



Examining the Effects of Social Entrepreneurship on the Sustainability of Community Programs of Selected Social Enterprises in Metro Manila

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ABSTRACT

The effect of social entrepreneurship on the sustainability of community programs is least examined in the existing literature. This study, guided by Freeman's Stakeholder Theory, used a mixed-methods approach—surveying 250 respondents and interviewing eight social enterprises in Manila—to investigate these effects. Regression analysis indicated that stakeholder salience, social entrepreneurship practices, and sustainable development components significantly contribute to sustaining community programs. Thematic analysis further revealed ongoing challenges that social enterprises face in maintaining these initiatives. Findings highlighted the need for targeted strategies that robustly engage stakeholders in decision-making and establish sustainability metrics for tracking the long-term impact of social entrepreneurship. Future research may analyze long-term trends, sector-specific strategies, standardized impact measurement, and policy implications of social enterprise models within the Philippine context. This study underscored the importance of strategic stakeholder engagement and effective sustainability tracking to enhance community program longevity and effectiveness.

Keywords: *Social entrepreneurship, sustainability, community programs, stakeholder theory, mixed methods*

INTRODUCTION

Social entrepreneurship has emerged as an urgent and innovative strategy to address social unrest while capturing the interest of young entrepreneurial minds in small-to-medium enterprises, locally and abroad. It capitalized on the idea of societal survival amidst the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in Southeast Asian regions, particularly in Malaysia and the Philippines. It has been paved as the way to reduce poverty, create job opportunities, and avert health and economic crises during and post-pandemic periods (Aziz & Sarhan, 2023).

The social enterprises sector played a significant role in advancing Sustainable Development Goals (Rashed & Shah, 2021), including activities related to corporate social responsibility (CSR), circular economy, and environmental initiatives. Companies were advised to move from regulatory compliance via CSR initiatives towards establishing linkages and partnerships that promote shared value creation (Go et al., 2022). The ongoing success of community programs hinged on engaging stakeholders to address systemic challenges—such as resource limitations, inconsistent participation, and reliance on external assistance—and to develop innovative solutions (Sonmezoglu, 2022). However, these organizations faced challenges in financial performance, stability, geographical location, resilience strategies, and innovation that hindered progress. These obstacles prompted institutions to adopt sustainable programs while sustaining their community service and advocacy. These enterprises struggled to maintain their operations while fulfilling their missions (Weaver, 2020).

Social enterprises have been influenced by visionary frameworks such as *Ashoka*, inspired by King Ashoka of India's principled and resolute governance. Over time, these models have developed into a contemporary discourse shaped by political, economic, and

environmental factors (Budumurus & Paruchuru, 2025). Sampaio and Sebastiao (2024) highlighted that social innovation and entrepreneurship contributed to the formation of the social economy by incorporating freedom of association, religious influences, and nationalist forces, ultimately leading to the emergence of modern social entrepreneurship and rapid industrialization and urbanization.

Consequently, social entrepreneurship continues to evolve, integrating entrepreneurial ecosystems with social enterprises to strengthen both financial sustainability and social impact (Budumurus & Paruchuru, 2025). The recent adaptation of entrepreneurial ecosystem theory underscored the significance of ecosystems in enhancing resilience against escalating social challenges. Various initiatives—ranging from community engagement and outreach projects to environmental development—have matured into long-term partnerships. These alliances have subsequently leveraged digitization and artificial intelligence, presenting new opportunities and challenges in the 21st century.

Several studies have explored the concepts of social entrepreneurship and sustainability. However, a notable gap existed in the literature regarding the direct effects of social entrepreneurship on the sustainability of community programs, particularly in well-developed countries. Specifically, while many investigations have examined various aspects of social entrepreneurship and its relationship with sustainability, only a limited number have addressed its explicit impact on the longevity and effectiveness of community programs within these advanced contexts. Furthermore, an even smaller body of research has focused on civic organizations operating in

developing and underdeveloped nations. The direct influence of social entrepreneurship on the sustainability of community programs within these organizations remains insufficiently studied, despite its potential significance in these regions. This gap highlighted the need for further research to understand how social entrepreneurship practices can contribute to the sustained success of community initiatives in diverse socioeconomic settings, with particular attention to civic organizations in developing and underdeveloped countries (Gupta et al., 2020).

