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EDITORIAL / ÉDITORIAL

Marco Alberio, Alma Mater Studiorum, Università di Bologna;
Canada Research Chair in Social Innovation and Territorial Development
Laurie Mook, Arizona State University

Welcome to issue 15(2) of the *Canadian Journal of Nonprofit and Social Economy Research* (CJNSER). In this issue, we feature four research articles, three contributions to the "Perspectives from the Field" section, and two book reviews. Before we focus on describing the contents, we would like to thank, as always, all those who contributed to the success of this issue—first and foremost, the authors and reviewers, the editorial board, and the technical support staff. The work of all these people is fundamental. We are also excited to announce that we have been accepted to the Érudit platform (erudit.org), a pan-Canadian interuniversity consortium consisting of Université de Montréal, Université Laval, and Université du Québec à Montréal. We anticipate that our presence on this platform will expand even more our reach to francophone authors and readers.

The first three scientific articles of this issue deal with community-based organizations and civic engagement from different perspectives and contexts. The first does so by studying civic and community engagement, the second by examining the nonprofit commu-

Bienvenue au numéro 15(2) de la *Revue canadienne de recherche sur les OSBL et l'économie sociale* (ReCROES). Dans ce numéro, nous présentons quatre articles scientifiques, trois contributions à la rubrique « Perspectives sur le terrain », et deux critiques de livre. Avant de nous concentrer sur la description du contenu, nous tenons à remercier comme toujours toutes les personnes ayant contribué à la réussite de ce numéro, en premier lieu les auteurs et les évaluateurs, le comité de rédaction, et le personnel de support technique. Le travail de toutes ces personnes est fondamental. Nous sommes également ravis d'annoncer que nous avons été acceptés sur la plateforme Érudit (erudit.org), un consortium interuniversitaire pancanadien composé de l'Université de Montréal, de l'Université Laval et de l'Université du Québec à Montréal. Nous croyons que notre présence sur cette plateforme permettra de rendre notre revue encore plus accessible aux auteurs et lecteurs francophones.

Les trois premiers articles scientifiques du numéro traitent, à partir de perspectives et contextes différents, d'organisations communautaires et d'engagement civique. Le premier le fait en étudiant l'engagement civique et communautaire comme tel, le deuxième en étudiant le secteur communautaire

nity sector as employer and labour market, and the third by assessing a particular form of community engagement that relates to culture and cultural heritage. The fourth article makes a worthy methodological contribution by looking at the Social Economy Business Survey Index (S-BSI).

The first article, written by **Kirk Leach, Mirivel Julien, Tusty ten Bensel** and **Avinash Thombre**, is entitled "Civic and Community Engagement of Poor Rural Women in Bihar: A Pilot Study." Here, the authors consider civic engagement and community as crucial elements for the success of rural development, emancipation and transformation at both the individual and collective levels. In particular, they examine the evolution of civic and community engagement among women in rural Bihar, India. Using exploratory factor analysis on survey data drawn from a relatively large sample, they identify three key factors of civic and community engagement. They then assess the effectiveness and impact of a specific program on participants' civic and community engagement in relation to the length of time during which they participated in the program and the type of self-help group of which they were a part. The results indicate that transmission groups are more civically active in their community than were the initial groups. However, civic and community engagement tends to decline over the course of the intervention.

The article by **Michaël Séguin, Bianca Briciu, Amy MacDonald, Michael Okunlola, Sahar Zohni** and **Christine Kouri** is entitled "Inclusion Norms in Ontario Settlement Agencies as Workplaces: Between Prefiguration and Systemic Exclusion." It analyzes nonprofit organizations as workplaces and examines

à but non lucratif comme employeur et marché du travail, et le troisième en étudiant une forme particulière d'engagement communautaire axé sur la culture et le patrimoine culturel. Le quatrième article fait une contribution intéressante du point de vue méthodologique en se penchant sur l'Indice des enquêtes de conjoncture en économie sociale (Social Economy Business Survey Index, S-BSI).

L'article écrit par **Kirk Leach, Mirivel Julien, Tusty ten Bensel** et **Avinash Thombre** s'intitule « Engagement civique et communautaire des femmes rurales pauvres du Bihar : une étude exploratoire ». Dans cet article, les auteurs considèrent l'engagement civique et communautaire comme un élément crucial pour le succès du développement, de l'émancipation et de la transformation rurale tant au niveau individuel que collectif. Ils examinent en particulier l'évolution de l'engagement civique et communautaire chez les femmes de zones rurales du Bihar en Inde. À l'aide de l'analyse factorielle exploratoire de données provenant d'une enquête basée sur un échantillon assez important, ils identifient trois facteurs clés d'engagement civique et communautaire. Par la suite, ils évaluent l'efficacité d'un programme spécifique ainsi que son impact sur l'engagement civique et communautaire des participantes en fonction de la durée de participation au programme et du type de groupe d'entraide. Les résultats suggèrent que, sur le plan civique, les groupes de transmission sont plus actifs dans leur communauté que l'étaient les groupes initiaux. Cependant, l'engagement civique et communautaire a tendance à diminuer à mesure que l'intervention progresse.

L'article de **Michaël Séguin, Bianca Briciu, Amy MacDonald, Michael Okunlola, Sahar Zohni** et **Christine Kouri** s'intitule « Normes d'inclusion dans les agences d'établissement de l'Ontario en tant que lieux de travail : entre préfiguration et exclusion systémique ». Les auteurs analysent les OSBL comme lieux de travail en se demandant

whether, in the concrete practice of work and human resources management, they apply the values of social and political inclusion that they espouse. The article analyzes the issue of inclusivity in nonprofit organizations from the perspective of frontline immigrant workers in an Ontario facility. As part of a collaborative research approach, 25 frontline workers were asked to describe their experiences with integrating diversity into the workplace, participating in decision-making, and providing equitable working conditions. Eight managers were also consulted. An analysis of the semi-structured interviews shows that, while most organizations seem to be successful in integrating diversity, there are significant limitations when it comes to involving frontline migrant workers in decision-making and fair employment practices. These results demonstrate a persistent form of systemic exclusion at the heart of the "Canadian cultural mosaic."

The third article, by **Roberta Paltrinieri** and **Giulia Allegrini**, is entitled "The Role of the Third Sector in the Development of Cultural Heritage from a Cultural Well-Being Perspective." Based on research conducted in 2021–2022 by the Scuola dei beni e delle attività culturali Foundation of the Italian Ministry of Culture, it offers insights into an emerging reality in Italy's third sector, the "heritage communities"—formal or informal groups focused on enhancing and preserving the country's tangible and intangible cultural heritage. As Paltrinieri and Allegrini point out, these heritage communities can become pathways to "cultural well-being," a new form of well-being inspired in 2019 by the World Health Organization, which recognizes the important connections between health and culture. By way of conclusion, the article presents heritage communities as innovative mechanisms for establishing policies and practices

si, dans la gestion du travail et des ressources humaines, elles arrivent vraiment à mettre de l'avant les valeurs d'inclusion sociale et politique qu'elles prônent. Pour ce faire, les auteurs étudient la question de l'inclusivité au sein des OSBL du point de vue de travailleurs immigrés de première ligne dans une organisation ontarienne. Dans le cadre d'une approche de recherche collaborative, 25 travailleurs de première ligne ont été invités à décrire leurs expériences d'intégration en ce qui a trait à la diversité au travail, à la participation à la prise de décision et aux conditions de travail équitables. Huit gestionnaires ont également été consultés. L'analyse des entretiens semi-dirigés montre que, si la plupart des organisations semble parvenir à intégrer la diversité, il existe des limites importantes quant à l'implication des travailleurs immigrés de première ligne dans la prise de décision et les pratiques d'emploi équitables. Ces lacunes indiquent une forme persistante d'exclusion systémique au cœur de la « mosaïque culturelle canadienne ».

Le troisième article, par **Roberta Paltrinieri** et **Giulia Allegrini**, s'intitule « Nouvelles perspectives sur le bien-être culturel : le rôle du tiers secteur en matière de patrimoine culturel ». Sur la base d'une recherche menée en 2021–2022 par la Fondation Scuola dei beni e delle attività culturali du ministère italien de la Culture, les auteures offrent un aperçu d'une réalité émergente dans le troisième secteur italien, la « communauté patrimoniale ». Il s'agit ici de groupes formels ou informels dont l'objectif est d'encourager la préservation et l'enrichissement du patrimoine culturel matériel et immatériel du pays. Comme le soulignent Paltrinieri et Allegrini, ces communautés patrimoniales peuvent mener au bien-être culturel—une nouvelle forme de bien-être inspirée en 2019 par l'Organisation mondiale de la santé, qui tient à souligner l'importance de la relation entre santé et culture. En guise de conclusion, l'article présente les communautés patrimoniales comme des

that pertain to cultural well-being, with a significant potential for sociocultural innovation.

The fourth article, written by **Jiae Seo**, is entitled "Analyzing the Social Economy Business Survey Index (S-BSI): Development, Features, and Effectiveness in Social Economy Policymaking and Evaluation." This text, as already observed in the introduction to this editorial, presents a more methodological orientation by exploring the Social Economy Business Survey Index, a tool designed to evaluate the social and economic value realized in the social economy. The knowledge acquired through this Index can be useful for conducting public policy interventions. The methodology used by the author includes an in-depth analysis of the S-BSI's development process, followed by multiple comparative analyses of similar domestic and international surveys. This quantitative approach is accompanied by qualitative evaluation tools based on a specific framework, "Next Generation," that is useful for formulating public policies in the social economy. Through her approach, the author aims to inspire a holistic understanding of the S-BSI, offering insights that could prove useful for policymakers and funders.

The issue continues with the "Perspectives from the Field" section, which presents three articles on the role of young people in the social economy. These texts were produced under the aegis of the Employment and Entrepreneurship component of the Youth Network Chair. Here, we want to thank the director of this component, **María Eugenia Longo**, for coordinating the writing of these three concise texts.

The first article of "Perspectives from the Field" was written by **Meryem Kabbaj** and **Étienne St-Jean** and is entitled "The Impact

mécanismes innovants pour les pratiques et politiques de bien-être culturel avec un potentiel important d'innovation socioculturelle.

Le quatrième article, de **Jiae Seo**, s'intitule « Analyse de l'Indice des enquêtes de conjoncture en économie sociale : développement, caractéristiques et efficacité dans l'élaboration et l'évaluation de politiques sur l'économie sociale ». Tel que nous l'avons déjà remarqué ci-dessus, cet article propose une orientation plus méthodologique en explorant l'Indice des enquêtes de conjoncture en économie sociale, un outil conçu pour évaluer la valeur sociale et économique réalisée en économie sociale. Le savoir acquis grâce à l'Indice pourrait s'avérer utile pour mener des interventions en matière de politiques publiques. La méthodologie employée par l'auteure comprend une analyse en profondeur du processus de développement de l'Indice, suivie de multiples analyses comparatives d'enquêtes semblables à l'échelle nationale et internationale. Cette approche quantitative s'accompagne d'outils d'évaluation qualitative fondés sur un cadre spécifique, « Prochaine Génération », qui peut être utile pour formuler des politiques publiques en économie sociale. Selon l'auteure, son approche vise à inspirer une compréhension holistique de l'Indice, offrant des observations qui pourraient s'avérer utiles pour les décideurs et les bailleurs de fonds.

Il s'ensuit la rubrique « Perspectives sur le terrain » qui présente trois articles consacrés au rôle de la jeunesse dans l'économie sociale. Ces textes ont été produits sous l'égide de la Chaire-réseau de recherche sur la jeunesse et en particulier de son volet Emploi et Entrepreneuriat. Nous tenons à remercier la directrice de ce volet, **María Eugenia Longo** et **Meryem Kabbaj** membre étudiant de la chaire qui ont coordonné la rédaction de ces trois textes courts.

Meryem Kabbaj et **Étienne St-Jean** sont les auteurs du premier article de « Perspectives sur le terrain ». Celui-ci s'intitule « L'impact de l'accom-

of Support in Collective Entrepreneurship: The Case of the SISMIC Program in Québec." This article examines the impact of the SISMIC program—initiated by the Chantier de l'économie sociale—through a qualitative study based on interviews with entrepreneurs who participated in the program. The results show an improvement in knowledge, resources, and project structuring. Participants also gained a better understanding of participatory governance mechanisms and legal structures specific to the social economy. In addition, the authors highlight the importance of establishing a synergy between support and financing that can allow entrepreneurs to lighten their mental load and focus fully on their projects.

The second article in this section is "Support for the Start-Up of Collective Youth Projects: Challenges and Prospects of the SISMIC Capitale-Nationale Incubator" by **Philippe Hamel** and **Frédérique Moisan**. This article, like the first one, focuses on the SISMIC program, which is supported by the Chantier d'économie sociale through its regional hubs. This program provides assistance to young people in their efforts to launch social economy enterprises. The authors highlight the relevance of the help offered in terms of the many projects supported but they also note the low proportion of collective enterprises set up from the SISMIC incubators. The coauthors, stakeholders from the Pôle des entreprises d'économie sociale de la région de la Capitale-Nationale, explain from their regional perspective the reasons for the difficulty that the youthful participants have had in launching collective projects.

To conclude this section, **Sandrine Dupuis** presents, in "Challenges on the Entrepreneurial Paths for Young People in Québec's Social Economy," the results of a qualitative study

pagnement en entrepreneuriat collectif : le cas du programme SISMIC au Québec ». Cet article examine le programme SISMIC établi par Le Chantier de l'économie sociale et ses retombées au moyen d'une étude qualitative fondée sur des entretiens auprès d'entrepreneurs ayant participé au programme. Les résultats indiquent une amélioration des connaissances, des ressources et de la structuration des projets. Les participants ont aussi mieux compris les mécanismes de gouvernance participative et les structures juridiques propres à l'économie sociale. Les auteurs soulignent d'autre part l'importance d'une synergie entre accompagnement et financement qui permettrait aux entrepreneurs d'alléger leur charge mentale afin de se concentrer pleinement sur leurs projets.

Le deuxième article de cette rubrique est par **Philippe Hamel** et **Frédérique Moisan.** Il s'intitule « L'accompagnement au démarrage de projets collectifs jeunesse : défis et perspectives de l'incubateur SISMIC Capitale-Nationale ». Cet article, comme le premier, traite du programme SISMIC géré par le Chantier d'économie sociale par l'intermédiaire de ses pôles régionaux. Ce programme offre un soutien aux jeunes dans leurs démarches pour lancer des entreprises en économie sociale. Les auteurs soulignent la pertinence de l'appui offert en ce qui a trait aux nombreux projets accompagnés mais ils constatent également la faible proportion de constitution d'entreprises collectives issues des incubateurs SISMIC. Ces intervenants du Pôle des entreprises d'économie sociale de la région de la Capitale-Nationale (Pôle CN) se basent sur leur perspective régionale pour exposer les raisons de la difficile concrétisation de projets collectifs portés par les jeunes.

Pour clore cette rubrique, **Sandrine Dupuis** présente dans « Les défis dans les parcours entrepreneuriaux des jeunes en économie sociale au Québec » des résultats issus d'une recherche qua-

conducted with 20 young collective entrepreneurs and 12 social economy guides in Québec. The author has identified several challenges related to ideation and design, governance and management, finances, articulation between spheres of life, and lack of support, as well as challenges specific to SE, such as a widespread lack of knowledge about it. The author notes that some of these challenges are also common outside of SE, but that the lack of knowledge about collective models, as well as the number of resources that are not adapted to these models, risk amplifying the challenges.

Finally, we have two book reviews. **Luc Thériault** reviews *The Canadian Non-Profit Sector: Neoliberalism and the Assault on Community* by Ted Richmond and John Shields, and **Muh Ikbal, Aldi Aldi,** and **Muhammad Anas** review *Celebrity Activism and Philanthropy in Asia: Toward a Cosmopolitical Imaginary* by Dorothy Wai Sim Lau.

litative menée auprès de 20 jeunes entrepreneurs et 12 accompagnateurs en économie sociale au Québec. L’auteure a identifié plusieurs défis. Ceux-ci touchent à l’idéation et la conception, la gouvernance et la gestion, les finances, l’articulation entre les sphères de vie et le manque de soutien, ainsi qu’à des défis spécifiques à l’ÉS, comme une méconnaissance répandue à son sujet. L’auteure remarque que certains de ces défis sont aussi communs au-delà de l’ÉS, et que le manque de connaissances sur les modèles collectifs et les ressources inadaptées à ces modèles risquent de les amplifier.

Enfin, nous avons deux comptes rendus de livres. **Luc Thériault** nous offre un commentaire du livre *The Canadian Non-Profit Sector: Neoliberalism and the Assault on Community* de Ted Richmond et John Shields, tandis que **Muh Ikbal, Aldi Aldi** et **Muhammad Anas** présentent *Celebrity Activism and Philanthropy in Asia: Toward a Cosmopolitical Imaginary* de Dorothy Wai Sim Lau.

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Civic and Community Engagement among Poor Rural Women in Bihar: A Pilot Study

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ABSTRACT

Civic and community engagement is often crucial for the successful development of rural areas and a catalyst of personal transformation. This article examines changes in civic and community engagement among women in rural Bihar, India. Using an exploratory factor analysis of survey data from *n* = 815 respondents who participated in Heifer's Values-Based Holistic Community Development [VBHCD] training, the study identifies three factors that constitute civic and community engagement. Next, the study assesses the efficacy of VBHCD's impact on participants' civic and community engagement relative to participants' duration in the program and type of self-help group. The results indicate that pass-on groups are more civically active in their community than original groups. However, civic and community engagement wanes over the course of participation in Heifer's intervention.

RÉSUMÉ

L'engagement civique et communautaire est souvent crucial pour le développement de zones rurales tout en étant un catalyseur de transformation personnelle. Cet article examine les changements dans l'engagement civique et communautaire parmi des femmes en milieu rural dans l'État du Bihar en Inde. Au moyen d'une analyse factorielle exploratoire de données provenant de *n* = 815 répondantes ayant participé à une formation au développement communautaire holistique fondé sur des valeurs éthiques crée par Heifer, cette étude identifie trois facteurs sous-tendant l'engagement civique et communautaire. Ensuite, elle évalue l'impact de la formation suivie par les participantes sur leur engagement civique et communautaire relatif au temps passé à suivre la formation et au type de groupe d'entraide. Les résultats indiquent que les groupes ayant suivi cette formation jouent un plus grand rôle civique dans leurs communautés que les groupes originaux. Cependant, plus les participantes passent de temps dans l'intervention de Heifer, plus leur engagement civique et communautaire s'amoindrit.

