social enterprises across various nations on each continent, along with their per capita distribution. This data helps to understand social entrepreneurial activity of various regions of the world.

Table 1: Estimated Number of Social Enterprises Across the World

Country/ Territory	Number of Social Enterprises	Population (approx.)	Social Enterprise Per Capita/Density
Austria	1,535	9131761	5,949
Australia	12,033	26658948	2,215
Bangladesh	1,50,000	171466990	1,143
Brazil	20,000	211140729	10,557
Canada	18,200	40097761	2,203
China	17,50,000	1410710000	806
Democratic Republic of Congo	4,485	105789731	23,587
Denmark	411	5946952	14,469
Ethiopia	54,980	128691692	2,341
Finland	1,181	5583911	4,728
France	96,603	68287487	707
Germany	77,459	83280000	1,075
Ghana	26,000	33787914	1,300
Hungary	15,855	9592186	605
India	20,00,000	1438069596	719
Indonesia	3,42,025	281190067	822
Ireland	4,335	5307600	1,224
Italy	1,02,461	58993475	576
Japan	2,05,000	124516650	607
Kenya	43,933	55339003	1,260
Latvia	200	1877445	9,387
Malaysia	20,749	35126298	1,693
Netherlands	5,500	17877117	3,250
Pakistan	4,48,000	247504495	552
Philippines	1,64,473	114891199	699
Portugal	7,938	10578174	1,333
Singapore	7,689	5917648	770
South Africa	1,41,500	63212384	447
Spain	9,680	48347910	4,995
Sri Lanka	10,500	22037000	2,099
Sudan	55,090	50042791	908
Sweden	3,000	10536632	3,512
Thailand	1,20,000	71702435	598
UK	1,31,000	68350000	522
USA	12,74,636	334914895	263
Global Total	10 million	8.06 billion	800

Source: WEF (2024); World Bank Group (2023)

Table 1 lists several social businesses along with their per capita numbers for these various nations, which make up around two-thirds of world's population. The aforementioned table demonstrates the strength of social business sectors in China, India, and United States. India has the largest number of social enterprises (20,00,000) while China has 17,50,000 social enterprises followed by the USA have 12,74,636 social enterprises. Other notable countries like Pakistan have 4,48,000 social enterprises, Indonesia has 3,42,025 social enterprises and Bangladesh has 1,50,000 social enterprises.

Simultaneously, smaller countries Latvia has the lowest number of social enterprises (200), followed by Finland (1,181) and Austria (1,535). Social enterprises often emerge to address the gaps in governmental or market-driven solutions for societal challenges. Countries with larger populations and developing economies, like India, China, Bangladesh, or Ethiopia show huge numbers of social enterprises may be because of unmet social needs.

As the total number of social enterprises may correlated with the national population, the social enterprise per capita figure may be interesting to examine. Social enterprise per capita shows how accessible or dense social enterprises are in relation to the size of the population by dividing the population by the number of social enterprises. There is one social business for every 262 people in the US, whereas in Democratic Republic of Congo, there is one for every 23,551 people. A higher number indicates a higher concentration of social enterprises in the population. Low density in populous countries like India (721) and China (806) represents the limited reach per social enterprise. Whereas high-density countries like the USA (264) and South Africa (431), indicate a more impactful and localized social enterprise sector.

Regional trends of social enterprise indicate that North America and Europe have a mature and well-established social enterprise ecosystem, whereas South America lags in the density of social enterprise. Asia hosts the largest number of social enterprises globally, though the numbers are diluted by their huge populations resulting in low per capita ratios. Africa's social enterprise sector faces significant challenges in terms of density (Dzomonda, 2020).

Financial and Social Performance of Social Enterprise

This part of the analyses examines social enterprises' economic and social impact by examining factors like turnover, job creation, and women's leadership within the sector. It aims to demonstrate how social entrepreneurship affects both social and economic advancement.