The primary purpose of this study was to develop and recommend systematic strategies to assist selected social enterprises in attaining optimal sustainability in their community programs within the Philippines, particularly in Metro Manila. By addressing these key areas, the study sought to strengthen the capacity of social enterprises to effectively contribute to the broader social entrepreneurship movement, both locally and globally. In doing so, the research aimed to support the creation of a more robust and impactful social entrepreneurship landscape that prioritizes sustainable practices and transparent operations at the community level, help the government agencies in crafting more sustainable social services and programs, promote social enterprises bill discussions among constituents, and offer theoretical and practical insights among business administration disciplines.

Theoretical Background

This study was grounded in stakeholder theory (ST), a strategic management theory developed by R. Edward Freeman (1980, as cited by Freudenreich, 2024). This theory states that stakeholders – customers, employees, shareholders, executive officers, managers, suppliers, and all other members in the supply chain – are mutually interrelated to one another (Freeman et al., 2020) and play a major role in managing the survival and success of an enterprise (Freudenreich et al., 2020). In the study by Awa et al. (2024), it was found that stakeholders—those directly affected by the company’s activities—also significantly influence the company’s strategic positioning and future direction. Their role is to incorporate functions crucial to the success of the business endeavor (Ackermann & Eden, 1997), as cited by Amoako et al. (2023). Such roles may be transactional (technical and business) or transformational (people relations aspect) (Freudenreich et al., 2020). At its core is the firm, which served as the central entity where essential principles and values originated and were extended to all levels of stakeholders. Stakeholder theory played a pivotal role in this study by offering a comprehensive framework for identifying and analyzing the importance of different stakeholders within social enterprises.

Through this theory, the research systematically determined which stakeholders were considered most critical based on their attributes of priority, legitimacy, and urgency. This enabled the study to clarify the decision-making processes of social enterprises, particularly in terms of how they prioritize and address the needs of stakeholders deemed to have the most legitimate and urgent concerns. Furthermore, stakeholder theory guided the evaluation of the organization and implementation of community programs, ensuring that the perspectives and interests of essential stakeholder groups were integrated throughout the planning and execution stages. By following this approach, the study developed strategic recommendations that will enhance the sustainability of community initiatives led by social enterprises.

Conceptual Framework

Social entrepreneurship was an emerging business model to foster shared value creation and sustainable impact on its stakeholders. Therefore, the researcher designed a conceptual framework that illustrated the overall context and foundation of the study. The framework examined the salience of stakeholders, their social entrepreneurship practices, and the pillars of sustainable development (independent variables) through adapting the stakeholder theory, and its effects on the sustainability of community programs (dependent variable) of selected social enterprises through the sustainable value

creation framework.

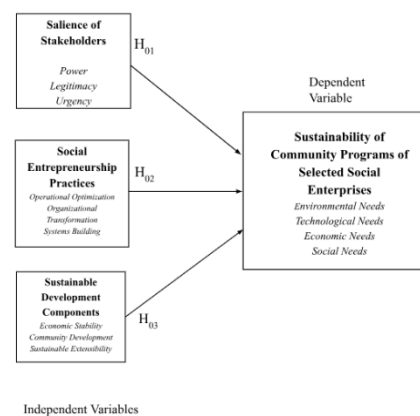


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework commissioned a more holistic strategy and systematic approach to address emerging challenges and recommended comprehensive strategies to achieve sustainable extensibility. The salience of different stakeholders was measured through the respondents’ correspondence to power, legitimacy, and urgency was tested in the study; the impact of social entrepreneurship practices was gauged by the four aspects of the sustainable value framework, considering the business sustainability levels: operational optimization (eco-efficiency), organizational transformation (new market opportunity), and systems building (societal change), and intensified by the sustainable development pillars, such as economic stability, community development, and sustainable extensibility. From this, effective strategies and approaches were drawn to address adversities.

Statement of the Problem

Specifically, this study addressed the following main research questions: (1) What community programs are offered by the selected social enterprises in terms of eco-efficiency (environmental needs), product stewardship (social needs), sustainable vision (economic needs), and clean technology (technological needs)? (2) How are their current stakeholders evaluated based on the dimensions of power, legitimacy, and urgency? (3) How are the implemented social entrepreneurship practices assessed in terms of operational optimization (eco-efficiency), organizational transformation (new market opportunity), and systems building (societal change)? (4) What are the significant effects of stakeholder salience on the sustainability of implemented community programs in the dimensions of power, legitimacy, and urgency? (5) What are the significant effects of the implemented social entrepreneurship practices on the sustainability of the community programs in the areas of operational optimization (eco-efficiency), organizational transformation (new market opportunity), and systems building (societal change)? (6) What is the significant effect of the sustainable development components embedded in the implemented community programs in terms of economic stability, community development, and sustainable extensibility? (7) What is the significant effect of the implemented social entrepreneurship practices on the sustainability of the community programs overall? (8) What key challenges do the selected social enterprises face in maintaining their community programs through social entrepreneurship? (9) What strategies should social enterprises adopt to strengthen the sustainability of their community programs, as espoused by the sustainable value creation framework?