Keywords / Mots clés : civic engagement, community engagement, self-help groups, women's empowerment / engagement civique, engagement communautaire, groupes d'entraide, autonomisation des femmes

INTRODUCTION

As an international non-governmental organization (INGO), Heifer International's mission is to end poverty and hunger in partnership with the local community (Heifer International, 2024). Its approach to poverty alleviation is grounded in a framework called Values-Based Holistic Community Development (VBHCD).[1] Heifer's work worldwide rests on the assertion that INGOs cannot address systemic poverty and hunger by providing a "cup of milk" for short-term relief, but rather the entire cow to a source of food and income. The VBHCD framework is a holistic framework grounded in the principle that poverty alleviation is more than providing resources such as food, water, and animals, but also includes building connections within the community that foster sustainable impact and transformation (Mahato & Bajracharya, 2009). The framework is a development philosophy that is participatory and asset-based and builds on the strengths and values available in each community (De Vries, 2012; Dierolf, Kern, Ogborn, Protti, & Schwartz, 2002; Mahanto & Bajracharya, 2009). Not only are short-term immediate relief needs addressed, but a foundation is created for civic and community engagement.

De Vries (2011, 2012) points out that Heifer's work exists at the intersection of economic empowerment and community connection. For Heifer, the VBHCD framework represents a holistic approach, where change involves and affects "all aspects of a person and community, including the physical, mental, social, spiritual and ecological" (DeVries, 2012, p. 374). To implement the VBHCD model, Heifer supports community members—primarily local women—to organize and form self-help groups (SHGs), which are small voluntary groups whose participants gather to address a problem of mutual concern and create social and personal change (Katz & Bender, 1976; Murria & Verma, 2013). The SHG model has been touted as a promising tool to enhance the capacity and agency of rural women in India (Tiwari & Thakur, 2007). The Government of India's National Rural Livelihoods Mission, launched by the Ministry of Rural Development, and numerous INGOs have supported and incentivized the proliferation of SHGs as a platform to foster rural women's engagement in civic life (Ministry of Rural Development, 2024). The ministry estimates there are over eight million SHGs with 86 million women members (Ministry of Rural Development, 2024).

Self-help groups "encourage self-management and self-regulation of the groups' activities" (Tiwari & Thakur, 2007, p. 177), and thus facilitates active engagement to address collective goals and build a more robust civil society. De Vries (2008) notes, "[SHGs] can nurture common values and mutual support, which are the glue that binds people together and allows them to overcome many constraints" (p. 223). Although empirical literature is mixed, several examples of SHG-based initiatives in Bihar illustrate the positive impact on women's agency and empowerment. For example, Tiwari and Thakur (2007, p. 177) point out that SHGs empower poor rural women by providing "an opportunity to make decisions involving themselves" and their communities. Datta's (2015) analysis of JEEViKA, an initiative of the Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society started in 2006 to promote social and economic empowerment of rural women through self-help-groups found that JEEViKA participants engaged more in decisions regarding their own employment and household political preference than non-participants. An assessment of the Do Kadam Barabari Ki Ore program, an initiative focused on preventing violence against women and girls in Bihar, showed increased agency among participants, specifically in terms of their ability to move freely and have

more control over household finances (Jejeebhoy & Santhya, 2018). The findings from these programs provide initial empirical support for the impact of SHGs on rural women's empowerment.

Building on established SHG initiatives, Heifer's approach supports forming initial self-help groups called original groups (OGs), whose participants are then encouraged to start pass-on groups (POGs) (Fitzpatrick & Akgungor, 2020; Janzen, Magnan, Sharma, & Thompson, 2021; Kafle, Michelson, & Winter-Nelson, 2019). The SHGs are the organizational mechanism that promotes self-reliance and collective action in rural communities. Forming SHGs, whether OGs or POGs, is a critical way for rural women to engage in civic life. Self-help groups can facilitate civic and community engagement (Barakso, 2005) among participants who act to enhance the wellbeing of their communities. In the context of Heifer International, SHGs are formed with inclusivity in mind and designed to address gender inequality in their training. For instance, Desai and Joshi (2014) found that women participants in SHGs as part of the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA)[2] were more likely "to be engaged in community affairs" and exercise greater personal autonomy over household decision-making (p. 494). Women who are members of SHGs also were more likely to be aware of local issues and to address issues that affected the village (Desai & Joshi, 2014). In a meta-analysis, Brody, Hoop, Vojtkova, Warnock, Dunbar, Murthy, and Dworkin. (2016) found strong evidence that women SHG participants were more comfortable collaborating with stakeholders to achieve change in their community.

Prior research has documented the positive economic impact of Heifer's VBHCD on participants (Mahato & Bajracharya, 2009), including improved human and social capital (De Vries, 2012), improved sustainable livestock production, and improved disaster resiliency (Preciados, Cagasan, & Gravoso, 2022). Other studies have assessed the social and personal impact of VBHCD. For instance, Mirivel, Thombre, ten Bensel, Leach, and Wood (2023) examined the impact of VBHCD on female participants' communication skills and found that they experience positive changes in their degree of expressiveness, assertiveness, and persuasiveness. Another study of female participants in Bihar, Mirivel, Fuller, Thombre, ten Bensel and Leach (2023) found that Heifer's VBHCD had a significant and positive impact on women's interpersonal and positive communication skills.

However, there are limited empirical assessments of the impact of VBHCD on participants' civic and community engagement relative to duration of participation in the program and group type. This exploratory study is designed to identify the factors that comprise civic and community engagement and then assess the aggregate changes in civic and community engagement among Heifer's VBHCD beneficiaries. This article therefore proposes the following research question:

> RQ: How does Heifer's VBHCD intervention impact civic and community engagement among women in Bihar, India?

The authors also examine two interrelated sub-questions: first, what are the differences in civic and community engagement by group type (OG or POG)?; and second, what are the differences in civic and community engagement by the length of participation in Heifer's VBHCD from baseline (0 months) to 24 months among 815 participants? The authors conducted ANOVAs with post-hoc tests to capture the between-group differences in civic and community engagement.

Desai and Joshi (2014) argue that it is difficult to precisely assess the causal mechanisms driving civic and community engagement among women-only SHGs in rural India. The difficulty is due to the "bundled nature of the initiative" (Desai & Joshi, 2014) that includes the formation of SHGs, educational and animal husbandry training, and discussions of gender inequality. Additionally, the unique local context impacts the outcomes of initiatives such as VBHCD (World Bank, 2012; Eliasoph, 2016). This article builds on previous research (cf. Casini, Vandewalle, & Wahhaj, 2017; Datta, 2015) to assess variation in civic and community engagement across participant duration and group type within the broader VBHCD intervention. This study contributes to a growing body of literature on rural women's civic and community engagement centred on participation in SHGs.

This article first provides an overview of Heifer's VBHCD framework and the research context in Bihar, India. Next, the study is grounded in the civic and community engagement literature, paying particular attention to the rural context. Following the methodology, the article reveals the findings and reflects on the study's limitations and future research and closes with implications for practitioners.

THE VBHCD FRAMEWORK

Heifer's approach to poverty alleviation and community development is rooted in the VBHCD framework. Developed in the 1990s, the VBHCD framework is guided by a set of principles called the 12 Cornerstones, enabling the community to assess and realize its potential for sustainable development (De Vries, 2012). The 12 Cornerstones include: 1) Passing on the Gifts; 2) Accountability; 3) Sharing and Caring; 4) Sustainable and Self-Reliance; 5) Improved Animal Management; 6) Nutrition and Income; 7) Gender and Family Focus; 8) Genuine Need and Justice; 9) Improving the Environment; 10) Full Participation; 11) Training, Communication, and Education; and 12) Spirituality. Overall, Heifer's VBHCD training attempts to mitigate the impacts of poverty, foster sustainable development, and redress historical caste and gender power disparities shaping the participants' lives. Participants in Heifer's VBHCD receive training by Heifer country staff on the 12 Cornerstones, which cover agricultural techniques, project management, leadership, communication skills, and gender equity (De Vries, 2012).

A unique aspect of VBHCD is the formation of OGs and POGs in locations identified by Heifer. First, at the early stage of the intervention, Heifer International invites individuals (primarily women) to form a self-help group. Members of the group are elected to serve as chair, vice-chair, or secretary, giving the group a formal structure to operate under. At this initial stage, the group collaborates on saving money to build some economic power, and every group member is asked to contribute what they can. In some areas, Heifer contributes a culturally appropriate productive asset, such as a goat, cow, or chicken. The group that received the initial asset—the OG—is then encouraged to pass on the offspring from that productive asset and to mentor another project group in a process called "Passing on the Gift." The receiving group is therefore called a POG (Fitzpatrick & Akgungor, 2020; Janzen et al., 2021; Kafle, 2018). The process takes place over 24 months, with OGs receiving training and animals aged 6–12 months and POGs being formed and mentored around one-year post Heifer intervention. Heifer begins to scale back its formal ground presence around 24 months post-initial intervention. Although many OGs and POGs work together for decades, the focus of this research assesses changes from baseline to 24 months.

Context: Bihar, India

Bihar, in eastern India, is bordered by Nepal to the north, Jharkhand to the south, Uttar Pradesh to the west, and West Bengal to the east. Based on the 2011 census data, Bihar has a population of over 104 million people making it the third most populous state in India (Government of Bihar, Finance Department, 2022). Approximately 52 percent of Bihar's population is male and 48 percent female (Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, 2021). Forty-nine percent of Bihar's population is illiterate, the majority of who (51.7%) are women who live in rural Bihar (Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, 2021).

Additionally, 51.9 percent of residents are multidimensionally poor[3] (NITI Aayog, 2021), making Bihar one of the most deprived states in India. The per capita income for Bihar in 2020–2021 is currently estimated at Rs 46,300 compared with Rs 128,800 for India as a whole (Government of Bihar, Finance Department, 2022). Bihar has the second lowest per capita income among the states in India. Bihar also has the lowest female workforce participation rate in India at 2.7 percent according to 2018–2019 data (Mitra & Rajput, 2020; Chakraborty, Joshi, Singh, Priyadarshini, & Choudhary, 2020). Moreover, 59.9 percent of males were self-employed in 2019–2020 and 76 percent of the total number of people migrating to find employment is male (Government of Bihar, Finance Department, 2022; Government of Bihar, Finance Department, 2020).

In addition, given the patriarchal socioeconomic context—where men dominate all forms of political, economic, and social life including decision-making regarding women's travel, employment, and household responsibilities (Mitra & Verick, 2013)—women are unlikely to be employed outside of the household nor engage in civic life. Moreover, the India Patriarchy Index (Singh et al., 2021) presents empirical evidence that Bihar consistently ranks as one of the most patriarchal states in India and gender disparities are particularly high among Scheduled Caste classes (SCs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs). Indeed, robust Dalit feminist scholars, including Paik (2021), Rege (1998), and Arya and Rathore (2020) have shed light on these oppressive structures.[4] The participants in this study live in a historically rigid social structure where male domination, oppression, and exploitation of women is normalized and institutionalized through laws, customs, and rituals (Singh et al., 2021).

The participants' lives are challenging in other ways. For instance, Mirivel, Thombre, ten Bensel, Leach, and Wood, (2023a) found that baseline participants have little if any expectations for the future and noted being harassed because they live in poverty. Study participants also have few income options and routinely have no assets (Datta, 2015), experience high levels of interpersonal violence (Jejeebhoy & Santhya, 2018), and persistently face poor health outcomes including high rates of acute respiratory illnesses and infant mortality, all coupled with a lack of access to safe drinking water (Government of Bihar, Finance Department, 2020).

In addition, caste and gender differences constrain the lives of participants. Sanyal, Rao, and Majumdar (2015, p. 4) point out that "oppressive gender and caste hierarchies" make addressing women's agency, empowerment, and civic engagement difficult. Indeed, the lives of the participants are contingent on intergenerationally reinforced cultural norms and systems. For example, within rigid gender norms, males exclusively maintain household economic decision-making and control

mobility of their partners (Jejeebhoy & Santhya, 2018). Traditionally defined gender roles also result in participants being the primary caregiver, a role reinforced through the threat and pervasiveness of intimate partner violence (Sanyal, Rao, & Majumdar, 2015). Study participants also experience caste-based inequalities. Due to their caste status, participants do not participate in political life or public service (Sanyal, Rao, and Majumdar (2015) and therefore have little political power (Desai & Joshi, 2014). Further descriptive data on participants is provided in the methodology.

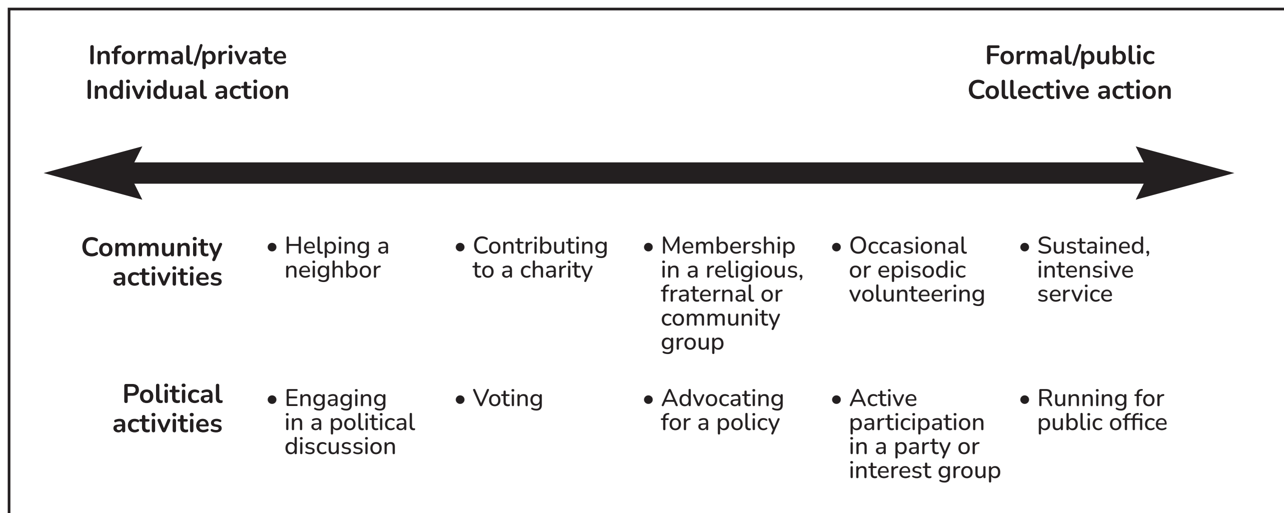
THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Civic engagement

In rural communities, civic and community engagement often catalyzes [re]development efforts. For the purposes of this study, the authors define civic engagement as an "individual's duty to embrace the responsibilities of citizenship with the obligation to actively participate, alone or in [collaboration] with others, in volunteer service activities that [pursue community issues] that strengthen the local community" (Diller, 2001, p. 211; also see Adler & Goggin, 2005; McBride, Sherraden, & Pritzker, 2006). Civic engagement aims to create positive change in the community, and there are many ways for individuals to be civically engaged.

Civic engagement encompasses both social and political dimensions (see Figure 1). The political dimension of civic engagement includes voting, advocating for policies, and other behaviors that "influence the legislative, judicial, or electoral process, and public decision-making" (Adler & Goggin, 2005; McBride, Sherraden, & Pritzker, 2006, p. 153). The social dimension of civic engagement includes helping neighbours, contributing to charity, volunteering, and contributing resources to religious and community groups, associations, or organizations (Adler & Goggin, 2005; McBride, Sherraden, & Pritzker, 2006). However, civic engagement's social and political dimensions are intertwined. For instance, volunteering at a community-based voter drive, a form of civic engagement, can be a form of political participation (Mazzoleni, 2000). Nonetheless, for the purposes of this project, this empirical and analytical focus is on the social dimension of civic engagement.

Figure 1: Continuum of civic engagement



Source: Adapted from Adler & Goggin, 2005, p. 240

This research assesses changes in civic and community engagement among VBHCD beneficiaries. The civic engagement process is conceptualized as occurring along a continuum from an individual to a collective action such as helping a neighbour or ongoing sustained service (organizing to address an identified community need) (Nuñez-Alvarez, Clark-Ibáñez, Ardón, Ramos, & Pellicia, 2018; Adler & Goggin, 2005). The authors focus on participants' movement along the social dimension of civic engagement and acknowledge that individual progression and regression are both possible (Eliasoph, 2016).

Civic engagement as a mechanism to address rural development has a rich tradition in civil society and development literature. It is routinely seen as an outcome of international development efforts, particularly in rural and marginalized communities. Civic engagement in rural India is especially valuable given local norms and institutional arrangements in which women are routinely excluded from participation in civic life. The challenges these women face are compounded by historically contingent patriarchal economic, social, and cultural norms that create barriers to full participation in civic life (cf. Desai & Joshi, 2014; Pande & Astone, 2007). For instance, women in rural India are routinely the most impoverished (Srivastava & Srivastava, 2010), over-represented in illiteracy rates, and have limited or no access to educational opportunities (Kingdon, 2007). In addition, they "are subject to household and interfamilial relations" that restrict their civic engagement (Malhotra & Schuler, 2005, p. 71). Thus, many community development initiatives attempt to facilitate civic engagement among this target population.