Table 2: Country-wise Turnover, Job Creation and Leadership of Social Enterprises

Country	Average turnover per Social Enterprise (in \$)	Total Turnover (\$ In Million)	Average Jobs per Social Enterprise	Total Jobs	Women-Led Social Enterprises (%)	Total Women-Led Social Enterprises
Austria	13,81,620	2,121	63	96,705	50.8	780
Australia	13,56,012	16,317	17.14	2,06,246	50	6,017
Bangladesh	39,308	5,896	14.26	21,39,000	20.81	31,215
Brazil	-	-	8.66	1,73,200	54.2	10,840
Canada	27,00,091	49,142	20.92	3,80,744	-	-
China	89,182	1,56,069	12.71	2,22,42,500	38.81	6,79,175
Democratic Republic of Congo	-	-	10	44,850	23	1,032
Denmark	13,61,268	559	43	17,673	60.3	248
Ethiopia	12,062	663	20.88	11,47,982	28.46	15648
Finland	-	-	44.45	52,495	-	-
France	10,34,650	99,950	51	49,26,753	64.1	61,923
Germany	8,36,467	64,792	24	18,59,016	51.3	39,737
Ghana	24,920	648	11.45	2,97,700	45.59	11,854
Hungary	1,96,648	3,118	27	4,28,085	72.1	11,432
India	1,48,297	2,96,594	19	3,80,00,000	24.03	4,80,600
Indonesia	68,672	23,488	13.21	45,18,150	49.6	1,69,645
Ireland	5,96,524	2,586	32	1,38,720	60.9	2,640
Italy	4,94,831	50,701	30	30,73,830	36.8	37,706
Japan	4,81,944	98,799	28.18	57,76,900	-	-
Kenya	-	-	10.3	4,52,510	45.36	19,928
Latvia	2,42,853	49	32	6,400	70	140
Malaysia	-	-	12.73	2,64,135	54.55	11,319

Netherlands	12,00,035	6,600	44	2,42,000	50.7	2,789
Pakistan	55,375	24,808	50.29	2,25,29,920	19.57	87,674
Philippines	28,171	4,633	29.55	48,60,177	44.17	72,648
Portugal	5,78,862	4,595	24	1,90,512	60	4,763
Singapore	4,07,008	3,129	23.58	1,81,307	56.12	4,315
South Africa	56,872	8,047	30	42,45,000	51.94	73,495
Spain	16,28,308	15,762	84	8,13,120	52.1	5,043
Sri Lanka	22,765	239	29.38	3,08,490	30.34	3,186
Sudan	4,688	258	16.91	9,31,572	44.24	24,372
Sweden	8,93,562	2,681	31	93,000	68.1	2,043
Thailand	-	-	26.43	31,71,600	35.66	42,792
UK	9,04,962	1,18,550	15	19,65,000	56.5	74,015
USA	4,20,352	5,35,796	-	-	-	-
Global Total	\$5,12,488	\$2 trillion	18	200 million	50	5 million

Source: WEF (2024)

Annual Turnover of Social Enterprise

The yearly turnover of social businesses, which is a measure of their financial performance, is displayed in Table 2. The remarkably high average turnover of \$27,00,091 for social businesses in Canada indicates a good business climate for these businesses. The USA has the highest total turnover of \$5,35,796 million with an average turnover of \$4,20,352 per social enterprise, reflecting a massive social enterprise sector both in scale and individual financial performance. India has the second largest total turnover at \$2,96,594 million, but with a relatively modest average turnover per social enterprise at \$1,48,297, indicating the contribution of a large number of social enterprises (20,00,000), but mainly smaller in scale. The total turnover of the UK stood at \$1,18,550 million with a relatively high average turnover of \$9,04,962, indicating a relatively smaller number of enterprises generating significant turnover. Countries like Sri Lanka, Ethiopia, and Sudan have both low average turnover and total turnover. A higher average turnover per social enterprise may suggest that the enterprises are operating on a larger scale, are much more established, and are more efficient in generating turnover. Also, it emphasises that this social enterprise might have better access to funding, more robust markets, and operations in a high-turnover sector. On the contrary, lower average turnover might imply smaller, newer, or more localised enterprises. It is estimated that, social enterprises generate approximately \$2 trillion turnover worldwide, with an average of \$5,12,488 per enterprise. Social enterprises contribute around 2% of global GDP, amounting to \$96 trillion in 2021 at current prices (WEF, 2024).