Review Of Literature

The Emergence of Social Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship has been defined as a continuous drive for innovative and creative action that manages enterprises by combining limited

resources to meet future needs, ultimately leading to profitability and improved living standards, and is categorized into digital, social, and eco-entrepreneurship (Todorova & Venelinova, 2024). Social entrepreneurship emphasizes welfare, humanitarian endeavors, and social responsibility, often linked to NGOs and nonprofits, and differs from conventional entrepreneurship by prioritizing solidarity, associationism, and social services over profit-making (Hussain et al., 2023; Todorova & Venelinova, 2024). Scholars highlight its role in addressing social challenges, mobilizing resources, and fostering accountability, with youth participation seen as crucial for driving social change and strengthening organizational cooperation (Sonmezoglu, 2022). Tourism has also emerged as a developmental strategy within social entrepreneurship, reducing unemployment and poverty while promoting regenerative tourism, environmental conservation, and socioeconomic equity, though financial support remains essential for sustainability (Mahato & Prats, 2024). In the Philippines, social enterprises have grown significantly, with over 164,000 operating by 2016, driven by youth and women leadership, particularly in sectors such as agriculture, education, finance, and employment creation, though challenges persist in capital access, reliance on grants, and technical skills shortages (Flores, 2025). Overall, social entrepreneurship complements conventional entrepreneurship by fostering social solidarity and sustainable development while addressing inequalities and enhancing community resilience.

Strategic Matrix Model

The strategic matrix model of Dyllick and Muff (2016, as cited by Sanchis et al., 2025) provides a comprehensive framework for assessing corporate sustainability by analyzing strategies, implementation methods, and achievement levels. It identifies three progressive stages: operational optimization, which emphasizes efficiency and eco-efficiency to minimize negative impacts, though organizations often struggle to balance profit goals with environmental and social responsibilities (Heras-Saizarbitoria, 2020); organizational transformation, where nonprofits evolve into social enterprises to ensure long-term viability by combining advocacy with income generation, highlighting the need for sustainable leadership and resilience (Ko & Liu, 2021; Suriyankietkaew et al., 2022); and Systems Building, which extends sustainability beyond organizational boundaries by fostering systemic change through stakeholder collaboration, with social entrepreneurship and market orientation shown to enhance both social and economic performance in community development (Pinheiro et al., 2021). This model underscores the importance of aligning internal practices with external responsibilities to achieve lasting and meaningful sustainability outcomes.

Essential Aspects of Sustainability

Trevisan et al. (2022) examined how businesses perceive sustainability in relation to social development and environmental impact, emphasizing that enterprises often adopt sustainability to address environmental problems, reduce social unrest, and ensure long-term operational viability. Their study distinguished between sustainable entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship, noting that while both intersect, social entrepreneurship primarily focuses on advancing socioeconomic development for marginalized and underprivileged groups. Within the framework of sustainable social entrepreneurship, they highlighted the potential of society to shape sustainable careers, identifying key elements of success: integration of social spaces that balance personal, family, and career values; provision of security and employability; flexibility and diverse career choices; and opportunities for continuous renewal of both specific and general knowledge.

Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory, developed by R. Edward Freeman (1980, as cited by Freudenreich, 2024), emphasizes that stakeholders—including

customers, employees, shareholders, managers, suppliers, and others within the supply chain—are mutually interrelated and play a vital role in ensuring the survival and success of enterprises (Freeman et al., 2020; Freudenreich et al., 2020). Stakeholders are considered interested parties directly affected by a company's activities, influencing its strategic positioning and future direction (Awa et al., 2024). Their contributions are essential to business success, encompassing both transactional roles that address technical and business functions, and transformational roles that focus on people and relational aspects (Ackermann & Eden, 1997, as cited by Amoako et al., 2024; Freudenreich et al., 2020).