Several studies suggest that participation in bundled community development initiatives such as VBHCD[5] enhances civic engagement among poor rural women. For example, Casini, Vandewalle, and Wahhaj (2017) found that women-only SHGs, similar to the groups that form the basis of this analysis, foster engagement in community activities to address "women's issues." Women-only SHGs also experience a time lag in their participation in civic engagement activities (Casini et al., 2017), which suggests a temporal nature regarding changes in civic engagement. Similarly, Datta (2015) analyzed survey data from 400 villages (200 treatment villages that are beneficiaries of JEEViKA and 200 villages where JEEViKA was not yet implemented) and found that women participants in the SHGs experienced a positive and significant change in civic engagement activities. Building on this work, qualitative analysis by Sanyal, Rao, and Majumdar (2015, p. 42) found that women participants in SHGs "took matters into their own hands" regarding the provision of social support services for community members and local community problem-solving. These findings support that bundled community development initiatives, such as the VBHCD framework, have a positive impact on women's civic engagement.

Community engagement

Although community and civic engagement are often used interchangeably, the Center for Disease Control defines community engagement as "a process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations to address issues affecting the well-being of those people" (CTSA Community Engagement Key Function Committee, 2011, p. 7). The focus is on collaborative activity by people who share similar socio-economic status and locations within the socio-political hierarchy. Building on this definition, we

contend that community engagement expressly incorporates "those who are excluded and isolated" from participation in community life (Nexus Community Partners, 2014, p. 1). Therefore, for this project's purposes, community engagement is an inherently localized process where marginalized residents collectively work toward addressing the community problems they face. This perspective is important to our project for several reasons. First, Heifer's intervention in the Bihar region is geographically bound to specific locations, with the intent of benefiting those areas. Moreover, the intervention targets those who have been marginalized within Bihari society.

Much like civic engagement, community engagement also serves as the catalyst for developing rural communities. Previous works on community engagement argue that SHGs are often the formal mechanism for fostering and implementing community engagement in rural areas. Initiatives that foster community engagement are particularly relevant in rural India, especially initiatives that target women, because women in provinces such as Bihar are routinely isolated from social networks, tending to focus primarily internally on the family, and are historically excluded from participation in decision-making related to community issues (Desai & Joshi, 2014; Lahiri-Dutt & Samanta, 2006).

Similarly, the research on facilitating community engagement through SHGs is generally positive. As Datta (2015) found, on average, more women participants from JEEViKA's SHG program collaborated to solve problems at the community level. In a study assessing the effect of a neonatal health intervention in rural India, Saggurti, Atmavilas, Porwa, Schooley, Das, Kande et al. (2018) provided initial evidence that SHG participants "began advocating for their own, and their fellow members' and community needs with administrative authorities" (p. 11). They further note that this process required constant and concerted efforts over time to be sustainable. They point to the newness of the group as one possible factor restraining concerted community engagement.

As SHG members work together and become more engaged in their community, they experience several benefits. Research has shown that civic and community engagement enhances an individual's wellbeing and life satisfaction (Wray-Lake, DeHaan, Shubert, & Ryan, 2019). When engaged, individuals often also realize other intrinsic benefits, such as satisfaction in the positive aspects of their work, knowledge of having contributed to a greater cause (Meier & Stutzer, 2008), and a sense of belonging and purpose (Sagiv, Goldner, & Carmel, 2022). Therefore, the intrinsic value of civic and community engagement impacts how an individual is transformed in or during these activities. Attree, French, Milton, Povall, Whitehead, and Popay (2011), for instance, document several positive impacts of community engagement, including expanded social networks and social relationships, more self-confidence, and increased positive perceptions about themselves.

Similarly, Bracht, Kingsbury, and Rissel (1999) point out that engaged individuals within their communities see increased value in their contributions to solving community problems. In addition, individuals participating in community engagement initiatives are also more confident (Stirling, O'Meara, Pedler, Tourle, & Walker, 2007) and develop a sense of pride from having decision-making power in their communities (Kagan, Castile, & Stewart, 2005). The VBHCD model presents the opportunity for women in rural India to enhance their social, economic, health, and spiritual needs to become empowered members of their community and enhance their quality of life. By supporting the creation of SHGs and providing training on the 12 Cornerstones values and principles, VBHCD

provides a mechanism to enhance participants' civic and community engagement. Self-help groups are an organizational form that can facilitate civic and community engagement. Although acknowledging the lack of empirical evidence on SHG's overall performance, Lahiri-Dutt and Samanta (2006) argue that SHGs are widely accepted as the go-to organizational form that facilitates civic engagement among rural women. Desai and Joshi (2014) similarly found that women in SHGs were more engaged civically in community life. Their analysis focused more on the political dimensions of engagement, that is, participation in local government and direct engagement with public officials.

METHODOLOGY

To assess civic and community engagement changes, the authors collected survey data from female participants (*n* = 815) across two districts in rural Bihar, India. Survey data was gathered from participants at baseline (0 months) to 24 months of participation in Heifer's VBHCD initiative. This survey is part of a larger collaborative project with Heifer International designed to assess individuals' personal transformation as they participate in Heifer International's VBHCD program. A conceptual framework of Personal Transformation was developed that includes seven dimensions along which individuals experience transformation: Identity, Self-perception & Perception of Others; Communication Competency; Empowerment; Leadership State; Civic & Community Engagement; and Intercultural Sensitivity. The dimensions represent areas where the authors posit individuals experience transformation as they participate in Heifer's VBHCD intervention. Each element of the model was assessed by several variables in the survey; however, discussing all these elements in the transformation model is beyond the scope of this article. The authors drew on the civic and community engagement literature to develop the survey tool. Given many variables, an exploratory factor analysis (Pett, Lackey, & Sullivan, 2003) was conducted first to identify the primary components of the civic and community engagement dimensions measured by the survey. The factor analysis helped identify the components that constitute civic and community engagement and reduce the number of survey questions to simplify future deployment in the field. The goal of factor analysis is to identify the variables that contribute to the primary components of each dimension that comprise our personal transformation model. The survey instrument is adapted from Grootaert (2004)[6] and Adler and Goggin's (2005)[7] Civic Engagement Framework and refined using Heifer's 12 Cornerstones training to ensure it focused on areas of concern related to VBHCD.

Civic and community engagement were assessed via 17 survey questions (see Table 3). The cross-sectional survey was translated into Hindi and administered by third-party enumerators[8] between October and December 2020. The survey was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic via local enumerators who recorded participant survey responses using the survey CTO data collection tool, a reliable and secure data collection platform for researchers. A total of 814 survey responses were received from across the region of Bihar, India.

Data collection

The authors partnered with Heifer International and a third-party agency that used enumerators to visit local villages across the Bihar region to recruit participants for the survey and interviews. Data for this exploratory study were collected from participants in two large districts—Vaishali (*n* = 701) and Muzzafarpur (*n* = 114)—across three blocks—Bidupur (*n* = 608), Desri (*n* = 95), and

Kurhanni (*n* = 112)—and included numerous villages. However, to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of respondents, village level differences were not analyzed.

To conduct the surveys and baseline interviews, participants' contact information was provided to the third-party enumerators by Heifer International. The approach using third-party enumerators is consistent with other research (Mwambari et al., 2022; Hershfield et al., 1993; Quetulio-Navarra et al., 2015) who relied on third parties to collect data during the COVID-19 pandemic, or with hard-to-reach populations in rural contexts as part of a culturally appropriate research team. The third-party agency is a professional research organization with trained enumerators with expertise in data collection in low-income rural areas in India. The authors also provided virtual training to the third-party enumerators on how to effectively conduct the survey data using our instrument and follow appropriate data collection protocols, such as consent, confidentiality, and ethical standards as approved by the UALR Institutional Review Board (Protocol # 20–154-R3). In addition, the authors set up a number of virtual data quality sessions to debrief progress and address any concerns or questions as data were collected. The third-party enumerators produced a random sample from the given list to recruit study participants for the project. The third-party enumerators visited randomly selected respondents at their homes with the logistical support of the local Heifer India field team to ask for their participation. Given the rural geography, illiteracy among participants, and limited internet accessibility, this is a context-appropriate means of approaching study participants (Ellard-Gray, Jeffrey, Choubak, & Crann, 2015).

For follow-up surveys (six, 12, and 24 months), enumerators walked door to door to contact previous participants who provided the baseline data. They asked respondents whether they would like to participate in the follow-up survey and/or in the follow-up interviews. Data was collected using the Survey CTO tool. Verbal consent was obtained prior to beginning data collection and recorded with the Survey CTO tool for each respondent, which was monitored by Heifer.

Participants were asked to complete a survey that included questions on a four-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = strongly agree to 4 = strongly disagree), with lower scores representing a higher presence of the attribute being measured. Participants were asked questions about relationships, self-identity, communication, leadership, civic engagement, empowerment, community engagement, and training (see Appendix A for the survey instrument). Enumerators recorded participant responses using the survey CTO data collection tool, and the de-identified survey data was provided to the research team in Excel.

For data analysis, the authors compiled descriptive statistics on the respondents to identify changes from baseline to 24 months. A series of exploratory factor analyses—a statistical technique to identify clusters of variables (Field, 2005)—were then conducted. The purpose of conducting a factors analysis is threefold: "1) to understand the structure of a set of variables … 2) to construct a questionnaire to measure an underlying variable … [and] 3) to reduce a data set to a more manageable size while retaining as much of the original data as possible" (Field, 2005 p. 619). A series of factor analyses were used to identify which survey questions were the most relevant for the civic and community engagement concepts the authors were trying to measure, and to help reduce the number of questions in the survey. Finally, a series of ANOVAs were conducted to understand group differences in civic and community engagement.

Sample

The sample included participants of Heifer’s SHGs and potential (i.e., baseline) participants from a community Heifer identified as in need of support. Table 1 provides an overview of the study participants’ characteristic and demographics; Table 2 provides descriptions of participants based on their duration in VBHCD and the type of SHG.

Table 1: Sample characteristics and demographics

Characteristics/demographics	Frequency	%
Sex		
Female	815	100
Education		
No formal education	498	61
Primary & middle school	187	23
Secondary school	106	13
Graduate school	24	3
Religion		
Hindu	774	95
Muslim	40	5
Other	1	0
Social Class		
SC	394	48
OBC	384	47
Schedule Tribe [ST]	8	1
General	29	3.6
Other	2	.02
Program Duration		
Baseline	212	26
Six months	186	23
12 months	204	25
24 months	213	26
Participant Type		
Original group	128	16
Pass on group	475	58
Baseline	212	26

Note: N = 815

As shown in Table 1, all the respondents in this study are female (*n* = 815; 100%). Most have no formal education (*n* = 498; 61%), followed by primary (*n* = 187; 23%) and secondary education (*n* = 106; 13%). The majority (*n* = 774; 95%) are Hindu, and 5 percent are Muslim (*n* = 40). Most respondents are in the Scheduled Caste (SC) class (*n* = 394; 48%) or Other Backward Class (OBC) (*n* = 384; 47%). Finally, most of the respondents were in a POG (*n* = 475; 58%). In Bihar, there are approximately 22 Schedule Castes and 131 Backward Castes (Government of Bihar, Finance Department, 2020). For the purposes of this exploratory research, the analysis was not disaggregated by specific castes.

As shown in Table 2, participants were almost evenly distributed across beneficiary duration: baseline (*n* = 212; 26%), 6 months (*n* = 186; 22.8%), 12 months (*n* = 204; 25%), and 24 months (*n* = 213; 26.2%). However, there were only five OG participants at a six-month duration, and 81 POG participants at a 12-month duration. The crosstab shows that 58.3 percent of participants are from POGs (*n* = 475) across all durations. There were 128 OG participants (15.7%) and 212 participants (26%) at baseline.

Table 2: Participant type by duration in the Heifer VBHCD program

		Participant type						Total	
		OG		POG		Baseline			
		N	%	*N*	%	*N*	%	*N*	%
Beneficiary duration	0 months	0	0.0	0	0.0	212	100.0	212	26.0
	6 months	5	3.9	181	38.1	0	0.0	186	22.8
	12 months	123	96.1	81	17.1	0	0.0	204	25.0
	24 months	0	0.0	213	44.8	0	0.0	213	26.1
Total		**128**	**100.0**	**475**	**100.0**	**212**	**100.0**	**815**	**100.0**

Finally, Table 3 summarizes participants based on social class and duration in Heifer's VBHCD program. Of participants in the SC class (*n* = 394; 48% of total participants), the majority *n* = 169 (42.9%) are at baseline; 39 (9.9%) are at six months of participation; 118 (29.9%) are at 12 months participation; and 68 (17.3%) are at 24 months participation. Of those classified as OBC (*n* = 384; 47% of total participants), 30 (7.9%) are at baseline, 133 (34.8%) are at six months of participation, 86 (22.5%) are at 12 months participation, and 133 (35.8%) are at 24 months participation. The participants are among the most disadvantaged groups in Bihar, and the data were aggregated by social class for the current analysis.

Table 3: Factor structure

Item	Factor		
	Civic engagement	Community engagement I	Community engagement II
5.11 I believe that it is important to financially support charitable organizations	.768		
5.17 I contribute to charitable organizations within the community	.685		
E_5.14 I help members of my community	.591		
E_5.6 I believe that I have a responsibility to help the poor and the hungry	.584		
E_5.10 I believe that it is important to volunteer	.544		
E_5.5 I believe I should make a difference in my community	.421		
E_5.4 I feel responsible for my community		.699	
E_5.7 I am committed to serve in my community		.658	
E_5.8 I believe that all citizens have a responsibility to their community		.649	
E_5.9 5.9 I believe that it is important to be informed of community issues		.538	
E_5.16 I participate in discussions that raise issues of social responsibility			.773
E_5.12 I am involved in structured volunteer position(s) in the community			.704
E_5.13 When working with others, I make positive changes in the community			.577
E_5.15 I stay informed of events in my community			.516
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization			

RESULTS

Exploratory factor analysis

Civic and community engagement are complex concepts that are intricately connected and hard to disentangle in rural development practice. To get an understanding of civic and community engage-

ment among participants in Bihar, the authors conducted an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) (n = 815) to determine the underlying factor structure (Pett, Lackey, & Sullivan, 2003). We used exploratory factor analysis for three reasons. First, given the exploratory nature of our work, EFA with Varimax rotation (Yong & Pearce, 2013) is used to identify the items that cluster together into meaningful factors that comprise civic and community engagement. Next, the survey instrument is grounded on the civic and community engagement literature and adapted and modified from the World Bank Social Capital Initiative (Grootaert et al., 2004) to capture and provide a better understanding of the nature of civic and community engagement in the rural context. Thus, EFA allows us to establish the validity of the modified instrument (Pett, Lackey, & Sullivan, 2003). Additionally, we had no a priori suppositions (or only implicit hypotheses) (Costello & Osborne, 2005; see also Sindik, 2013) to test whether and how civic and community engagement varies, particularly among study participants. Finally, limited empirical attention has been paid to the impact of Heifer's VBHCD program on participants' civic and community engagement. Exploratory factor analysis, therefore, furthers the discussion by exploring the underlying processes of how VBHCD is associated with civic and community engagement, which, this article argues as part of the authors' larger study, is integral to a participant's personal transformation journey.

The factor analysis extracted three scales that comprise civic and community engagement based on Eigenvalues larger than one and above the breakpoint in the scree plot (Costello & Osborne, 2005). We dropped freestanding and cross-loading items to clarify the factor structure (Costello & Osborne, 2005). Initial Eigenvalues indicated that the first three factors explained 32 percent, 8.4 percent, and 7.9 percent of the variance, respectively, and in sum, explained 48.46 percent of the total variance. The fourth through fourteenth factors were dropped because they had Eigenvalues less than one, and the leveling off of values below the breakpoint on the scree plot made the fourth through fourteenth factors uninterpretable (Costello & Osborne, 2005; Yong & Pearce, 2013).

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure (0.875) indicated the data were suitable for exploratory factor analysis, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($\chi 2$ (91) = 2573, p <.001), indicating that there is a patterned relationship between the items. All commonalities, except E5.5, were above 0.3, indicating that the selected items shared some common variance.

Internal consistency

Once we identified the primary factors of civic engagement and community engagement, we assessed if the factors were internally consistent and reliable. Six items loaded to factor I, labelled *Civic Engagement*, with a Cronbach's Alpha α = 0.735, suggesting that the selected variables are internally consistent. Four variables loaded onto the second factor, labelled *Community Engagement I*, with a Cronbach's Alpha α = 0.651. The third factor, labelled *Community Engagement II,* is composed of four variables with a Cronbach's Alpha α = 0.669. Both *Community Engagement* factors are moderately reliable, with Cronbach's Alphas α = 0.651 and α = 0.669 suggesting that the selected variables are modestly internally consistent. The items that comprise each factor are presented in Table 3.

Cronbach's Alpha is an indication of inter-item homogeneity measuring the proportion of variance due to common factors, with low scores suggesting that items in the factor do not measure the same dimension (Cronbach, 1951). Although Cronbach (1951) argued that a "higher alpha is desir-

able, a test need not approach the perfect scale to be interpretable … and the pure scale should not be viewed as ideal" (pp. 331–332). Given the exploratory nature of the research and the modest Cronbach's Alpha scores, it would be logically meaningless (Cronbach, 1951) to have separate *Community Engagement* factors. Community engagement is an inherently localized process where marginalized residents collectively work toward addressing their community problems. For this research, the authors did not seek to unpack the specific elements of community engagement per se (e.g., contributing to charity or engaging in volunteer activities), but rather how participants' descriptions community engagement activities changed as they participated in Heifer's VBHCD. Therefore, consistent with Pett, Lackey, and Sullivan (2003) and Cronbach (1951), the authors combined *Community Engagement I* and *Community Engagement II* into an interpretable *Community Engagement* factor based on the mean of all eight items that comprised both factors with Cronbach's Alpha $\alpha = 0.750$. The *Civic Engagement* and *Community Engagement* factors provide the basis for assessing how engagement in civic life varies across beneficiaries at different timeframes (0 months to 24 months) and group types (OG or POG).