Number of Jobs Created by Social Enterprise

Table 2 shows the employment generation potential of social enterprises in different countries across the globe. With an average of 84 jobs each, social enterprises in Spain demonstrate significant job creation capacity. The WEF estimates that social companies generate an average of 18 jobs per enterprise, over 200 million employments globally. Spain stood at 84 jobs per enterprise, followed by Austria (63), France (51), and Pakistan (50.29). High average job creation potential per enterprise suggests that the social enterprises in that region tend to employ more people, facilitate larger organizational structures or the countries focus on employment-generating enterprises. Countries like India (19), Australia (17.14), and the UK (15) fall in the mid-range, indicating moderate employment generation by social enterprises of that region. Social enterprises in Brazil have very poor job creation ability with only 8.66 jobs per enterprise, followed by the Democratic Republic of Congo (10) and Kenya (10.3). Higher averages of job creation per enterprise may indicate that the social enterprises operate on a large scale, possibly with more financial backing or working in sectors that require a large workforce (e.g., manufacturing, health services, agriculture). A strong social sector ecosystem also may enhance employment opportunities. Conversely, lower averages of job creation per enterprise might suggest the prevalence of smaller, localised enterprises where the scope of operations and financial capability limit the number of employees, or enterprises are focused on sectors that require fewer employees.

In terms of country-wise total job creation by social enterprises, India creates 3,80,00,000 jobs and is followed by Pakistan (2,25,29,920 jobs) and China (2,22,42,500 jobs). This shows that social

entrepreneurs can be crucial in creating job opportunities and boosting the national economy in developing nations where unemployment is a major problem.

Leadership of Social Enterprise

Women's leadership is far more prevalent in social enterprises, with a one-half representation compared to just one in five in regular business (WEF, 2024). While there is some variation in the average percentage of women-led social enterprises depending on the country (Table 2). With less than 25% of women leading social enterprises in Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and India, these countries have the lowest level of women's representation in social business. On the contrary, women continue to make up about 70% of the women-led social enterprises in Hungary, Latvia, and Sweden.

China and India have the highest total number of women-led social enterprises at 6,79,175 and 4,80,600 enterprises respectively, despite the low percentage of women's representation in the social enterprise sector, likely due to the existence of a vast number of enterprises. While gender equality issues remain very prominent, the social enterprise sector globally is taking significant strides in leading efforts to address this issue. A higher percentage of women in the social entrepreneurial sector signifies greater economic empowerment for women in that country (Dixit et. al., 2023; Fareeha & Tregua, 2025).

Contribution of Social Entrepreneurship in Driving Social Change

A multivariate regression analysis assessed the association between societal transformation and social entrepreneurship. The HDI has been used to measure the dependent variable, i.e., societal change. On the other hand, social enterprise per capita, average turnover per social enterprise, average jobs per social enterprise, and percentage of women-led social enterprises have been taken into consideration as independent variables. Therefore, the OLS model for the present study may be presented as:

$$\text{HDI} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (\text{SEPC}) + \beta_2 (\text{ATSE}) + \beta_3 (\text{AJSE}) + \beta_4 (\text{PWLSE}) + \epsilon$$

Where,

HDI = Human Development Index

SEPC = Social enterprise per capita

ATSE = Average turnover per social enterprise

AJSE = Average jobs per social enterprise

PWLSE = Percentage of women-led social enterprises

β_0 is the constant. β_1 , β_2 , β_3 and β_4 are the regression coefficients, and ϵ represents the error term. The regression result is discussed below.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	0.883	0.779	0.749	0.07675	2.594

With a high positive correlation between HDI and predictor variables, the regression model demonstrates a strong fit with an R-value of 0.883 (Table 3). R Square value of 0.779 suggests that about 77.9% of the variability in HDI is explained by the predictors: social enterprise per capita, average turnover per social enterprise, average jobs per social enterprise, and percentage of women-led social enterprises. This suggests a well-fitted model for explaining a country's human development. Even when the number of predictors is taken into account, the model's adjusted R-squared value of 0.749 shows that it still accounts for a sizable portion of the variance in social change. Furthermore, the Durbin-Watson statistic (2.594), which is near to 2, indicates that there is no discernible autocorrelation between the residuals.

Table 4: ANOVA Results

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	0.622	4	0.156	26.408	0.000
Residual	0.177	30	0.006		
Total	0.799	34			

In Table 4, the F-statistic ($F = 26.408$, $p = 0.000$) indicates that the regression model as a whole is highly significant, with a significance level of $p < 0.05$. This implies that a significant portion of the variance in the HDI can be explained by the predictor factors.