Stakeholder Salience Model

Stakeholder salience model emphasized that organizations must identify and prioritize stakeholders before making decisions, with importance determined by three key attributes: power, or the ability to influence organizational outcomes; legitimacy, or the perceived validity of a stakeholder's claim within moral, social, or legal norms; and urgency, or the degree to which a claim requires immediate attention due to its time sensitivity or criticality (Raha et al., 2021). Stakeholders who possess all three attributes are classified as definitive stakeholders, those with two are expectant, and those with only one are considered latent stakeholders.

Sustainable Value Creation Framework

Hart and Milstein's (2003, as cited by Yturzaeta, 2023) four-quadrant framework provides a strategic lens for corporate sustainability by mapping two dimensions: temporal (today–tomorrow) and organizational boundaries (internal–external). The tomorrow–external quadrant emphasizes the sustainable vision strategy, aligning long-term growth with external challenges such as poverty, inequity, and population growth. The internal–tomorrow quadrant highlights the clean technology strategy, focusing on research, innovation, and adaptability to address social and environmental issues with lasting implications (Dao et al., 2011, as cited by Yturzaeta, 2023). The internal–today quadrant centers on Cost and Risk Reduction, reducing waste and pollution through stakeholder involvement, responsibility, and employee engagement to ensure present operations remain sustainable (Dao et al., 2011, as cited by Yturzaeta, 2023). Finally, the external–today quadrant underscores reputation and legitimacy, where organizations strengthen corporate image and social relationships by valuing stakeholder insights and practicing responsible stewardship. This framework integrates immediate operational needs with long-term sustainability goals, balancing internal efficiency with external accountability.

Community Programs in Action

Sonmezoglu (2022) emphasized that humans are naturally inclined toward social responsibility, though this willingness often develops over time rather than being innate. A key indicator of social responsibility is voluntary participation in organizational roles aimed at solving social problems, with low engagement reflecting weaker social responsibility. Al-Boinin et al. (2025) highlighted the growing prominence of women entrepreneurs in Qatar, who leverage social media platforms as cost-effective tools to balance household responsibilities while promoting businesses and advocacies, thereby contributing to socioeconomic empowerment. Similarly, Sonmezoglu (2022) found that integrating community service into student-athletes' lives enhanced personal development, academic balance, and social innovation, aligning with the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly SDG 4 on inclusive education and SDG 11 on sustainable cities (Nguyen, 2023; UN ESA, 2023). Moron (2024) further demonstrated that service-learning and experiential approaches significantly shape students' social entrepreneurship competencies, fostering interpersonal skills, empathy, and leadership.

In India, Raut and Joshi (2023) underscored the importance of nurturing social entrepreneurship within medical and educational institutions, with initiatives like the Social Innovative Lab (SinnoLab) promoting biomedical innovation and collaborative ventures. Fleischer and Pendl (2024) traced the historical and cultural roots of social enterprises across countries, citing pioneers such as Bill Drayton in the USA, Gloria de Souza in India, Muhammad Yunus in Bangladesh, and grassroots models in Italy and Germany, all of which illustrate diverse approaches to social entrepreneurship. Collectively, these studies highlight how social responsibility, education, innovation, and cultural context converge to strengthen social entrepreneurship as a driver of community development and sustainable change.

Three Pillars of Sustainability

Ghimire (2023) defined the three pillars of sustainable development—economic, social, and environmental—as “interconnected” and “mutually reinforcing,” each essential to achieving sustainability. From the economic perspective, Surya et al. (2020) noted that industrialization and urbanization in India have led to challenges such as population growth, land conversion, and complex urban ecosystems, with overpopulation driving competition for basic resources and worsening poverty. Social entrepreneurship has emerged as a transformative approach to balance financial sustainability with social impact, though it faces challenges such as funding limitations and mission drift (Hudon et al., 2020). On the social pillar, Haidar et al. (2021) emphasized that community needs—ranging from finances and housing to health care and employment—are closely tied to individual well-being, while Kangovi et al. (2020) highlighted income, education, and social relationships as critical social determinants. Social entrepreneurship contributes to community development by creating products, expanding markets, and generating employment, thereby uplifting morale and fostering social and environmental well-being (Mendez-Picazo et al., 2021). The environmental pillar, as Winston (2021) discussed, is integral to human well-being and closely linked to the other two pillars, with housing and climate challenges underscoring the urgency of achieving SDG 11. Bretos et al. (2020) further noted that social entrepreneurship at the international level demonstrates organizations’ ability to transcend local challenges, contributing to global sustainability goals while balancing financial stability, social welfare, and environmental responsibility.