Dependent variables

To continue this analysis, the authors created two dependent variables based on the mean scores for the items that comprise the *Civic Engagement* ($\alpha = 0.737$) and *Community Engagement* ($\alpha = 0.750$) factors. Creating the dependent variables *Civic Engagement* and *Community Engagement* allowed the authors to assess if there was variation between 1) beneficiaries at different exposure levels and 2) participant types. First, a dependent variable was created called *Civic Engagement* based on the mean scores from the six items (5.5, 5.6, 5.10, 5.11, 5.14, 5.17) that loaded onto the factor. Next, the two factors, *Community Engagement I* (variables 5.4; 5.7; 5.8; 5.9) and *Community Engagement II* (variables 5.12; 5.13; 5.15; 5.16), were combined into an interpretable composite *Community Engagement* factor based on the mean of the eight items that comprised both factors. Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics for the two composite scores *Civic Engagement* and *Community Engagement*.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics for *Civic Engagement and Community Engagement* composite scores

Descriptive Statistics									
	N	Range minimum	Range maximum	Mean		Std. deviation	Variance statistic	Skewness	
				Statistic	Std. error			Statistic	Std. error
Community engagement	815	1.00	3.25	1.9587	.01169	.33367	.111	-.546	.086
Civic engagement	815	1.00	3.00	1.8135	.01210	.34534	.119	-.449	.086
Valid *N* (listwise)	815								

Results of one-way ANOVA

To further the analysis, ANOVA Omnibus tests were performed using the *Civic Engagement* and

Composite Community Engagement dependent variables to assess if there is a statistically significant difference in the means of the beneficiary groups (0 months to 24 months) and the group type (POG or OG].

The comparison of the means for civic engagement ($\alpha<0.05$) shows significant differences for both participant duration in the project ($F[3, 811] = 2.668$, $p = 0.047$) and participant group type ($F[2, 812] = 4.434$, $p = 0.012$), respectively. Specifically, post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for participants at baseline (M = 1.8699, SD = .342) was significantly different than the participants at 12 months (M = 1.7289, SD = .361). However, participants at baseline (M = 1.8699, SD = .342) did not significantly differ from participants at six-months and 24-months duration, nor did participants at six months significantly differ from participants at 24 months of participation. Additionally, post-hoc comparisons for *Civic Engagement* and participant type using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for POGs (M = 1.7859, SD = .346) was significantly different than for participants who were not yet part of a group (M = 1.8699, SD = .342). However, OGs (M = 1.8225, SD = .337) did not significantly differ from POGs or those not assigned to self-help groups. Based on our four-point Likert scale survey, where 1 = strongly agree and 4 = strongly disagree, the statistically significant lower scores for participants at 12 months (M = 1.7289, SD = .361) and POGs (M = 1.7859, SD = .346) represent a higher presence of the *Civic Engagement* attribute.

As discussed above, the factor analysis initially identified two factors: *Community Engagement I* and *II* with Cronbach's Alphas of 0.653 and 0.670, respectively. Due to the exploratory nature of this study, the authors combined these two factors and reassessed the factors internal consistency for ongoing analysis (Pett, Lackey, & Sullivan, 2003). The resulting Cronbach's Alpha for the composite *Community Engagement* factor (0.750) suggests that the selected variables are internally consistent. ANOVA Omnibus tests assessed if there is a statistically significant difference in the mean composite *Community Engagement* score based on beneficiary groups (0 months to 24 months) and group type (POG or OGs). The results for the composite *Community Engagement* factor are presented below.

The analysis indicated that there were statistically significant differences in the means for *Community Engagement* at ($\alpha<0.05$) for both participant duration in the project ($F[3, 811] = 4.996$, $p = 0.002$) and group type ($F[2, 812] = 4.651$, $p = 0.010$). Specifically, post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the *Community Engagement* mean score for participants at baseline (M = 2.018, SD = .323) was significantly different than that at 12 months (M = 1.892, SD = .365). Participants at baseline (M = 2.018, SD = .323) did not significantly differ from participants at six months or 24 months. With regards to participant type, post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the *Community Engagement* mean score for participants that were not yet part of a group (M = 2.018, SD = .323) was significantly different than mean scores for both POGs (M = 1.940, SD = .339) and OGs (M = 1.929, SD = .319). Based on our four-point Likert scale survey, the statistically significant smaller community engagement scores for participants at 12 months (M = 1.892, SD = .365), POGs (M = 1.940, SD = .339), and OGs (M = 1.929, SD = .319) represent a higher presence of the *Community Engagement* attribute among participants in each of those categories.

DISCUSSION

This exploratory study aimed to understand the impact of Heifer's VBHCD intervention on civic and community engagement among women in Bihar, India. The study focused on civic and community engagement by length of participation (baseline and six, 12, and 24 months) and participant group type (OG vs POG). Specifically, the mean *civic engagement* scores for participants at 12 months duration in the program and participants who were part of a POG were significantly different than those at baseline or those who were not part of a group. The results suggested that duration of participation in Heifer's VBHCD program did affect participants' civic engagement for those who have participated for at least 12 months. Baseline participants new to VBHCD expressed lower attitudes toward civic engagement. Practically, given the context, this indicates that participants new to VBHCD were not as civically engaged within their community. This is consistent with previous research in resource constrained contexts (c.f. Aiyede, 2016) where individual survival strategies mediate civic engagement.

Similarly, baseline participants new to VBHCD had lower mean *community engagement* scores overall. The analysis indicates a statistically significant difference in community engagement activities between baseline and participants at 12 months in the project and between those not assigned to groups compared with those who are either part of a POG or OG. This makes sense given that participants would not have received most of the training within the first six months of participation as they were beginning to receive Heifer Cornerstones training, while the majority of participants are likely to have received all of their training by 12 months. On average, training seemed to be the most effective around 12 months, then declined thereafter. By 24 months, there was no statistical difference between baseline, six months, and 12 months for both civic and community engagement factors. Further research is needed to understand at what point civic and community engagement begins to wane post-VBHCD training, with particular attention to the interval between 12 and 24 months.

These civic and community engagement findings are consistent with other findings in the literature. For instance, participants at 12 months and those who are part of OGs or POGs were more civically engaged, consistent with findings from Casini et al. (2015) and Datta (2015). Moreover, the finding that improved mean civic engagement scores for participants at 12 months duration in the program were significantly different than those at baseline but not at 24 months duration aligns with findings by Casini et al. (2015). These findings support the changes in civic and community engagement activities among study participants over time. The results suggest that POGs may be more civically active in their community than OG members or those who have not yet formed groups.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

As with any research, this study has some limitations that should be considered. First, the data for this research was collected during the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the virus' widespread and infectious nature, the research team could not collect the data in person; therefore, a third-party local research team (enumerators) was hired to collect the survey and interview data. Although this local team was made up of trained professionals with previous experience in collecting survey and interview data, the authors held a series of training workshops via Zoom focused on collecting the data with integrity and anonymity. In addition, the authors held several debriefing sessions with the local

enumerators during the data collection period to address any field issues and to provide clarification on data collection procedures. Given these extra measures, the authors were confident with the quality of the data collected.

The VBHCD program started before the COVID-19 pandemic; however, data collection occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic, so participants would have faced lockdown challenges and limitations in engaging civically in their community. The COVID-19 pandemic is a critical event that created structural shifts in civic life that are just beginning to manifest. It is anticipated that COVID-19 increased poverty, limited economic activities, and created food shortages (UNICEF, 2020). Thus, a longitudinal analysis comparing this data collection timeframe to prior and subsequent timeframes would shed more light on how a critical environmental event may have influenced civic and community engagement among women-only SHGs. For instance, it is unknown if COVID-19 would have been the catalyst for enhanced civic and community engagement among this and other populations post-pandemic.

In addition, given the cross-sectional nature of the data, the comparisons between baseline and six, 12, and 24 months in this study only reflected changes at a single point in time. Additionally, the authors aggregated data based on duration of participation in the program and group type and could not compare participants at the individual level. Longitudinal data could not be collected due to a limited timeframe and issues with attrition. Future research should focus on collecting data over time across participants to understand changes in civic and community engagement at the individual level versus the group level. Ongoing research (see Mirivel, Thombre, ten Bensel, Leach, & Wood, 2023) attempts to disaggregate the data and analyze an individual's personal transformation journey.

Second, the research did not expressly address changes in civic and community engagement based on participants' caste. Given the rigid caste and gender disparities faced by the participants, future research will examine the impact of VBHCD on civic and community engagement by caste (SC and OBC). Specifically, research in that area will contribute to our understanding of how caste-based social hierarchy intersects with INGOs initiatives to shape outcomes for participants. This future line of inquiry will expressly integrate Dalit feminist literature (c.f. Rege, 2000; Arya, 2020) to illuminate "the complexities of Dalit women's experiences" (Paik, 2021, p. 127), and build on work by Soundararajan, Sharma, and Bapuji (2024), who argue that SC or Dalits continue to be excluded from participating in civic and community life. We acknowledge that the historical isolation and oppression of Dalits prevented them from collectively engaging to improve the local community. This future research will unpack the power differentials at the intersection of caste and gender, building on the interview data collected as part of the larger project.

Third, this research focused on women's only SHGs in a rural context. Thus, the findings may not be generalizable to the broader population. For example, the research could not say whether participants in mixed-gender SHGs or male-only SHGs would have different levels of civic and community engagement. Further comparison of the differences in civic and community engagement between mixed-gender SHGs or male-only SHGs could help uncover, as Desai and Joshi (2014) and others (cf. Lahiri-Dutt & Samanta, 2006) point out, through what mechanisms women remain historically excluded from civic life.

This exploratory research aimed to assess the efficacy of VBHCD's impact on participants' civic and community engagement relative to duration in the program and group type. Further research is necessary to confirm the factorial validity (Yong & Pearce, 2013) of the three factors that comprise civic and community engagement. Consistent with Costello and Osborne (2005), confirmatory factor analysis can ascertain if our factor structure is consistent across population subgroups and time-frames. For example, how is civic and community engagement mediated based on caste, and at what point between 12 and 24 months in the program does civic and community engagement begin to wane? Also, do subsequent groups started by POG members show the same variation in civic and community engagement activities?

Fourth, this research project takes an etic rather than an emic perspective. However, future research is needed to further explore Bihari women's phenomenological experience with civic and community engagement, including what counts as community engagement and what does not. Future research will explore this line of enquiry using in-depth interviews with women across the Bihar region. In addition, a historicized understanding of how SC or Dalits continue to be excluded from civic and community engagement activities needs further examination. Subsequent analysis that integrates Mezirow (1978) with Dalit feminism, could ask how personal transformation is mediated by caste, and therefore be sensitive to the nuance and complexity of power differentials among women.

Finally, future research needs to investigate the differences across castes more closely. In this study dataset, which is a cross-sectional sample, it is difficult to explain those differences with meaningful results. Longitudinal studies, however, can more accurately reveal the possible oppression and power dynamics across castes and time. The authors are currently analyzing longitudinal data from Bihar to shed light on those differences.

IMPLICATIONS

There are several theoretical and practical implications of this study. To date, no empirical research has focused on the impact of Heifer's VBHCD training on civic and community engagement, especially among women living in rural impoverished areas. This is the first study to examine VBHCDs impact on women across time and specific SHG groups. The findings indicate that civic and community engagement increases over time once Heifer participants undergo training on the 12 Cornerstones. Although further research is needed, Heifer field trainers and administrators need to note that participants demonstrate increased civic and community engagement.

Theoretically, the study contributes to understanding the conceptual connection between civic and community engagement and personal transformation. Personal transformation is the process by which individuals create profound change in themselves (Mezirow, 1978). These findings suggest that what may positively contribute to the individuals' degree of personal transformation is the extent to which they are engaged in civic life. This research initiates the theoretical conversation regarding whether increased civic and community engagement is the source or an outcome of personal transformation.

Second, nonprofit humanitarian organizations are increasingly under pressure to measure and demonstrate their effectiveness and impact (Carnochan, Samples, Myers, & Austin, 2014). Organizational

effectiveness typically includes improved service delivery for clients, increased efficiency and effectiveness for the organization, and increased judicious use of stakeholders' time and money. Research on nonprofit organizational effectiveness has tended to emphasize financial measures (Liket & Maas, 2015) while underemphasizing other factors, such as the social and community capabilities created and supported. This study offers an additional way for nonprofit organizations to measure the impact of their programming on their beneficiaries. On the face of it, Heifer's approach may resemble an economic transaction. Yet, the transactional approach, such as training in animal management and product processing, is complemented by a humanistic approach, including training in gender equality and women's empowerment, which facilitates civic and community engagement over time. Researchers know much less about nonprofit organizations' impact on beneficiaries' civic and community engagement, particularly those from marginalized communities or impoverished individuals. This study fills this gap by a) providing a framework for measuring impact and b) documenting an approach (VBHCD) that is having an impact on beneficiaries' civic and community engagement.

A first practical implication is related to the impact of the training. Based on the authors' analysis, the effects of the training wane after 12 months. Specifically, participants at 24 months show no significant group differences between participants at baseline and six months. The findings suggest that practitioners should offer additional training past 12 months to continue seeing positive results in civic and community engagement. Broadly, INGOs should assess when to withdraw from hands-on training to see whether additional time on the ground is necessary.

Second, international community development professionals can learn from VBHCD's holistic approach, which combines economic development with personal empowerment. VBHCD's approach offers several economic and income-generating trainings, such as animal and agricultural management, combined with support for gender equality and women's empowerment, which facilitates civic and community engagement. The holistic approach is in line with wrap-around services that include addressing multiple factors, such as caste and gender-based discrimination, that place families and women at risk (Carson & Chowdhury, 2018).

CONCLUSION

This study explored the impact of Heifer's VBHCD on civic and community engagement. Using data collected in Bihar, India, one of India's most impoverished districts, the results show that our instrument is valid and that VBHCD has a positive and significant impact on Heifer beneficiaries' civic and community engagement activities. In addition, Heifer's intervention leads to personal transformation. This article shows that civic and community engagement is integral to beneficiaries' personal transformation. As beneficiaries participate in VBHCD, they improve their lives and the lives of their community.

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ETHICS STATEMENT

Ethics approval was obtained by research ethics boards at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (# 20-154-R3).

NOTES

1. Cf. Aaker (2007) and De Vries (2011, 2012).
2. SEWA is an NGO based in India that utilizes the SHG model to help women achieve economic independence. SEWA, like other NGO programs, provides employment training and facilitates access to credit and other health and social services (Desai & Joshi, 2014).
3. Multidimensional poverty is a non-monetary measure of poverty used by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to capture overlapping deprivations in education, health, and overall living standards (NITI Aayog, 2021). It is used to account for biases in measures of poverty based solely on income. Alkire, Kanagaratnam, and Suppa (2018) argue that "poor people themselves define their poverty much more broadly to include lack of education, health, housing, empowerment, employment, personal security and more" (p. 4). The measure has been broadly applied in the international development context by the UNDP (NITI Aayog, 2021) in the Human Development Report (Alkire, Kanagaratnam, & Suppa, 2018).
4. The goal of this exploratory study is to assess aggregate changes in civic and community engagement among study participants. We acknowledge the significant contribution that Dalit Feminist Theory [QA: Theory?] has made to addressing gender-based inequality and power disparities among our participants. See for example the excellent writings of Paik (2021), Rege (2000), and Arya (2020).
5. SEWA is another example of a bundled rural community development activity.
6. The World Bank working paper "Measuring Social Capital: Integrated Questionnaire" was developed and designed to measure social capital at the national level. The instrument was piloted in different country settings with a focus on developing countries, making it applicable to our research project.
7. Adler and Goggin (2005) distinguish between the dimensions of civic engagement and community engagement, and outline several common indicators the measure the constructs.
8. We did not collect data on the caste of our enumerators; however, enumerators were both men and women.

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Inclusion Norms in Ontario Settlement Agencies as Workplaces: Between Prefiguration and Systemic Exclusion

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the issue of inclusivity within nonprofit organizations as workplaces, focusing on the perspective of immigrant frontline workers of the Ontario settlement sector. Using a community-based collaborative approach, 25 frontline workers were invited to describe their experiences of integration of differences at work, involvement in decision-making, and equitable working conditions. Eight managers from the same agencies were also interviewed to better understand the policies and practices in their organization. The semi-directed interviews revealed that, while most organizations successfully integrate differences, there are some significant limitations regarding the involvement of immigrant frontline workers in decision-making and fair employment practices. This demonstrates a persistent form of systemic exclusion at the heart of Canada's cultural mosaic.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet article traite de la question de l'inclusion au sein des organisations à but non lucratif en tant que milieux de travail, et ce, du point de vue des personnes travailleuses immigrantes de première ligne du secteur de l'aide à l'établissement en Ontario. En utilisant une approche de recherche communautaire collaborative, 25 personnes salariées de première ligne ont été invitées à décrire leurs expériences en matière d'intégration des différences au travail, de participation à la prise de décision et de conditions de travail équitables. Huit personnes cadres des mêmes organismes ont également été interrogées afin de mieux comprendre les politiques et les pratiques en place. Ces entretiens semi-dirigés ont révélé que, si la plupart des organismes parviennent à bien intégrer les différences, la participation des personnes travailleuses immigrantes de première ligne à la prise de décision et aux pratiques d'emploi équitables présente d'importantes lacunes. Ces résultats démontrent une forme persistante d'exclusion systémique au cœur de la mosaïque culturelle canadienne.

Keywords / Mots clés : settlement, settlement agencies, immigrants, inclusion, equity, EDI, community-based research / établissement, organismes d'aide à l'établissement, immigrants, inclusion, équité, EDI, recherche communautaire

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INTRODUCTION

While research on equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in the Canadian private sector is abundant (Klarsfeld, Ng, Booysen, Christiansen, & Kuvass, 2016; Kuptsch, Charest, Tomei, & Cyr, 2022), much less is known about the nonprofit sector. Recent evidence suggests that while the commitment to diversifying staff and leadership is taken seriously by Ontarian nonprofit organizations, the questions of equity and inclusion remain largely unaddressed (Gagnon, Cuckier, Olivier, & Ying Mo, 2024; McIsaac & Moody, 2014). Yet, equity, inclusion, and respect for workers’ rights are essential components of the *Decent Work Charter* initiated and promoted by the Ontario Nonprofit Network (2018). This begs the question: to what extent are community-based nonprofit organizations, as employers of a diverse workforce, sufficiently equipped to become inclusive workplaces?