Table 5: Coefficients and Predictor Analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics
	B	Std. Error	Beta			VIF
(Constant)	-0.557	0.174		-3.209	0.003	
Social Enterprise per Capita	-0.062	0.029	-0.190	-2.099	0.044	1.110
Average Turnover per SE	0.123	0.023	0.549	5.289	0.000	1.463
Average Jobs per SE	0.154	0.057	0.241	2.692	0.012	1.085
Women-Led SEs	0.410	0.102	0.394	4.033	0.000	1.295

According to Table 5, analysing the predictor variables, it was found that social enterprise per capita, average turnover per social enterprise, average jobs per social enterprise, and percentage of women-led social enterprises have significantly affected the HDI. Thus, it confirms the contribution of social entrepreneurship in fostering positive societal change (Al-Qudah *et al.*, 2022; Hietschold *et. al.* 2023; Turyakira *et al.*, 2025). Also, all VIF values are below 2, indicating no major multicollinearity issues.

Social Enterprise per Capita: Social enterprise per capita ($t = -2.099$, $p = 0.044$) with a level of $p < 0.05$, represents a statistically significant inverse correlation with the HDI, indicating that as the social enterprise per capita decreases, the human development tends to increase and vice versa. This indicates a direct beneficial impact of social entrepreneurship on human development. The coefficient $B = -0.062$ suggests that for each additional social enterprise per capita, the HDI decreases by 0.062 units, assuming all other factors remain constant.

Average Turnover per Social Enterprise: Average turnover per social enterprise ($t = 5.289$, $p = 0.000$) shows a statistically highly significant positive relationship with the HDI ($p < 0.05$), suggesting that as the average turnover increases, the HDI also tends to rise. Assuming all other variables stay the same, the coefficient $B = 0.123$ shows that the HDI rises by 0.123 units for every unit increase in average turnover per social company. This suggests that human development is positively and directly impacted by social entrepreneurship.

Average Jobs per Social Enterprise: Average jobs per social enterprise ($t = 2.692$, $p = 0.012$) with a level of $p < 0.05$ has a statistically highly significant positive relationship with HDI. The result indicates that social enterprises generating more jobs contribute positively to the HDI. The coefficient $B = 0.154$ signifies that each unit increase in the average jobs per social enterprise leads to a 0.154-unit rise in the HDI, assuming all other factors remain constant. This highlights the positive influence of social entrepreneurship on human development.

Women-Led Social Enterprise: Women-led social enterprises ($t = 4.033$, $p = 0.000$) with a significance level of $p < 0.05$ represent a statistically highly significant collaborative partnership with the HDI. The coefficient $B = 0.410$ signifies that each unit increase in women-led social enterprises leads to a 0.410-unit rise in the HDI, assuming all other factors remain constant. This implies a direct positive influence on the advancement of society as a whole and emphasises the critical role that women-led social entrepreneurship plays in promoting human development.

Conclusion

Social entrepreneurs catalyse constructive social change by creating novel answers to economic and 7890social problems. Through the incorporation of social goals into their business plans, social entrepreneurs empower marginalised communities, generate jobs, improve gender equality, and promote inclusive economic growth. Regional trends of the prevalence of social enterprises show that North America and Europe have a mature and well-established social enterprise ecosystem. In contrast, South America lags in density of social enterprise. Asia hosts the largest number of social enterprises globally, though their huge populations resulting in low per capita ratios dilute the numbers. Africa's social enterprise sector faces significant challenges in terms of density. Developed nations with higher per capita ratios may benefit from robust institutional frameworks, better funding opportunities, and favourable policies that support social entrepreneurship.

The regression model represents a statistically significant relationship between the HDI and the predictor variables: social enterprise per capita, average turnover per social enterprise, average jobs per social enterprise, and percentage of women-led social enterprises. Thus, the result emphasises social entrepreneurship as a potent force for promoting human growth and constructive societal change. Women-led social enterprises and turnover are the two most significant predictors of HDI improvement, emphasizing the role of women's empowerment and financial success. The study recommends that policies and strategies should focus on financial growth, employment generation, and support for women-led businesses to maximise the societal benefits of social entrepreneurship. The benefit could be further maximised by solving the issues caused by a high density of social enterprises.

Conflict of Interest

The authors affirm that there are no conflicting objectives.

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