Social Entrepreneurship and Social Enterprises

In the 2022 Global Innovation Index, the Philippines ranked 59th out of 132 countries, reflecting progress in innovation and entrepreneurship (United Nations Development Programme, 2024). The growing number of social enterprises presents opportunities to strengthen sustainability strategies, particularly in Metro Manila, where Quezon City and Manila serve as hubs for notable organizations. While research on social entrepreneurship has provided valuable insights, Hisyam (2023) noted that it often overlooks negative consequences, underrepresents less developed countries, and inadequately addresses technological advancement (Klarin & Suseno, 2022). Moreover, social enterprises continue to face persistent challenges, including limited funding, slow revenue growth, weak infrastructure, lack of standardized impact metrics, difficulties in reaching target audiences, and employee retention concerns (Weaver, 2020). These findings highlight both the promise and the hurdles of social entrepreneurship in the Philippines, underscoring the need for innovative solutions and stronger support systems to ensure long-term sustainability.

Synthesis of the Reviewed Literature

The reviewed literature on sustainability, social entrepreneurship, and community programs featured salient facts on how each supports empirical study. Despite its recognition as a potential strategy, there

remained some gaps in the empirical evidence on the effects of social entrepreneurship on the sustainability of community programs in private organizations in Metro Manila. The study of Vieira et al. (2022) revealed that social entrepreneurship is mainly studied in developed countries with a high success rate on the implementation of sustainability in different enterprises, leaving the developing and underdeveloped countries with few to no research studies (Gupta et al., 2020). This implied a need to study the effects of social entrepreneurship activities in underdeveloped and developing countries. This highlighted the need to study importance of identifying the salience of stakeholders as a critical factor to the sustainability of the organization and its community programs, the effects of social entrepreneurship practices in community programs being implemented in Metro Manila, while understanding the needs and values of its stakeholders, the sustainability of social entrepreneurship practices, and the industry mindset on the components of sustainable development.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed-methods approach under a descriptive research design. The mixed-methods framework integrated qualitative data from focus groups and semi-structured interviews with quantitative data from researcher-designed surveys, guided by a pragmatic philosophy to ensure systematic collection, analysis, interpretation, and reporting (Dawadi et al., 2021; Hasselwander, 2024). The descriptive design complemented this approach by assessing social entrepreneurship practices and their effects on community program sustainability without further experimentation (Siedlecki, 2020; Taherdoost, 2022). To enhance credibility and validity, triangulation was applied, allowing the concurrent collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data. This strengthened methodological rigor and ensured that findings were substantiated by multiple perspectives, providing a more comprehensive and nuanced interpretation of results (Taherdoost, 2022).

Respondents were drawn from social enterprises operating in Metro Manila and included social entrepreneurs, key officers, and staff members directly involved in organizational and community-based initiatives. Participants were selected using Purposive Sampling, a non-probability sampling technique that allows the deliberate selection of individuals who possess relevant knowledge and experience related to the research problem. This approach was appropriate for studies examining organizational practices because it ensured respondents had sufficient exposure to the operational processes and community programs. The inclusion criteria required respondents with adequate length of employment in the organization, familiarity with organizational functions, and direct experience or participation in the implementation of community programs (Mwansa et al., 2022). These criteria ensured that the participants were familiar with the operational and social dimensions of social enterprises and provided relevant and informed responses to the study. Conversely, exclusion criteria were implemented to ensure the sample's relevance. Individuals who were not practitioners in social enterprises, those employed outside Metro Manila, respondents unwilling to participate, and those who withdrew consent during the data collection process were excluded from the study.

To determine the adequacy of the sample size for statistical analysis, a power analysis was conducted using G*Power, developed by Franz Faul and colleagues. Based on 12 predictor variables, a medium effect size ($f^2 = 0.15$), an alpha error probability of 0.05, and a statistical power of 0.95, the analysis indicated a minimum required sample size of 184 respondents (Faul et al., 2009, as cited by Aljohani, 2022). To enhance the reliability and precision of the statistical analysis, the target sample size was increased to 250 respondents.

Given the purposive selection of respondents and the defined geographical coverage of the study, the findings were interpreted within the context of social enterprises operating in Metro Manila. Consequently, the scope of inference of the study is primarily applicable to organizations and practitioners with similar characteristics and operational environments.