Settlement service providers across Canada are not immune to these challenges. While most of their frontline staff consists of immigrants to Canada,[1] many settlement organizations struggle to implement their commitment to EDI as employers, especially when resources, time, and expertise are lacking (Day & Greene, 2008). Each new wave of refugees to Canada further exacerbates this predicament, as settlement agencies are pressured to hire more diverse frontline workers to meet client needs with sometimes little capacity to properly train and integrate these employees. Without the appropriate welcome, accompaniment, and support when challenges arise, there is a real danger of staff burnout and turnover in settlement agencies (Mukhtar, Dean, Wilson, Ghassemi, & Wilson, 2016).

This article addresses these issues through the perspective of managers and immigrant employees in the settlement sector in Ontario. In an exploratory manner, given the study’s small sample, the article focuses on the practices with the most impact on the inclusion experiences of frontline workers, most of whom are racialized women. In doing so, the authors identified several organizational norms that bring EDI to life, while also pointing out some of their limitations.

LITERATURE REVIEW: INCLUSION IN THE THIRD SECTOR AND SETTLEMENT AGENCIES

Diversity management is now a well-established field in the private sector, even though its effectiveness is highly debated (Dobbin & Kalev, 2022; Kalev, Dobbin, & Kelly, 2006). But what about the third sector? Most studies to date on diversity management in the nonprofit and voluntary sectors have focused on diversity in terms of board composition and the increased organizational performance that diverse boards enable (Weisinger, 2017; Weisinger, Borges-Méndez, & Milofsky, 2016). Little, however, is known about practices designed to foster workplace inclusion among diverse employees, particularly within contexts of significant financial and human resource constraints, such as the Canadian settlement sector.

Diversity and inclusion in the third sector

This literature review found only a handful of relevant studies focusing on employee perspectives of workplace inclusion in human-service-oriented organizations, including nonprofit hospital employees (Brimhall, 2019; Brimhall, Williams, Malloy, Piekunka, & Fannin, 2022), child welfare workers in the public sector (Brimhall, Lizano, & Mor Barak, 2014; Brimhall, Mor Barak, Hurlburt, McArdle, Palinkas, & Henwood, 2017; Hwang & Hopkins, 2012, 2015), and social workers

(Acquavita, Pittman, Gibbons, & Castellanos-Brown, 2009). These studies provide empirical evidence that a climate of inclusion can increase job satisfaction (Acquavita et al., 2009; Brimhall, 2019; Brimhall et al., 2014, 2022; Hwang & Hopkins, 2012, 2015), strengthen commitment to the workgroup and/or organization (Brimhall et al., 2022; Hwang & Hopkins, 2012, 2015), and reduce turnover (Brimhall et al., 2014; Hwang & Hopkins, 2012, 2015).

Empirical evidence regarding specific policies and initiatives that foster a climate of inclusion in community-based organizations is scarce and theoretically ambiguous. These practices include support for "high quality leadership interactions" (Brimhall et al., 2017, p. 233), leaders who invite, encourage, and value the input of others in decision-making (Brimhall, 2019), greater workplace diversity (Acquavita et al., 2009; Hwang & Hopkins, 2012, 2015), and organizational-level factors such as "social support" and "organizational diversity efforts" (Acquavita et al., 2009).

The scope of these studies is mainly limited to nonprofit boards and/or executive leadership. In this regard, they found strong evidence for formalizing diversity and inclusion efforts and embedding them in policies and practices such as recruitment to ensure accountability (Acquavita et al., 2009; Brown, 2002; Fredette, Bradshaw, & Krause, 2016; Solebello, Tschirhart, & Leiter, 2016), setting up a specific EDI task force or committee (Acquavita et al., 2009; Brown, 2002), or "mentorship programs, orientation practices, and socialization processes such as retreats and relationship-building rituals" (Fredette et al., 2016, p. 35). These aspects tell us little about the effectiveness of specific policies and practices that foster a climate of inclusion *as experienced by* racialized and minoritized employees.

Diversity and inclusion in the Canadian settlement sector

Inclusivity is one of the top values that inform settlement sector practices in Canada, along with respect, empowerment of newcomers, and cultural sensitivity (George, 2002). Many settlement agencies provide newcomer mentorship programs and workplace training to help other organizations create "immigrant-friendly workplaces" and "build intercultural competencies" (Ashton, Pettigrew, & Galatsanou, 2016, p. 75). This makes it undoubtedly one of the most culturally diverse sectors of Canadian society. Is this same commitment to foster inclusion among newcomers as clients also extended to employees who have experienced immigration? Are the settlement sectors' efforts to welcome and include newcomers within Canadian society at a macro level also replicated on a meso level, i.e., among employees within settlement organizations?

There is a growing body of literature about the structural constraints of Canadian nonprofit settlement agencies and the various ways they adapt their services to meet the needs of their diverse clients (Giwa & Chaze, 2018; Janzen, Brnjas, Cresswell, & Chapman, 2020; Senthanar, MacEachen, Premji, & Bigelow, 2020). However, we know little about the ways they manage and support their diverse workforces. This literature shows that inadequate, unstable, and restrictive funding, combined with mandatory program quotas, creates competition and distrust among settlement service organizations and staff burnout among frontline workers, particularly among small ethno-specific agencies (Mukhtar et al., 2016; Richmond & Shields, 2005). Settlement agencies may support inclusion, but they face systemic challenges and barriers that restrict their capacity to create it. These challenges have only increased since the end of the 1980s with the gradual implementation of

New Public Management. The adoption of this approach to running public service organizations imposed a neoliberal austerity agenda on settlement agencies characterized by a focus on efficiency, funding instability, reduced autonomy, and more rigid control by the state while offloading its responsibility onto communities and volunteers (Lowe, Richmond, & Shields, 2017).

Yet, these systemic pressures do not reflect the full breadth of experience of inclusion (or lack thereof) in the settlement sector. While we can expect inclusion based on culture and ethnicity to be prominent features of the sector, evidence shows that inclusion based on sexual (Giwa & Chaze, 2018) and religious diversity (Bramadat, 2014) is sometimes lacking. Beyond these social identities, we can interrogate the depth of the inclusion experience. Studies about the Ontario settlement sector (Bauder & Jayaraman, 2014; Türegün, 2013a) show that immigrant settlement counsellors are not always seen as influential stakeholders, but rather as an appropriate "means" to serve organizational "ends." A study on social inclusion of immigrants through recreation programs in Toronto (Forde, Lee, Mills, & Frisby, 2015) highlights this paradoxical double standard. The attributes that make immigrants valuable program volunteers—their multilingualism and cultural backgrounds—are the same attributes that exclude them from employment with the organization, mainly because of English language fluency requirements. It is thus important to open Pandora's box of inclusion in the settlement sector to explore the tension between utilitarianism and tokenism.[2]

In sum, there is a gap in the literature concerning what fosters a climate of inclusion in diverse third-sector organizations such as settlement agencies, where frontline workers are hired specifically for their *cultural and linguistic diversity*. How do these diverse organizations, which serve diverse populations, foster a climate of inclusion? Bolder still, can we conceive of these agencies as prefigurative spaces of inclusion? According to Yates (2015), to prefigure means "to anticipate or enact some feature of an alternative world in the present as though it has already been achieved" (p. 4). While prefiguration has been mostly studied in relation to political mobilization and activist movements (Ashton et al., 2016; Senthanar et al., 2020), the authors hypothesize that the settlement sector has lessons to teach about inclusion given its prominent place at the forefront of Canada's cultural mosaic. This article offers an empirical account of immigrant workers' subjective experiences of inclusion and the obstacles that prevent settlement organizations from living up to their social purpose.

THEORETICAL APPROACH: LOOKING AT EMERGING INCLUSION NORMS

This article is framed by the intersection of the sociology of social norms (Alter, 2018; Rubington & Weinberg, 2008) and the management of diversity in organizations (Ferdman, 2014; Nishii, Khattab, Shemla, & Paluch, 2018), seeking to understand both the practices that create greater organizational inclusion and the incomplete (and often contested) nature of such practices.

An interactionist sociology of the inclusion norm

Every institution creates norms that govern its social life in a way that fosters both collective learning and collective action (De Munck, 1999). As such, norms act as "grammar of social interactions" (Bicchieri, Muldoon, & Sontuoso, 2018, p. 1), defining what is acceptable or not in a group. From time to time, new norms can be introduced by "crusading reformers" (Becker, 1997, p. 147), challenging widespread societal ways of doing and thinking (e.g., challenging racist stereotypes), often

by aligning with social movements (e.g., Black Lives Matter). Social norms are inevitably associated with power. They are created by normalizing discourses of exclusion (Ponzoni, Ghorashi, & Van Der Raad, 2017). Acker (2006) illustrates this unevenly distributed power and the systematic disparities that come with it in the concept of inequality regimes that pervade the structure of organizations. Though they are seen as legitimate by the actors who reproduce them, these organizational regimes reinforce wider social norms (e.g., the sexual or racial division of labour). This begs the question: if we can think of organizations as spaces that reproduce inequality regimes, can they also become spaces that reinforce the social norms of diversity, equity, and inclusion?

While social movements continue to address discrimination and systematic disparities in society at large, the scholarly discourse on organizations moved to a more proactive concern with creating diverse, equitable, and inclusive environments (Shore, Cleveland, & Sanchez, 2018). This concern reflects a shift from challenging existing norms to the reinforcement of alternative ones, seen as more democratic. With the caveat that all norms, even the most democratic ones, produce standards that lead to exclusion (Dobusch, 2014, 2021), this article examines inclusion as a complex set of prefigurative norms. In prefigurative practice, the end becomes the means, and the level of inclusion of immigrant workers in these organizations prefigures the integration of newcomers into Canadian society.

Defining inclusion as a set of normative practices

Shore, Randel, Chung, Dean, Holcombe Ehrhart, and Singh (2011) argue that inclusion is the balance between “belongingness”—the need to be part of larger social groups—and uniqueness—the need to preserve a distinctive sense of self. In other words, workplace inclusion is “the degree to which an employee perceives that he or she is an esteemed member of the workgroup through experiencing treatment that satisfies his or her needs for belongingness and uniqueness” (Shore et al., 2011, p. 1265). Inclusion is neither assimilation (belongingness without uniqueness) nor tokenism (uniqueness without belongingness). As Ferdman (2014) points out, inclusion is something workers experience phenomenologically through characteristics such as feeling safe, involved and engaged, respected and valued, influential, authentic and whole, recognized and honoured. Inclusion can be experienced at multiple levels, such as within one’s own workgroup, in the relationship with one’s supervisor, through organizational practices and policies, and in one’s relationship with upper management (Ferdman, 2014; Mor Barak, 2022).

Although it is possible to measure inclusion at each of these levels, a growing number of scholars (Mor Barak, Lizano, Kim, Duan, Rhee, Hsiao, & Brimhall, 2016; Nishii, 2013; Nishii & Rich, 2014; Shore et al., 2018) prefer to look at the broader “climate of inclusion” that emerges from different normative practices. The authors agree with Nishii (2013) that such a climate is based on three dimensions: equitable employment practices, integration of differences, and inclusion in decision-making. In short, an inclusive work environment rests on whether “individuals of all backgrounds—not just members of historically powerful identity groups—are fairly treated, valued for who they are, and included in core decision-making” (Nishii, 2013, p. 1754). From this conceptualization stems the question at the heart of this research: which practices do foster a climate of inclusion from the perspective of immigrant frontline workers in Ontario settlement agencies? What “prefigurative” norms do these practices promote and on whose terms? And what are the limits of these same norms?

METHODOLOGY: A COMMUNITY-BASED PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

The design of this research is based on a mixed methodology, combining a heuristically administered Linkert scale (Nishii, 2013) with semi-structured interviews. The following explains the rationale for adopting this method in community-based research, as well as the sampling and analysis strategy.

A collaborative approach

Community-based participatory research is a problem-driven and change-oriented research approach. It involves partnerships with community organizations based on their specific needs (Leavy, 2017). Although the level of community involvement can vary greatly from one research design to the next, the engagement of the beneficiaries as co-researchers constitutes a distinctive feature. This creates a different research dynamic, where the aim is not just to contribute to the creation of scientifically valid knowledge, but to building community capacity (Caine & Mill, 2015).

This research emerged from conversations with leaders and members of the National Newcomer Navigation Network (N4), a pan-Canadian network of over 350 organizations assisting newcomers. In the wake of activism motivated by racist violence throughout North America, not to mention the COVID-19 outbreaks that disproportionately affect migrant and racialized populations, many N4 member organizations made public statements condemning racism and other forms of systemic discrimination. While these pledges were an important first step, the N4 team realized that health and settlement organizations frequently struggled to implement their commitments to EDI. The authors launched this project in October 2022 with a "coordination circle" that met on average once a month. Contributors also met three times with an "advisory circle" made up of three people with in-depth knowledge of the Ontario settlement sector.

Sampling: Organizations, workers, and managers

After customary ethics approval, our main research partner reached out to 31 Ontario-based settlement organizations identified as community partners who showed an interest in anti-racism and equity work. Eight organizations working primarily in English agreed to participate. They all adhere to EDI principles to various degrees: cultural diversity among their staff is a given, they are committed to accommodating workers' needs, they offer diversity training, most have diversified panels when it comes to interviews, and most have a diversity committee. Table 1 summarizes our organizational sampling.

Table 1. Description of partner settlement organizations

Organization	Size	Region	Demographic	Ethno-specific	Diversity committee
Org A	Medium (100–500 employees)	Southwestern Ontario	Large urban population centre (100,000+)	No	Yes
Org B	Small (4–99 employees)	Eastern Ontario	Large urban population centre (100,000+)	Yes	Yes
Org C	Small (4–99 employees)	Northern Ontario	Medium population centre (30,000–99,999)	No	Yes

Table 1 (continued)

Organization	Size	Region	Demographic	Ethno-specific	Diversity committee
Org D	Small (4–99 employees)	Northwestern Ontario	Large urban population centre (100,000+)	No	(Yes)*
Org E	Small (4–99 employees)	Greater Toronto Area	Large urban population centre (100,000+)	Yes	No
Org F	Small (4–99 employees)	Southwestern Ontario	Small population centre (1,000–29,999)	No	No
Org G	Large (500+ employees)	Greater Toronto Area	Large urban population centre (100,000+)	No	Yes
Org H	Small (4–99 employees)	Greater Toronto Area	Large urban population centre (100,000+)	No	Yes

* This organization has a "Fun Committee," which acts more or less like a diversity committee.

Each partner circulated a flyer to their settlement employees inviting immigrant members of their frontline staff to participate in a research interview via Microsoft Teams. To be recruited, workers had to be born outside of Canada and had to be working with immigrants, refugees, and/or asylum seekers in an Ontario-based settlement agency for at least six months. In total, we interviewed 25 frontline workers, 21 women (84%), and four men (16%), ranging in age from 18 to 65 (43 years old on average). Eighteen (72%) identified as racialized in the Canadian context. One identified as belonging to a sexual minority (4%) and two reported a disability (8%). Twenty-one had a university degree (84%), 12 of which were master's degrees (48%). Most have been living in Canada for more than a decade (12 years on average) and working extensively in the settlement sector (eight years on average). Employees' job titles varied, with the most common being Settlement Worker and Settlement Counsellor.

The recruitment criteria for managers were they must have been working for an Ontario-based settlement agency for at least 12 months and have been nominated by the organization for the interview. In total, eight managers were interviewed, seven women (87.5%) and one man (12.5%), ranging in age from 41 to 58 (50 years old on average). One (12.5%) identified as racialized in the Canadian context. None identified as belonging to a sexual minority or having a disability. All had a university degree, three of which were master's degrees (37.5%). Five were born in Canada and most have been working extensively in the settlement sector (12 years on average). Managers' job titles included Human Resources Manager, General or Senior Manager, and Executive Director.

Mixed data collection tools

Given the exploratory nature of this research, we decided to cross-reference quantitative data (to administer a scale) and qualitative data (to have a conversation about their answers) obtained via a single online interview. We used a slightly adapted short version of the climate for inclusion scale developed by Lisa H. Nishii (2013) (available in Appendix I). Based on a five-point Likert scale rang-

ing from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree) administered through a semi-directed interview, this survey focused on the inclusion climate as it was lived by immigrant frontline workers and managers. Although the same scale was used for all interviews, the follow-up questions were slightly different for workers and managers. In the case of workers, questions focused on their subjective experience of inclusion. In the case of managers, questions focused on understanding their organizational practices for inclusion.

To organize the anonymized data collected from the interviews, the authors conducted a thematic content analysis of verbatim using NVivo (Bardin, 2013). Consistent with Nishii's definition of inclusion, our coding aimed to identify practices that promoted or hindered the integration of differences, participation in decision-making, and the perception of fair employment practices. As such, we categorized practices as either promoting a climate of inclusion or leading to a climate of exclusion. In keeping with the inductive spirit of qualitative data coding (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), consideration was given to practices that did not fit into this initial grid. To promote coding consistency, a single person carried out the coding under the supervision of the principal investigator. The analysis consisted of tracing the central inclusion norms as expressed by workers and managers.

RESEARCH RESULTS: FOUR EMERGING INCLUSION NORMS

Based on thematic coding of the data, the authors identified four norms that most managers and frontline workers aspire to. These norms, which also prefigure what an inclusive workplace can be, are: 1) opening spaces for the expression of cultural differences; 2) fostering positive relationships; 3) empowering workers; and 4) developing transparent and equitable employment practices. This article describes these inclusion norms and the practices that bring them to life, but also some of the obstacles to their implementation. When relevant, the results of the Nishii scale are also referenced (see Appendix 1).

Welcoming, celebrating, and accommodating differences

A first emerging norm is the creation of a culture of tolerance where everyone can openly live their identities, especially their cultural and religious ones. An overwhelming majority—22 frontline workers (88%) and all eight managers (100%), according to scale results—see their workplace as a non-threatening environment in which they can reveal their "true" selves. Eleven workers (44%) and four managers (50%) spontaneously referred to this ability to include and celebrate cultural differences as one of the distinctive features of settlement agencies. For some, this collective openness is the result of the blending of cultures in a context of mutual acceptance: "no matter where you are from, you always end up interacting with very different cultures and backgrounds, beliefs and faiths" (IFW-1). For other interviewees, this spirit of cultural tolerance is more than an unplanned outcome of a diverse demographic; it is the result of an organizational strategy. One participant explained:

> But I think my organization is very open and you can come and wear any dress that is culturally appropriate for you in terms of religion or other things. Yes, I think this organization is really fair. We have even a prayer room. I'm not Muslim but have some colleagues who are Muslims. So, everything is here designed now to help and understand and let us be whatever we are in terms of religion or culture. (IFW-3)

Many means are deployed within organizations to create a multicultural atmosphere of tolerance and celebrate the uniqueness of diverse cultures. Among them, we find: being able to speak their mother tongue, bring or cook their own culturally appropriate food, wear their own culturally appropriate clothing, share music or films, and celebrate holidays (such as Ramadan) or important moments (such as Black History Month) with colleagues.

This openness to cultural otherness extends to the issue of accommodating diverse needs. Twenty-two frontline workers (92%) and all managers shared with us that their organization goes to great lengths to accommodate the needs of their employees. In practice, the accommodation process can take many forms, both formal and informal: cultural and religious (prayer time and space, time off for celebrations, remote working and flexible schedule during Ramadan, offering *halal* or vegetarian options), family based (adjusting work time to children's schedule, granting longer time off for weddings abroad), and mental health and physical health (tracking food restrictions, adjusting workload to health condition, adjusting work time for medical appointments, meeting accessibility needs).

While many employees pointed out the importance of multicultural openness and answering workers' needs, a minority of employees considered this openness to diversity to be incomplete or incongruent. One important example is the experience of employees adhering to cultural practices that conflict with Canadian cultural norms. For example, five racialized employees (20%) talked about a culture of assimilation in their organizations. One worker expressed this point very clearly:

> So this [assimilationist] mold is very much a like-minded mold. I think our organization prefers the newcomer employees to be ones that are willing to … bring forth the favorable parts of their identity. Right? Like so, for example, if you don't mind drinking alcohol or being in a bar or, you know, eating certain types of foods and stuff they don't like … I don't feel that it's as much accepted with people that may have any type of restriction in their life. It just doesn't fit that mold. They want people that can be completely super flexible and open … . (IFW-4)

These employees were clearly wary of the expectation to engage in certain ways of speaking or behaving. They had to assimilate to the "Canadian token norm" (IFW-4) and show only the parts of themselves "acceptable" to the white Canadian-born majority. In other words, they faced a paradoxical (and racist) injunction: assimilate yourself—"[be] the right kind of migrant" (IFW-4)—and then you can fully be yourself at work.[3]

The same kind of shortcomings are seen with accommodation. As three frontline workers (12%) noted, the effectiveness of policies is by no means guaranteed since their interpretation is subject to the goodwill of supervisors. Furthermore, accommodation is a tool that can easily be instrumentalized according to managers' values, personal affinities, or current organizational priorities to assist some and stigmatize others.

Fostering positive relationships

A second norm is the quality of the relationships that can make the organization feel like a community or a family. This unexpected norm (we did not explicitly ask about it) reflects the strong attachment many of the frontline workers have to their workplace. When asked to complete the scale,

18 frontline workers (72%) and all the managers said that employees in their workplace are valued for who they are as people, not just for the jobs that they fill. Fourteen employees (56%) referred to the open-mindedness of their colleagues and 11 (44%) to the open-mindedness of their leader. Open-mindedness was described as the tendency to listen to and respect others, to show humility and curiosity, and to demonstrate an encouraging attitude.

A fundamental consequence of this open-mindedness and concern for the wellbeing of others is that people feel a strong sense of community and belongingness. Twelve employees (48%) and one manager (12.5%) referred to their colleagues as a work family or to their workplace as a friendly environment because of their understanding, care for, and respect for each other, both professionally and personally. As one worker mentioned:

> We have this like family culture at work, I would say, and that I think it has provided that safe space. Some of us come, you know, from different backgrounds. Parents, no parents. You know, refugees and non-refugee … So we all are able to understand a little bit about everyone and it just humbles everyone. And then that's how we're able to kind of be open amongst each other and be our true selves. (IFW-19)

This diversity contributes to a shared understanding of what it means to be an immigrant and makes the environment comfortable (something even more meaningful for newcomers who left a large part of their social network behind them). The settlement agency becomes a "second family" where co-workers "are always there for each other to help each other" (IFW-23).

One strong indicator of that family spirit is the extension of relationships beyond work-related interactions. Nineteen employees (76%) reported some level of informal social inclusion. The main form of social inclusion was socializing during lunch hour or outside work, and going for walks together during the lunch break. Some organizations have planned potlucks, but most socialization seems to be informal. Several employees socialize with colleagues outside of work, going out for dinner or having dinners at each other's houses, hosting a farewell gathering for a colleague, going to the beach, or camping together. One worker summed it up as follows: "Part of the reason I don't leave this job is because I made my strong friends in this job" (IFW-16).

Opportunities for workers to collaborate both as a team and with other teams also seemed to strengthen inclusion. Six workers (24%) highlighted how collaborative work made them feel like an insider. They described this as sharing information and ideas with colleagues, working in teams to serve clients, or participating in working groups. One mentioned that this collaborative spirit is cross-departmental and it is possible because they value regular and "strong communication" (IFW-2). Another important element of that spirit is that people feel supported by their colleagues in work-related tasks, especially when they bump into more difficult issues. Seven frontline workers (28%) told us they could share their needs not only with their supervisor but also with their team members who offer solutions, tips, advice, encouragement, and support. In one worker's words: "Sometimes we don't know each other in terms of cultures, but we learn from each other and every day we learn new things from our colleagues, no matter the cultures" (IFW-14). This collaboration is made possible by the shared commitment to offering the best services to newcomers.

Unsurprisingly, however, not every employee thinks of their workplace as a family. This seemingly positive metaphor can have a paternalist or assimilationist connotation (e.g., employees are like children, and good kids do not rock the boat). It can also be seen as a way of compensating for precarious working conditions and low wages with the ethos of mission-driven caring work (Baines, Cunningham, Campey, & Shields, 2014). In a context of rising demands, insufficient resources, and unstable employment structures, framing settlement work as "being primarily a 'labour of love' which is seen to be a reward in and of itself" (Baines et al., 2014, p. 86) can be a dangerous idea. As such, when filling the scale, three frontline workers (12%) disagreed that employees in their workplace are valued for who they are as people, not just for the jobs that they fill. Four (16%) neither agreed nor disagreed. In the follow-up question, five employees (20%) mentioned they did not feel comfortable expressing ideas, opinions, or perspectives that were different from their workgroup or supervisor while two participants (8%) talked about fear of reprisals if their views challenged those of the dominant culture. One worker expressed it as such: "I don't feel that all staff here are created equally or are treated equally. … It seems that basically anybody who applauds the organization and doesn't have any points for improvement or criticism tends to have, you know, a voice that's a little bit more heard" (IFW-4). Some frontline workers felt they had to fight hard to have their voice heard; others felt pressured to go along with the group.

This difficulty in expressing oneself may also have a cultural component. Two frontline workers (8%) note that internalized cultural codes are sometimes at play. For example, in some cultures, power imbalances related to age or managerial status call for respectful obedience and keeping quiet (Hofstede, 1984). In others, being blunt and making your point, even with your boss, is the norm. A worker framed it as follows:

> Canadian culture in nature is a bit conservative. If you ask someone if they want something or not, or if you have an idea and the person wants to say no, they never say no in your face. They say: "Oh, I'll think about it." In some cultures, including my culture, when someone says, "Oh, I'll think about it," it is partial agreement. In the Canadian context, it is mainly a no. (IFW-22)

This shows how different communication styles and cultural codes can also lead to misunderstandings and a lack of inclusion.

Though cultural differences can also act as obstacles to the informal socialization central to building a family-like environment, the biggest obstacles to this informal socialization come from management itself or from work conditions (such as teleworking). Six frontline workers (24%) explained that they did not often socialize with other co-workers, especially when they are "constantly reminded that, you know, your lunch is only an hour. So, if you don't have time to go, don't go to that type of thing" (IFW-1). For another worker, it was a financial issue: "Our income is very limited, and people are at a point where it's either a beer or beef" (IFW-21).

This lack of meaningful engagement with colleagues also translates into what a minority of workers perceived as discrimination—most often racial micro-aggressions[4] (Sue et al., 2019). Two employees (8%) reported experiences of discrimination from colleagues, four from managers (16%), and two from clients (8%). For example, discrimination from colleagues may mean being excluded from

conversations by colleagues who are speaking their native language(s) or not being taken seriously in their role. When it comes to managers, the issue is often about one's ideas not being considered (yet the same idea, coming from someone from the dominant culture, is accepted), not being invited to some conversations when others are, having to fight to be heard when others' ideas are solicited, or being reprimanded for speaking up. Positive relationships in the workplace and a family ethos prove insufficient to compensate for the systemic precarious conditions of low pay, instability, stress, and an inability to challenge management (Baines et al., 2014).

Empowering workers

Another norm that emerged during the interviews was empowering workers. This dimension of inclusion goes beyond welcoming and celebrating employees' unique diverse characteristics. According to the scale, 18 frontline workers (72%) and seven managers (87.5%) reported that leadership actively seeks input from all their employees. The managers all stressed the diverse means they used to seek this feedback, whether it be through formal survey tools, regular staff meetings or all-staff gatherings, one-on-one meetings, working groups, information sessions, or emails. Two managers (25%) mentioned that within their organization, frontline staff are seen as experts in their domain, therefore their input is highly valued. Twelve frontline workers (48%) stressed that management actively sought their input and valued their perspectives as a main source of client information, seeking their thoughts and ideas to improve service delivery, inviting their feedback on policy drafts, and involving them in strategic planning meetings.

But what is this input actually used for? According to the scale, 16 employees (64%) and six managers (75%) consider that all employees' insights are used to rethink or redefine work practices. On the one hand, managers pointed out that employees were influencing decisions in the organization. The examples they offered include changes to policies and procedures regarding staff leave, benefits, hybrid work arrangements, mental health training, compensation review, and unionization. On the other hand, only eight employees (32%) mentioned that their feedback was used to influence decisions and/or strategic planning. One of the preferred mechanisms for this exchange of ideas is the working group. As one frontline worker expressed: "I've been a part of two or three working groups since joining and honestly it is open to all. … It's nice to know that you're allowed to be a part of, you know, whatever decision-making that is going to long-term affect the organization" (IFW-20). In the long run, this practice of seeking input is important since it demonstrates to workers that their knowledge, perspectives, and ideas are valued.

A corollary to consultation is the autonomy granted to employees. According to the scale results, 15 employees (60%) and six managers (75%) said that all employees could make work-related decisions on their own. These answers show that the degree of autonomy varies greatly according to the nature of the job and the range of decisions available to frontline workers. The examples that managers and employees gave included staff being allowed to manage their own schedules and meetings, and to determine how best to serve clients within the organizations' ethics and policy guidelines. Frontline workers appreciate the absence of micromanagement. One said they felt free to take risks, while another commented that they felt trusted: "You know, she [their supervisor] makes us feel like we are adults. No micromanaging. This is a wonderful, wonderful thing that I

found in this job" (IFW-8). Two managers added that clearly defining staff roles and providing clarity regarding expectations encourages autonomy by helping inform employees of the area(s) they have ownership over.

This sense of agency is finally fostered through the development of each individual employee. According to the scale, 17 frontline workers (68%) and all the managers believe that their organization invests in the development of all its employees. In fact, it appears that all the organizations studied provide a basic level of mandatory job-related training for their employees, covering topics such as EDI, mental health, trauma informed care, positive spaces, etc. Twenty-one workers (84%) reported having transparent and equitable access to these training opportunities. Five managers (62.5%) mentioned they provide mentoring and job shadowing to help new employees learn and develop. Beyond mandatory job-related training, some organizations are investing in their employees with funding as well as time and flexibility to pursue additional professional development opportunities. Three managers (37.5%) and three frontline workers (12%) said their organizations provided employees with the space to pursue further education (e.g., doing courses from the office, time to work on certification, taking three months' leave to complete a master's program).

This workplace empowerment norm is not experienced the same way by all employees. According to the scale, not all employees feel properly consulted and listened to—one (4%) disagreed with the idea that all employees' input is actively sought, and six (24%) were undecided; six (24%) disagreed that their opinions influenced decisions, and three (12%) were undecided. In the qualitative interview, three workers (12%) referred to decisions made by managers and passed on to staff, without explanation or discussion (e.g., shutting down a program without talking to employees first). Nine employees (36%) mentioned that while their ideas may be solicited, they are not necessarily included, which is quite disappointing since they run the programs every day. Two racialized employees (8%) mentioned a fear of "backlash" and reprimand preventing them from offering their input and genuine feedback to help the organization. In their experience, voices that criticize the organization are often silenced: they are labelled as "difficult" or "disrespectful" (IFW-13) for speaking out.

The same limit to the norm of employee empowerment comes into play when we look at their room for maneuvering and making decisions independently. Ten frontline workers (40%) did not agree (three [12%] disagreed, seven [28%] were undecided) with the scale statement that in their workplace all employees were empowered to make work-related decisions on their own. During the interview, nine (36%) participants mentioned having experienced some level of micromanagement and a lack of freedom in how their work was done. They felt their hands were tied and that they did not have the liberty to think outside the box. Three employees (12%) felt constrained by time and resources due to a high-volume workload with many competing priorities, and four (16%) cited leadership close-mindedness. Two managers (25%) acknowledged this lack of autonomy coming from hierarchical structures or a bilateral loss of trust that led to unionization. In fact, front-line workers' autonomy over decision-making remains mainly at managers' discretion since unions are not common in the settlement sector (Baines et al., 2014). In this sample, only two organizations are unionized.

Finally, a significant number of employees reported unequal access to professional development. According to the scale, two employees (8%) disagreed with the idea that their workplace invested

in the development of all its employees, and six (24%) neither agreed nor disagreed. During interviews, five frontline workers (20%) mentioned a lack of professional development opportunities at their organization (e.g., due to the location of their agency) and three (12%) mentioned a lack of transparency in opportunity sharing (e.g., training falling back on employees' proactiveness). Among the practices of exclusion from training opportunities frontline workers also mentioned: being declined training without a reason, lack of schedule flexibility, lack of funding for training, and lengthy approval processes for new training programs. This lack of opportunities is not happening in a vacuum. Funding for training has been increasingly reduced under the austerity agenda of the New Public Management model, which disproportionately affects the many workers with precarious employment status in settlement agencies (Lowe, Richmond, & Shields, 2017).

Developing transparent and equitable human resource practices

The last inclusion norm emerging from this study pertains to transparent and equitable human resource practices. When asked to fill out the scale, 18 frontline workers (72%) found the hiring practices of their employer fair, three disagreed (12%), and four (16%) were undecided. During the qualitative interview, 17 (68%) acknowledged they were hired based on their credentials (including foreign credentials), previous experience (including non-Canadian experience), and/or transferable skills. Among them, eight (32%) were grateful that their relevant experience (including volunteering in the settlement sector) played a significant role. One frontline worker with a background in business explained: "So when I was hired, I don't think it was for my credential … I'm not a social worker. I didn't have experience. But I really have a genuine love for helping people. … So, like, I was always [an] advocate or [a] volunteer with the organization helping newcomers" (IFW-3).

For their part, all managers expressed confidence in the fairness of their recruitment, mainly because it was based on the assessment of skills, competencies, and previous experiences rather than bias. Five of them (62.5%) mentioned that this process has been evolving in recent years to be approached with the EDI lens. This means that job openings are formally posted on multiple channels, job postings are worded sensitively, interview accommodations are offered (if needed), and interviews are conducted by hiring panels. Two managers (25%) went a step further and made the interview process an intentional opportunity to build an inclusive climate in their agency, either through adding a question about EDI or a human rights pledge.

The equity of the promotion process seems to be a much trickier business, including from the point of view of the managers themselves. When surveying these managers with the scale, only four of them (50%) found their promotion process to be fair, three (37.5%) neither agreed nor disagreed, and one (12.5%) said the question did not apply given the size of their organization. That said, according to five of them (62.5%), what made it fair was the formality of the process (having a job description, an inside and outside job posting, an interview, etc.). Surveying workers with the Nishii scale, only 11 (44%) agreed that the promotion process in their settlement agency was fair, eight (32%) disagreed, and six (24%) were undecided. During the qualitative interview, 17 workers (68%) saw some fairness in the process since they knew immigrant frontline workers who were promoted to leadership positions within the organization. Seeing immigrants becoming managers, and even the CEO in one big organization, shows frontline workers that promotion is possible.

Since promotion opportunities are quite limited in the settlement sector (especially in smaller organizations), salary remains one of the major symbols of recognition for their work. Yet, settlement agencies depend on grants and funding from donor agencies, including Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). According to the scale, only four managers (50%) felt their organization was offering "equal pay for equal work," three (37.5%) were undecided, and one (12.5%) disagreed. As part of efforts to create more equitable salaries, two managers explained that their organizations (25%) had engaged in a regular external review of pay equity and were compliant with the *Ontario Pay Equity Act*. Though it has been challenging to keep pace with the rate of inflation and the settlement sector lately, three managers (37.5%) said their organization was still reviewing salaries annually; one was following the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants' salary survey, the others were doing their own market research. Employees were even less optimistic when it comes to salaries. Only 10 (41.7%) agreed with the scale statement about "equal pay for equal work," 11 disagreed (45.8%), and three (12.5%) were undecided. In the qualitative follow-up, seven workers (28%) mentioned that salaries were fair given that everyone received the same amount based on their seniority, contractual status, and position.

While transparent and equitable human resource practices are important factors in fostering a climate of inclusion, putting this norm into practice poses some limitations in the settlement sector. For instance, not everyone experienced a fair hiring process. Four frontline workers (16%) mentioned that their non-Canadian credentials were not recognized in their agency. Three managers (37.5%) and five frontline workers (20%) reported that immigrant frontline workers were often hired primarily for their language skills, not necessarily their qualifications, especially when there was a linguistic shortage. Four employees (16%) referred to this practice as tokenism, i.e., hiring people from a certain racial, ethnic, or linguistic group as a diversity *façade*. One interviewee recalled this: "after the introduction of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion department, they were able to hire a black man as a manager of a small department. And they ticked the box" (IFW-21).