The primary instrument was a researcher-designed questionnaire, developed through an extensive review of the literature on stakeholders, social entrepreneurship, and sustainability. Content validity was established through expert review by three field specialists, and items that received unanimous agreement from the validators regarding their relevance and clarity were retained in the final instrument. Construct validity was addressed by aligning the questionnaire items with the theoretical dimensions of stakeholder engagement, social entrepreneurship practices, and sustainability initiatives, and was further examined during the pilot test. Reliability was confirmed through a pilot study involving 30 participants from enterprises outside Metro Manila, yielding a Cronbach's alpha of 0.974, indicating strong internal consistency. Surveys were administered primarily through online platforms such as Google Forms, while eight key informants participated in semi-structured interviews to provide deeper qualitative insights (Ruslin et al., 2022). Potential biases, including sampling bias due to online distribution, self-selection bias, regional differences between pilot and main respondents, and possible social desirability bias during interviews, were considered and mitigated through confidentiality assurances, clear instructions, and careful participant selection. Ethical protocols were strictly observed, including informed consent, confidentiality, compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012, and approval from the Ethics Review Committee of Colegio de San Juan de Letran-Manila.

This study employed a convergent mixed-methods design, in which quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed in the same phase of the research. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, including frequency distributions, weighted means, standard deviations, and regression analyses, to examine relationships among variables and assess their predictive significance (Ziglari, 2024; Hasan, 2024). Qualitative data were transcribed, coded, and subjected to thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and narratives from the participants' perspectives. Integration of the quantitative and qualitative findings was conducted through triangulation during the interpretation stage, wherein qualitative themes were systematically compared with the statistical results to determine areas of convergence, complementarity, or divergence. This process enabled the qualitative insights to explain and contextualize the quantitative findings, thereby strengthening the credibility and comprehensiveness of the results and informing the development of an enhanced strategic model for sustaining community programs implemented by social enterprises.

RESULTS

The assessment of implemented community programs yielded an overall weighted mean of 4.16 (SD = 0.85), interpreted as "Often" or "High," indicating that organizations consistently integrate sustainability-driven practices into their initiatives. This suggested that sustainability has become an embedded operational principle rather than a peripheral activity within the organizations studied. Among the four dimensions, clean technology obtained the highest mean (M = 4.22), followed by product stewardship (M = 4.18), sustainable vision (M = 4.14), and eco-efficiency (M = 4.13). The prominence of clean technology implied that organizations prioritize innovation-based

solutions to address environmental and social challenges. However, the relatively close mean scores across dimensions also suggested that sustainability practices were implemented in a balanced manner, though slightly stronger emphasis was given on technological innovation compared to operational efficiency. This pattern aligned with studies emphasizing the growing role of innovation and legitimacy in sustainability-oriented organizations (Trevisan et al., 2022; Yturzaeta, 2023; Dyllick & Muff, 2016, as cited by Sanchis et al., 2025).

Stakeholder salience was rated very high, with an overall weighted mean of 4.27 (SD = 0.77). Respondents perceived stakeholders as powerful, legitimate, and urgent actors, with power (M = 4.32) emerging as the most salient attribute, followed by urgency (M = 4.28) and legitimacy (M = 4.22). The prominence of power suggested that organizations are particularly responsive to stakeholders who possess the ability to influence resources, policy support, or organizational legitimacy. This finding implied that stakeholder influence played a significant role in shaping program priorities and sustainability strategies. While legitimacy and urgency were also rated highly, their slightly lower scores indicated that decision-making processes remained somewhat influenced by power dynamics within the stakeholder network, a phenomenon frequently observed in stakeholder salience theory (Mitchell et al., 1997, as cited by Raha et al., 2021).

Social entrepreneurship practices were frequently observed, with an overall weighted mean of 4.14 (SD = 0.88), interpreted as "Often" or "High." Among the three dimensions, systems building (M = 4.15) ranked highest, followed closely by operational optimization (M = 4.14) and organizational transformation (M = 4.13). The minimal variation across these dimensions suggested that social enterprises adopt a multidimensional approach in pursuing their missions, combining operational efficiency, systemic collaboration, and organizational innovation. However, the slightly lower rating for organizational transformation may indicate that while enterprises actively engage in collaborative and operational initiatives, bigger structural changes within organizations may require longer periods to fully materialize.

The effects of social entrepreneurship practices were consistently positive, with an overall weighted mean of 4.21 (SD = 0.83), interpreted as "Always" or "Very High." Organizational transformation (M = 4.25) demonstrated the strongest perceived impact, followed by systems building (M = 4.21) and operational optimization (M = 4.18). This finding suggested that initiatives aimed at transforming organizational structures and strategies tend to generate more substantial long-term outcomes compared with operational improvements alone. The strong influence of transformation and collaboration highlighted the importance of innovative leadership, cross-sector partnerships, and systemic initiatives in producing sustainable community impact (Trevisan et al., 2022; Pinheiro et al., 2021).

Finally, the sustainable development components influencing community program sustainability obtained an overall weighted mean of 4.17 (SD = 0.85), interpreted as "Often" or "High." Sustainable extensibility (M = 4.24) received the highest rating, followed by community development (M = 4.18) and economic stability (M = 4.12). The prominence of sustainable extensibility suggested that organizations prioritize long-term scalability and adaptability of their programs. However, the relatively lower rating for economic stability may indicate persistent financial constraints or reliance on external support mechanisms, which remain common challenges among social enterprises. This pattern underscored the need for stronger financial sustainability strategies to ensure that community programs can be maintained and expanded over time.

Overall, the findings revealed a consistent pattern in which sustainability-oriented practices, strong stakeholder engagement, and social entrepreneurship initiatives collectively contribute to the sustainability of community programs. The very high rating of stakeholder salience suggested that organizations operate within highly interactive networks where stakeholders exert considerable influence on program direction and resource mobilization. This may partly explain the strong emphasis on systems building and organizational transformation within social entrepreneurship practices, as collaboration and partnerships are essential for addressing complex social and environmental issues. Moreover, the prominence of sustainable extensibility among the sustainable development components indicates that organizations prioritize the long-term scalability and adaptability of their initiatives. However, the relatively lower rating of economic stability compared with other sustainability dimensions suggests that financial sustainability remains a continuing challenge despite strong program implementation and stakeholder engagement. This pattern highlights a potential tension between maintaining social impact and securing stable economic resources, a challenge commonly faced by social enterprises. Taken together, these findings underscore the importance of integrating innovation, stakeholder collaboration, and sustainable management practices to ensure the long-term viability and impact of community programs.

DISCUSSIONS

The results confirmed that the surveyed social enterprises demonstrated multidimensional sustainability performance—environmentally responsible, technologically adaptive, socially accountable, and strategically future-oriented. Stakeholder salience and social entrepreneurship practices emerged as pivotal drivers of organizational growth and the sustainability of community programs, aligning with global frameworks of integrated sustainability and social entrepreneurship. Despite the generally high ratings across all variables, slight variations among the dimensions suggest important nuances in the implementation of sustainability practices. While organizations demonstrated strong performance in areas such as stakeholder engagement and sustainable extensibility, the comparatively lower rating for economic stability indicates that financial sustainability may remain a persistent challenge for many social enterprises. This disparity suggests that although organizations are effective in delivering socially impactful programs and fostering collaborative networks, securing consistent financial resources to sustain and scale these initiatives may require further strategic attention. Such findings highlight the complex balance that social enterprises must maintain between achieving social impact and ensuring long-term economic viability.

In support of the relevant findings, the qualitative findings were drawn to highlight several key challenges faced by social enterprises in Metro Manila, as well as the strategies they employed to address them. The most prominent issues included limited financial resources, bureaucratic hurdles, weak institutional support, and the absence of clear policy recognition for social enterprises. Informants emphasized the importance of collaborative partnerships and multi-sectoral networks to supplement constrained resources and enhance organizational legitimacy. Strategic succession planning and organizational restructuring were also identified as critical for ensuring leadership continuity and long-term sustainability. Financial sustainability emerged as a recurring concern, with income diversification through training programs, grants, blended finance, and innovative business models seen as essential for resilience.

Capacity building and skills development were highlighted as necessary investments, particularly in addressing technical skill gaps among staff

and community partners. Relational and community-based engagement was considered vital for fostering trust, inclusivity, and program relevance, especially among marginalized groups. Finally, adaptability and program realignment were noted as pragmatic responses to evolving contexts, enabling organizations to recalibrate priorities and safeguard their social mission.

Overall, the findings revealed that social enterprises navigated challenges through integrated strategies encompassing collaboration, succession planning, financial diversification, capacity building, community engagement, and adaptability. These approaches strengthened program sustainability and effectiveness, complementing the quantitative results and underscoring the multidimensional nature of social entrepreneurship in advancing community development.