The same kind of limits to fair human resource practices can be seen in promotion practices. Six employees (24%) and three managers (37.5%) mentioned the lack of a clear promotion process or significant loopholes in the process, resulting in the promotion being at the discretion of senior management. Such process is hence biased in favour of unwritten criteria, such as familiarity with the organization, supervisor's opinion, seniority (which is then often synonymous with whiteness) or belongingness to a certain group (in the case of ethno-specific organizations). One manager explained: "The thing about this process that is challenging is [that] it's not the best person that gets the job. It's the person who meets the kind of basic minimum requirements who has the seniority" (MNG-3). Even in organizations that do have a formal promotion process, five workers (20%) and two managers (25%) mentioned that the process was far from neutral. In addition, according to nine workers (36%) and two managers (25%), advancement opportunities for newcomers are limited because of a lack of recognized credentials (e.g., a Canadian degree), language skills (e.g., a certain level of English proficiency), a lack of specific identity (e.g., belonging to an ethnic or religious group in ethno-specific or confessional agencies), or a narrow vision of their capabilities (e.g., thinking an immigrant cannot lead outside the settlement unit). For sure, such bias can be a cause of great frustration for talented and overqualified frontline workers.

Finally, the issue of equitable salaries is probably the most burning and complex one, since it does not entirely depend on the agencies themselves (Mukhtar et al., 2016; Richmond & Shields, 2005). Equity is itself a difficult concept (Bernstein, Bulger, Salipante, & Weisinger, 2020). One manager explained that salaries and benefits may be considered "equal" in terms of the same pay being offered for the same pay grade (or job title), but they were not equitable based on the nature and scope of work within one organization or compared with other agencies doing similar work (MNG-1). Another manager illustrates the kind of paradoxical headaches that may come with equity in a big organization: "Every time we would have been able to increase our salaries [as a unit] because the funder supported that, our organization said, 'no,' because then we're not equitable. Then that means [that in] our government-funded programs [by IRCC], their staff [could] get more money than our childcare people [in another unit]…" (MNG-8). The outcome is a high turnover rate of settlement workers since they can get better paid elsewhere in the settlement sector.

Aside from the equity problems faced by managers, the workers themselves raised the issue of injustice caused by their wages. Six employees (24%) and three managers (37.5%) felt salaries were inadequate compared with other organizations. Seven employees (28%) mentioned they felt underpaid for the nature and volume of the work they did compared with others who did similar work, i.e., being mental health workers, engaged in emotionally distressing work, dealing with the "dark side of life" (IFW-8). Finally, six workers (24%) and one manager (12.5%) saw the wages as unfair because salaries did not provide a decent standard of living, particularly in the context of soaring inflation. While many felt highly invested in and indebted to their settlement agencies, their very poor salaries were forcing them to re-evaluate their work future.

DISCUSSION: THE SYSTEM AT PLAY BEHIND INCOMPLETE INCLUSION NORMS

This article describes the norms and practices of workplace inclusion in the Ontario settlement sector by paying particular attention to the voices of frontline workers. What emerges is a mixed picture, where certain norms seem strongly institutionalized (most notably the celebration of differences and the valuing of mutually supportive relationships), while others seem unevenly implemented (most notably involvement in decision-making and fair HR processes). These norms and practices are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Summary of inclusion norms and practices in the Ontario settlement sector

Norms	Openness to differences	Positive relationships	Workers' empowerment	Equitable HR practices
Inclusive practices	Celebrating differences	Caring for people as friends or family	Enabling employee influence on decision-making	Hiring based on credentials, experience, and skills
	Accommodating cultural and religious needs	Fostering workplace collaboration	Giving employees autonomy	Fair promotion practices
			Investing in employee development	Fair salaries and benefits
Exclusive practices	Assimilationist cultural expectations	Lack of safety and care	Not incorporating employee input	Utilitarian and token hires
	Individualization of accommodation	Discrimination and lack of support	Micromanagement and lack of autonomy	Biased promotion practices
			Unequal access to training opportunities	Unequitable salaries

We can now return to our initial question: can these settlement organizations be seen as prefiguring an inclusive workplace for newcomers? We believe that the answer to this question is partly yes. Some of the dynamics described so far illustrate a workplace where it is possible to bring "one's whole self to work" (Ferdman, 2014, p. 42), while others illustrate dynamics of exclusion and marginalization pertaining to Canadian society in general.

Dynamics prefigurating an inclusive workplace

Three key points need to be highlighted: settlement agencies 1) intentionally hire people from all cultures dedicated to the common good; 2) are committed to celebrating and accommodating differences; 3) are quite successful in creating a supportive environment. First, the importance of diversity does not need to be demonstrated within the settlement agencies under study: its value is self-evident. A survey of the Toronto settlement sector in 2006 showed that 86 percent of settlement workers were women, 75 percent were newcomers, and 63 percent were racialized, which shows intersectional dimensions of diversity (Wilson, 2006). In this present study Ontario-based sample, 84 percent of frontline workers self-identified as women and 72 percent considered themselves racialized. Clearly, newcomers' diverse languages and cultural backgrounds are inescapable employment assets for settlement agencies (Türegün, 2013b). The managers interviewed spoke about intentionally hiring newcomers because they valued their non-Canadian expertise and cultural backgrounds. This example of the value of diversity and its alignment with the mission of the agencies to contribute to the integration of immigrants is an example of prefiguration.

Second, celebrating religious and cultural differences has the virtue of recognizing that cultures are different from one another and that accommodations are a way of honouring the rights of immigrants in their adopted country (Haq, 2016). Since the enactment of Canada's Multicultural Act in 1988, multiculturalism has been a marker of cultural identity but remains nevertheless a fragile, contested ideal (Bilge, 2012; Hiranandani, 2012). Frontline workers in settlement agencies come from minoritized groups whose voices and contributions are too often overlooked or tokenized. Evidence of the norm of empowerment in settlement agencies shows the impact of fully valuing, engaging, and developing the capabilities of frontline workers as respected experts in their field.

Third, positive relationships emerge as the intentional commitment of many frontline workers to engage with colleagues in a caring, curious, and open-minded way. This commitment leads to spontaneous positive dynamics, which can be supported by creating opportunities for collaboration, mentorship, and socialization. Even though the metaphor of the family may not always have positive connotations, employees used it to describe being an insider, being unconditionally accepted as a whole person in an interconnected web of caring relationships. Feelings of inclusion and "insider" status due to good relationships with colleagues are some of the factors that lead to increased employee retention and reduced turnover (Brimhall et al., 2014; Hwang & Hopkins, 2012, 2015). This is also an example of prefiguration.

Dynamics contributing to systemic forms of exclusion

Important limitations to the norms of inclusion in the settlement agencies we studied are reflective

of broader systemic racism and exclusion in Canadian society. Three dynamics include: 1) frontline workers having to adapt to the unwritten rules of the Canadian dream; 2) being caught in a racialized organizational hierarchy; and 3) becoming a means to economic ends, doing underpaid care work.

First, the ideas of tokenism or assimilationist workplaces, although raised only by a few participants, are representative of the broader difficulties of multiculturalism in Canada. According to Shore et al. (2011), an assimilationist culture does not balance the need for uniqueness and the need for belonging characteristic of inclusion. Typically, managers are representative of the dominant culture, and they have certain expectations that immigrant frontline workers abide by Canadian norms, values, and behaviours without a critical lens for examining those norms and values. There are thus three problems with this partial integration of differences: 1) room is made only for differences that do not come in conflict with dominant norms, 2) the hegemonic power of the white norms is not to be questioned, and 3) people have to comply to these norms if they are to be successful (Grimes, 2002; Kang, DeCelles, Tilcsik, & Jun, 2016). This danger is omnipresent in the agencies that welcome newcomers, despite their commitment to integration.

Second, the way diversity is distributed in the settlement sector shows a hierarchical structure. A survey of the Ontario Nonprofit Sector in 2013 showed that despite its diverse workforce, the sector was less diverse in its leadership (McIsaac & Moody, 2014), an issue arising from systemic forms of exclusion in the larger Canadian society. While frontline workers have a certain degree of autonomy in how they do their work, their feedback is not always integrated into the larger functioning of the organization, which shows that minoritized workers are often seen as means to an end rather than influential stakeholders (Liu & Guo, 2021). They experience frustration at being caught between wanting to respond to the needs of clients, which they understand better, and following the authority of managers, who are typically representatives of the dominant white culture.

Third, while Canada is internationally lauded for its multiculturalism, which has become inextricably linked with Canadian identity (Kymlicka, 2021), the hard truth is that Canada's immigration system is set up to meet its economic needs, not necessarily the needs of immigrants (Chand & Tung, 2019). In that context, settlement agencies have the difficult task of mediating between the government's utilitarian conception of immigration (linked to the needs of the job market) and the needs of the immigrants themselves. The impact of the Canadian government's policies regarding the burden of supporting and integrating an increasing influx of newcomers to Canada falls largely on immigrant women who work and volunteer on the frontlines in the settlement sector (Lee, 1999). The norm of inclusion has a hard time competing with deeply rooted gendered norms in society that see care work as women's work. This is compounded for racialized women via cultural assumptions and expectations around how racialized ethnic minority groups care for their community's needs (Charlesworth, 2010; Lee, 1999). The settlement is no exception.

CONCLUSION

This study sought to bridge important gaps in the existing literature on workplace inclusion in settlement agencies, in four valuable ways. First, while participants of existing studies are often organizational leaders, we interviewed frontline workers about how they perceived EDI policies and practices. Second, while most studies focus on measuring a climate of inclusion within a single or-

ganization, we focused on immigrant frontline employees from different settlement agencies across Ontario to offer a more comprehensive understanding of inclusion norms and practices in the settlement sector. Third, while most studies use either quantitative surveys or qualitative interviews or focus groups, we employed mixed methods, using both a validated quantitative scale to measure the climate of inclusion (Nishii, 2013), as well as semi-structured qualitative interviews. Finally, the authors sought the perspective of diverse employees who are hired and valued specifically for their diversity, a situation that makes them more vulnerable to exclusive practices such as differentiation and tokenism (Shore et al., 2011; Turco, 2010).

The interviews confirm that the settlement agencies understudy are trying to walk the talk of workplace inclusion. Differences are celebrated and accommodated, so most people feel they can bring what is unique about themselves into a work environment they belong to. From a general outlook, equity in employment conditions seems to be the next frontier, that is going beyond applying universal norms, to having a closer look at the advantages and disadvantages faced by different groups (Bernstein et al., 2020). To do so, more resources are needed, which ties back to the funding structure of the sector. This also applies to decision-making and to the old argument being made by leader-member exchange theorists (Dulebohn et al., 2012; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995): who is being heard versus ignored by leaders? This might require more intentionality, including some training or coaching, especially if we are to address the racial gap identified earlier.

However, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of these findings. First, the sample was small (25 participants from eight organizations of a possible 230 organizations in Ontario). Second, these participants were recruited from organizations that are members of the National Newcomer Navigation Network, a pan-Canadian education and advocacy network. The results may be influenced by an assumed self-selection bias in the fact that most organizations that accepted to be part of this research have been doing EDI work for some time now. The portrait presented here may be more positive than what is playing out in most Ontario settlement agencies. Nonetheless, it provides some good lessons on inclusion in the third sector.

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NOTES

1. We use immigrants in a broad sense, whether people are landed immigrants, asylum seekers, or refugees.
2. Tokens can be defined as "numeric minorities in segregated occupations" (Turco, 2010, p. 895). As such, they face various obstacles to their career advancement that are compounded by their isolation.
3. Such an assimilationist norm is not simply a cultural issue. It can just as easily be formulated in heterosexist terms. As one interviewee (IFW-20) mentioned, despite a strong openness to cultural differences, many individuals from the LGBTQ+ community feel "tolerated" rather than "celebrated" in settlement agencies.
4. While most frontline workers did not describe their discrimination in terms of sexism and/or racism, it bears many of its intersectional caracteristics given the demographic makeup of the sample.

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APPENDIX 1

RESULTS BY STATUS AND RACE OF THE INCLUSION SCALE (*N* = 33)

	Frontline Workers			Managers		
	All (*n* = 25)	Racia-lized (*n* = 18)	Non-Racia-lized (*n* = 6)	All (*n* = 8)	Racia-lized (*n* = 1)	Non-Racia-lized (*n* = 7)
Integration of Difference						
My workplace is characterized by a non-threatening environment in which people can reveal their "true" selves.	4.36	4.11	5.00	4.63	5.00	4.57
My workplace values work-life balance.	4.16	4.06	4.50	4.63	5.00	4.57
My workplace commits resources to ensuring that employees are able to resolve conflicts among colleagues effectively.	3.80	3.61	4.33	4.13	4.00	4.14
Employees in my workplace are valued for who they are as people, not just for the jobs that they fill.	3.92	3.72	4.50	4.63	5.00	4.57
My workplace has a culture of appreciating the differences that people bring.	4.04	3.89	4.50	4.50	4.00	4.57
Inclusion in Decision-Making						
In my workplace, all employees are empowered to make work-related decisions on their own.	3.60	3.44	4.17	3.88	4.00	3.86
In my workplace, all employees' input is actively sought.	3.88	3.67	4.50	4.25	5.00	4.14
In my workplace, all employees' insights are used to rethink or redefine work practices.	3.56	3.33	4.17	4.25	5.00	4.14
In my workplace, all employees can offer ideas on how to improve operations outside of their own areas.	3.56	3.33	4.17	4.00	4.00	4.00
In my workplace, all employees can make use of their own knowledge to enhance their work.	4.08	3.89	4.50	4.50	4.00	4.57
Equitable Employment Practices						
The recruitment in my workplace is equitable.	3.72	3.50	4.17	4.50	5.00	4.43
My workplace has a fair promotion process.	3.16	2.89	3.83	3.71	4.00	3.67
My workplace invests in the development of all of its employees.	3.92	3.89	4.17	4.25	4.00	4.29
Employees in my workplace receive "equal pay for equal work."	3.04	2.71	3.83	3.88	5.00	3.71
My workplace provides safe ways for employees to voice their grievances.	3.80	3.61	4.33	4.50	5.00	4.43
Total Weighted Average	**3.77**	**3.58**	**4.31**	**4.28**	**4.53**	**4.24**

Note: Weighted averages are based on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

Legend of the Color Code:

Disagree, Strongly Disagree	≤ 2.99
Neutral, Leaning to Disagree	3.00 - 3.49
Neutral, Leaning to Agree	3.50 - 3.99
Agree	4.00 - 4.99
Strongly Agree	5.00

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Nouvelles perspectives sur le bien-être culturel : le rôle du tiers secteur en matière de patrimoine culturel

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ABSTRACT
This essay is based on research carried out in 2021-2022 by the Foundation School of Cultural Assets and Activities of the Italian Ministry of Culture. The data obtained provides an interesting overview of an emerging reality in the Italian third sector, "heritage communities"—formal or informal groups capable of enhancing and preserving the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of Italy. This article defines these heritage communities as pathways towards cultural well-being. It proposes to identify in heritage communities innovative mechanisms in terms of practices and policies of cultural well-being, a new form of well-being inspired by the World Health Organization's recognition in 2019 of the fundamental relationship between care and culture.

RÉSUMÉ
Cet essai est basé sur une recherche menée en 2021-2022 par la Fondation Scuola Beni Attività Culturali du ministère italien de la Culture. Les données obtenues donnent un aperçu intéressant d'une réalité émergente dans le troisième secteur italien, les « communautés patrimoniales »—des groupes formels ou informels en mesure d'améliorer et de préserver le patrimoine culturel matériel et immatériel de l'Italie. Cet article définit ces communautés patrimoniales comme des voies vers le bien-être culturel. Il propose d'identifier dans les communautés patrimoniales des mécanismes innovants en termes de pratiques et de politiques de bien-être culturel, une nouvelle forme de bien-être inspirée par la reconnaissance par l'Organisation mondiale de la santé, en 2019, de la relation fondamentale entre les soins de la santé et la culture.

Keywords / Mots clés : collective entrepreneurship, cultural well-being, heritage community, social economy, support for emerging entreprises / entreprenariat collectif, bien-être culturel, communauté patrimoniale, économie sociale, appui aux entreprises émergentes

INTRODUCTION

L'objectif de cet article est de contribuer aux échanges internationaux en présentant les données d'une recherche réalisée par la Fondation Scuola Beni Attività Culturali du ministère italien de la Culture au cours des années 2021 et 2022, à la suite de l'application de la Convention européenne

de Faro, adoptée en 2005 mais seulement entrée en vigueur en Italie en 2020. Les données de la recherche fournissent un aperçu intéressant d'une réalité émergente dans le tiers secteur italien, les « communautés patrimoniales », c'est-à-dire les groupes, associés de manière formelle ou informelle, capables de valoriser et de préserver les biens de l'immense patrimoine culturel matériel et immatériel de l'Italie afin de le transmettre aux générations futures. Ces communautés patrimoniales visent à valoriser le patrimoine culturel dont l'Italie est si riche, y compris soixante sites reconnus par l'UNESCO à ce jour. Le tiers secteur italien a ainsi l'occasion d'élargir le potentiel de son action à un domaine différent du domaine traditionnel, la culture, et de devenir un point de référence mondial en matière de pratiques et de politiques. Les objectifs de cet article sont cependant beaucoup plus larges que la simple description de la situation existante.

En effet, l'essai vise à définir les communautés patrimoniales comme de véritables dispositifs pour l'activation de parcours de bien-être culturel. On parle aujourd'hui de *welfare mix*, de deuxième bien-être, de processus de subsidiarité horizontale, ou de gouvernance collaborative. Notre proposition est d'identifier dans les communautés patrimoniales des dispositifs pour innover en matière de pratiques et de politiques de bien-être culturel, ce qui semble être l'une des nouvelles formes de bien-être, après la reconnaissance de la relation fondamentale entre les soins de la santé et la culture par l'Organisation mondiale de la santé en 2019 et la crise pandémique.