The results demonstrated that all three predictor variables—stakeholder salience, social entrepreneurship practices, and sustainable development components—had statistically significant effects on the sustainability of community programs. Stakeholder salience ($\chi^2 = 9.57$, $p < .001$) underscored the critical role of power, legitimacy, and urgency in shaping program longevity, with stakeholder engagement and prioritization mechanisms emerging as key determinants of effectiveness and adaptability. Social entrepreneurship practices ($\chi^2 = 20.18$, $p < .001$) also exerted a strong influence, confirming that eco-efficiency, organizational transformation, and systems building enhanced resilience and continuity, enabling organizations to generate lasting value and maintain social relevance. Most notably, sustainable development components ($\chi^2 = 30.79$, $p < .001$) demonstrated the strongest predictive effect, highlighting the importance of economic stability, community development, and sustainable extensibility in ensuring long-term viability and measurable impact.

Triangulation of quantitative and qualitative findings reinforced these results, with interview data validating the statistical evidence. Informants emphasized challenges such as financial constraints, policy hurdles, and operational sustainability, while recommending strategies including blended financing, capacity building, policy support, and cross-sector collaboration. Collectively, the findings affirmed that program sustainability was not solely dependent on operational efforts but was rooted in the integration of stakeholder engagement, social innovation, and sustainable development frameworks. This synergy confirmed the study's hypothesis and validated its conceptual framework, demonstrating that holistic social entrepreneurship—anchored in collaboration and sustainability principles—enhances the long-term viability and societal impact of community-based programs.

CONCLUSION

This study determined that stakeholder salience, social entrepreneurship practices, and sustainable development components each exerted significant effects on the sustainability of community programs, with sustainable development components demonstrating the strongest predictive influence. These findings were established through the integration of quantitative evidence ($p < .001$ across all variables) and qualitative insights, which consistently emphasized the importance of stakeholder power, legitimacy, and urgency, alongside eco-efficiency, organizational transformation, and systems building, in sustaining program longevity. The statistical outcomes with experiential data revealed that sustainability is not achieved through isolated operational efforts but through systemic alignment of stakeholder engagement, social innovation, and development frameworks.

The implications of these findings are threefold. First, the results

reinforce the stakeholder salience model (Mitchell et al., 1997 as cited by Raha et al., 2021) and the three levels of business sustainability (Dyllick & Muff, 2016, as cited by Sanchis et al., 2025), validating their relevance in community-based contexts and demonstrating how stakeholder attributes and systemic sustainability principles jointly influence program viability. Second, the study highlights the need for longitudinal and sector-specific analyses to capture sustainability trends over time and to refine impact measurement frameworks that encompass economic, social, and environmental dimensions. Lastly, the findings underscore that social enterprises must adopt integrated strategies—collaboration, adaptive planning, financial diversification, and capacity building—to institutionalize sustainability.

Within the discipline of social entrepreneurship, these insights affirm that holistic, stakeholder-centered, and innovation-driven approaches are essential for achieving systemic and enduring community impact. By aligning stakeholder engagement with sustainable development principles, social enterprises can strengthen resilience, enhance accountability, and ensure that community programs remain relevant and impactful in the face of evolving challenges.

Recommendations for Future Research

While this study established statistically significant relationships between key variables, several research gaps remain that warrant further scholarly attention. First, the cross-sectional design employed in the present research limits causal inference. Future studies should therefore adopt longitudinal approaches to capture dynamic processes and examine sustainability trends in social entrepreneurship over time.

Second, subsequent research may benefit from sector-specific analyses (e.g., health, livelihood, education) to identify context-driven strategies that reflect the unique challenges and opportunities within different social enterprise domains. Such comparative insights can deepen understanding of sectoral heterogeneity and inform tailored interventions.

Third, there is a pressing need to develop standardized impact measurement frameworks that extend beyond economic indicators to encompass dimensions of social inclusion and environmental transformation. Establishing such frameworks would enable more holistic evaluations of social enterprise performance and enhance comparability across studies.

Finally, future research should investigate the policy and institutional factors that influence scalability and systemic integration of social entrepreneurship programs. Governmental regulations, institutional arrangements, and cultural contexts play a pivotal role in enabling or constraining sustainability, and their examination can provide critical insights into the conditions under which social enterprises thrive.

Addressing these research gaps will not only refine theoretical models but also strengthen practical approaches, thereby advancing the capacity of social enterprises to serve as agents of inclusive and sustainable development.

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