S'il est vrai que les défis contemporains incluent les processus d'individualisation, la solitude et l'effritement progressif des liens sociaux et du sens de la communauté, en plus des besoins essentiels, on doit également traiter du bien-vivre, comme le démontrent, par exemple, les expériences des populations sud-américaines au Brésil et en Colombie. Il devient important de comprendre la relation dialogique entre la culture, les langages artistiques, le patrimoine culturel et la communauté. Pour cette raison, les communautés patrimoniales peuvent être cet élément d'intersection dans lequel une relation dialogique à double sens est activée entre la communauté et le patrimoine culturel en tant que ressource et élément de construction communautaire. Elles peuvent en même temps jouer un rôle dans la régénération du patrimoine culturel en tant que bien commun.

Dans cette perspective, notre attention au bien-être culturel est entièrement orientée vers une dimension collective, à savoir la redistribution des compétences culturelles au sein des communautés et en soutien à celles-ci, un processus fondamental pour la réalisation de sociétés plus inclusives, plus durables et moins inégalitaires. Nous sommes convaincues que dans cette chaîne de valeur, les acteurs du tiers secteur ont à jouer un rôle d'une importance primordiale. En effet, nous sommes conscientes que le capital culturel est l'un des atouts les plus importants des classes supérieures et qu'une démocratisation de l'accès à la culture, par le biais de la participation sociale, peut contribuer à ce processus de redistribution.

LA CONVENTION DE FARO COMME POLITIQUE DE PARTICIPATION CULTURELLE : SA MISE EN APPLICATION EN ITALIE

L'étude récente, menée par la Fondation Scuola Beni Attività Culturali du ministère italien de la Culture sur l'application de la Convention de Faro en Italie (Ferrighi A., Pelosi E.; 2024), a analysé

l'étendue et les caractéristiques des communautés patrimoniales et démontré l'importance capitale du tiers secteur pour dynamiser ces communautés.

La Convention de Faro, convention-cadre du Conseil de l'Europe sur la valeur du patrimoine culturel pour la société, met l'accent sur les aspects du patrimoine culturel qui sont liés aux droits de la personne et à la démocratie. La Convention promeut une compréhension plus large du patrimoine culturel et de sa relation avec les communautés ainsi qu'avec la société en général. Elle encourage la reconnaissance des objets et des lieux culturels non pas tant pour leur valeur intrinsèque que pour les significations et les usages que les gens leur attribuent et les valeurs qu'ils représentent.

La Convention a été adoptée par le Comité des ministres du Conseil d'Europe le 13 octobre 2005 et ouverte à la signature des États membres à Faro au Portugal le 27 octobre de cette même année. Elle est entrée en vigueur le 1er juin 2011. À ce jour, vingt-quatre États membres du Conseil de l'Europe ont ratifié la Convention et cinq l'ont signée. L'Italie l'a ratifiée en 2020. Les principes généraux qui sous-tendent la Convention sont les suivants : développer la participation démocratique et la responsabilité sociale; améliorer le cadre et la qualité de vie; promouvoir la diversité culturelle et la compréhension mutuelle; et favoriser une plus grande cohésion sociale par la valorisation du patrimoine culturel. Le patrimoine culturel, tel que le définit la Convention de Faro, est considéré comme un ensemble de ressources héritées du passé que des personnes considèrent, par-delà le régime de propriété des biens, comme un reflet et une expression de leurs valeurs, croyances, savoirs et traditions en continuelle évolution. Il inclut tous les aspects de l'environnement résultant de l'interaction au fil du temps entre les personnes et les lieux. La Convention encourage particulièrement la participation culturelle des citoyens, organisés ou non, en favorisant la création de communautés patrimoniales. La recherche présentée par le ministère italien définit la communauté patrimoniale comme un groupe de personnes unies par les mêmes valeurs et les mêmes intérêts, regroupées de manière formelle ou informelle, qui valorisent des éléments particuliers et identifiables du patrimoine culturel, qui souhaitent être pris en compte, et qui s'engagent, dans le cadre d'une action publique, à soutenir et à transmettre des éléments patrimoniaux aux générations futures. L'appartenance à une communauté est donc liée au fait que les personnes qui font partie de la communauté attribuent une valeur au patrimoine culturel qu'elles ont elles-mêmes contribué à faire connaître et à sauvegarder.

La recherche de la Fondation sur les communautés patrimoniales a clairement mis en évidence que la fonction de ces dernières n'est pas exclusivement de préserver le « droit *du* patrimoine culturel », c'est-à-dire l'entretien et la conservation du patrimoine, mais bien de promouvoir le « droit *au* patrimoine culturel », c'est-à-dire la possibilité d'élargir l'action publique en promouvant la responsabilité sociale des communautés patrimoniales et de ceux qui les animent, la participation culturelle, et la sauvegarde et la valorisation du patrimoine culturel, afin que les citoyens puissent profiter davantage des lieux, des espaces et des objets culturels. L'objectif de cette intervention est l'entretien des « biens communs », notamment la restitution d'artefacts archéologiques, architecturaux ou urbains, ainsi que de jardins, de parcs et de zones rurales, aux territoires et aux personnes qui y vivent.

La recherche présentée et commentée ici, menée dans le contexte de la ratification italienne de 2020, présente la situation en Italie en cartographiant les politiques et bonnes pratiques en matière

de participation. La cartographie réalisée par la Fondation est la première recherche exploratoire sur les communautés patrimoniales en Italie, car il n'existe pas de sources ni de registres officiels. Il s'agit d'une première démarche de recherche qui a permis de cataloguer des communautés patrimoniales italiennes et de comprendre quels sont leur statut juridique, leurs activités, les objectifs de leurs interventions et les problèmes importants auxquels elles sont confrontées. D'un point de vue théorique et systématique, il semble évident que les communautés patrimoniales ont pour but de renforcer la communauté grâce à des processus de mise en commun, de gérer le patrimoine culturel au sens large y compris le paysage et l'environnement, et de promouvoir la participation sociale et culturelle. Pour mener à bien cette recherche, la Fondation du ministère a lancé un appel à l'action intitulé « La carte des communautés : expériences de participation ». Cet appel a été diffusé par le biais des médias sociaux de la Fondation Scuola Beni Attività Culturali et de groupes Facebook qui s'intéressent à la participation, ainsi que dans le bulletin d'information mensuel de la Fondation. Après la première diffusion de l'appel à l'action, les communautés ont été invitées à remplir un bref questionnaire concernant leurs formes d'organisation et les types de biens qu'elles gèrent. En date du 4 mai 2023, 255 communautés ont répondu à cet appel. Elles constituent maintenant le groupe de référence de notre étude et composent ce que la Fondation a appelé la Carte des communautés patrimoniales en Italie.

Sur les 255 communautés cartographiées dans le cadre de l'appel, un comité scientifique a sélectionné un échantillon de 119 d'entre elles, lesquelles correspondent complètement à la définition de « communauté patrimoniale » mentionnée ci-dessus, pour remplir un deuxième questionnaire portant sur l'expérience de participation à la gestion du patrimoine culturel des communautés, avec une focalisation sur : leurs activités; leurs relations avec les institutions ou les acteurs de leurs territoires; les compétences et les mécanismes qui leur ont permis d'adopter de bonnes pratiques; et les enjeux importants auxquels elles font face. Enfin, des groupes de discussion en ligne ont été organisés réunissant les chercheurs de la Fondation et les communautés, afin de comparer les diverses réalités et d'identifier les différents points de vue sur des thèmes spécifiques, et ainsi mieux comprendre les problèmes des participants eux-mêmes. En ce qui concerne les expériences de participation, l'analyse des données de la recherche démontre l'importance du tiers secteur, qui représente à lui seul plus de 60 % de l'échantillon. En effet, 48 % des communautés patrimoniales sont des associations bénévoles, 12 % des coopératives et 8 % des fondations. Le secteur privé ne représente que 10 %, tandis qu'environ 15 % des communautés patrimoniales sont créées au sein d'organismes publics. Il est intéressant de noter qu'elles ont toutes vu le jour au cours des vingt-cinq dernières années, principalement après 2010, avec un sommet en 2015. Sur le plan opérationnel, les communautés patrimoniales adoptent un modèle de gouvernance collaborative basé sur la co-conception et une reconnaissance des réalités de leur quartier, mais aussi des réalités nationales et européennes. Parmi les dispositifs juridiques utilisés, 22 % des communautés interrogées privilégient les pactes de collaboration, 19 % les concessions, 5 % la reconnaissance de l'usage civique, et 10 % d'autres pactes publics, auxquels on peut également ajouter l'utilisation de biens qui ne sont pas nécessairement privés. D'un point de vue territorial, environ 40 % des communautés patrimoniales étudiées se situent dans le sud de l'Italie et dans les îles de la région, en particulier les Pouilles et la Sicile, lieux qui bénéficient de la majeure partie des fonds publics.

La majorité des communautés patrimoniales, soit 62%, vivent uniquement des fonds fournis par le secteur public, le plus souvent se situant dans une fourchette allant de 5 000 € à 10 000 €. Quelques communautés patrimoniales disposent de fonds plus importants, dépassant même les 50 000 €. Celles-ci sont principalement concernées par la régénération urbaine. D'un point de vue temporel, toutes les communautés patrimoniales sont nées après 2000, avec des sommets en 2010 (après la crise de 2008) et en 2015. Il s'agit principalement de milieux qui vivent grâce à l'engagement de citoyens bénévoles qui consacrent leur temps à l'entretien des biens communs. Les expériences de ceux-ci tournent avant tout autour de lieux communautaires appartenant à l'État (palais, églises, bâtiments désaffectés, zones de fouilles, ruines, parcs et jardins) dans lesquels ils travaillent à la régénération, à la réutilisation et à la récupération, tant dans les zones urbaines que rurales, et qui sont ensuite rendus à l'ensemble de la communauté.

Une communauté patrimoniale étudiée en Italie et reconnue pour ses bonnes pratiques est celle du Bolzanism Museum, premier musée italien sur le logement social qui, depuis 2020, présente aux habitants, aux visiteurs et aux touristes l'histoire des quartiers considérés comme des banlieues, de l'architecture populaire et des personnes qui y vivent. Le musée a fait du patrimoine de la périphérie de Bolzano son exposition permanente. En déconstruisant la pensée derrière la planification urbaine de la ville de Bolzano, il promeut l'émerveillement comme un principe générateur de créativité, de culture et de diversité, et comme une plateforme pour imaginer et repenser une ville future dans laquelle la prise de conscience et la participation des citoyens sont fondamentales.

La recherche montre que ces communautés ont compris à quel point la participation, la gestion et la valorisation du patrimoine culturel ont un impact sur le territoire, surtout en ce qui concerne la promotion de l'éducation au patrimoine culturel. Pour ce qui est des enjeux, la méconnaissance de la Convention de Faro en Italie est celui qui a émergé très clairement. Bien que cette Convention remonte à 2005, plus de la moitié des communautés qui ont répondu au questionnaire, soit 52 %, fonctionnent selon les principes des communautés patrimoniales et présentent les spécificités qui les caractérisent. La recherche menée par le ministère de la Culture pourrait, par conséquent, servir de levier pour lancer des pistes de réflexion pour le tiers secteur.

Les groupes de discussion ont ensuite révélé les difficultés que rencontrent les communautés patrimoniales à fonctionner dans les territoires de manière durable, notamment la précarité due à l'incertitude d'un financement continu et la nécessité de recourir au travail de bénévoles qui doivent être formés constamment, car ils n'ont pas les compétences nécessaires en matière d'organisation, de gestion ou de planification. De plus, les administrations publiques n'écoutent pas attentivement leurs besoins de formation pour acquérir les compétences qui leur permettraient de travailler pour le bien-être de la communauté dans laquelle ils s'activent. En conclusion, les communautés patrimoniales représentent une occasion pour le secteur communautaire et les OSBL. La préservation ou la protection du patrimoine culturel et du paysage ne sont pas tant l'objectif de l'action collective qu'un dispositif pour favoriser de bonnes pratiques visant à promouvoir la participation à la connaissance et à la construction d'identités collectives, qui sont aussi importantes que la diffusion du patrimoine culturel en Italie.

De tout cela, nous pouvons tirer deux considérations importantes. La première découle du fait que la Convention de Faro représente une grande occasion pour le tiers secteur en Italie, qui lui permet

de devenir une référence au niveau international en matière de promotion des communautés patrimoniales, étant donné la richesse de son patrimoine culturel matériel et immatériel. La deuxième concerne le rôle du tiers secteur qui, grâce à son engagement au sein des communautés patrimoniales pour la préservation du patrimoine culturel et la défense du droit à la culture, participe au débat actuel sur les processus de bien-être dans les sociétés occidentales contemporaines. De plus, un important débat sur un « deuxième bien-être » est très vif en Italie. Il postule qu'à côté du « premier bien-être »—le bien-être public traditionnel qui comprend toutes les mesures et interventions de l'État—un « deuxième bien-être » comprenant des mesures et des interventions non étatiques fournies par des entités à but non lucratif devrait être considéré. Comme il est indiqué dans le Manifeste du tiers secteur italien, rédigé en 2023 après la crise pandémique liée à la COVID-19 :

> Le système actuel de bien-être social est toujours fortement axé sur la « protection » des personnes. Mais, à l'épreuve des faits, il continue de s'avérer peu efficace. C'est un système qui doit donc être progressivement remplacé par un modèle inclusif basé sur la reconnaissance des droits et tendre à soutenir une logique globale de changement, en partant de la prise de conscience des problèmes anciens et nouveaux, mais aussi en valorisant les nombreuses bonnes pratiques et celles prometteuses que le tiers secteur a été en mesure d'exprimer, même dans les situations les plus critiques et les plus urgentes. (Forum Terzo Settore, 2023, p. 17)

Le Manifeste dit aussi :

> Il apparaît également d'une importance fondamentale de baser la programmation sur une approche visant à soutenir et à valoriser le potentiel des personnes [...] en veillant à ce qu'il existe, de plus en plus, un système solide et compétent, capable de promouvoir sur le territoire la participation des réseaux de citoyens, alliant bien-être et développement de la démocratie sur la base de l'équité, de l'égalité des chances, de l'accessibilité et de la lutte contre les inégalités. (Forum Terzo Settore, 2023, p. 19)

À la lumière de ces considérations, nous pensons que le bien-être culturel, déjà largement répandu dans le monde anglo-saxon, est de bon droit imputable aux processus de deuxième bien-être. Toutefois, nous retenons surtout que les communautés patrimoniales et l'application plus générale de la Convention de Faro, impliquant des sujets du tiers secteur, peuvent à notre avis permettre des innovations en matière de pratiques et de politiques.

Plus spécifiquement, nous croyons que le fait de penser le bien-être culturel comme un moyen de lutter contre les inégalités peut contribuer à la connaissance et à l'appréciation par l'ensemble de la population des biens culturels qui font traditionnellement partie du capital culturel des classes sociales supérieures, comme l'a étudié Pierre Bourdieu dans le cadre des processus de « distinction » (1979).

Comme le montrent les recherches financées par le ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche (Paltrinieri, 2022), nous pouvons affirmer que le bien-être culturel, s'il devient une véritable politique, permet de démocratiser l'accès à la culture, tant du point de vue de l'éducation et de la formation que de la consommation culturelle et de la connaissance des styles et des goûts

culturels, en élargissant la participation des personnes moins bien dotées en capital culturel et en permettant leur inclusion, qui n'est pas actuellement garantie.

COMMENT LES COMMUNAUTÉS PATRIMONIALES PEUVENT-ELLES ÊTRE DES DISPOSITIFS POUR LE DÉVELOPPEMENT DU BIEN-ÊTRE CULTUREL?

Depuis 2019, le thème du bien-être culturel est devenu très important dans le débat sur les politiques de bien-être, de santé et de soins en Europe. En 2019, en effet, l'Organisation mondiale de la santé a reconnu que les arts et la culture ont un rôle décisif à jouer dans la promotion du bien-être pour les individus et les communautés, en reconnaissant la valeur ajoutée de l'implication dans les arts pour la santé, en encourageant les organisations artistiques et culturelles à faire de la santé et du bien-être une partie intégrante et stratégique de leur travail et, enfin, en soulignant l'importance de l'intersectorialité entre les domaines des arts et de la santé.

En Italie, le CCW, le centre sur le bien-être culturel, association du tiers secteur, créé en 2020 par la Fondation d'origine bancaire San Paolo, a décrit le bien-être culturel en ces termes :

> La définition de bien-être culturel indique un nouveau modèle intégré de promotion du bien-être et de la santé des individus et des communautés, à travers des pratiques fondées sur les arts visuels, la performance et le patrimoine culturel. Le bien-être culturel est fondé sur la reconnaissance, également consacrée par l'Organisation mondiale de la santé, de l'efficacité de certaines activités culturelles, artistiques et créatives spécifiques. (Cicerchia, Rossi Ghiglione, Seia, 2020)

Au cœur de cette approche développée en Italie se trouve une perspective biopsychosociale et salutogène, centrée sur les compétences d'adaptation et le développement de *life skill* (aptitude à la vie quotidienne). Nous devons l'approche salutogène au sociologue de la santé Aaron Antonovsky, qui a déclaré dès 1979 qu'il est plus important de se concentrer sur les ressources et la capacité des personnes à se maintenir en santé (la prévention) que sur les risques et les maladies.

L'objectif du bien-être culturel, dans cette vision orientée vers la relation entre les soins et la culture, est la santé des personnes comprise dans une simple dimension individuelle. Ainsi, la participation culturelle permet d'améliorer la qualité de vie des personnes physiquement et psychologiquement fragiles, des personnes ayant un trouble mental, des enfants handicapés, des personnes atteintes de démence, etc. Selon cette acception du bien-être culturel, la prise en charge de la personne dépend d'une relation systémique et systématique de collaboration entre professionnels de différentes disciplines et, surtout, d'une intégration des objectifs entre les systèmes institutionnels de la santé, des politiques sociales et des arts et de la culture.

C'est dans cet esprit qu'a été mis en œuvre au Royaume-Uni, depuis 1994, le programme Arts on Prescription (AoP), qui repose sur la conviction que la participation à une activité créative peut promouvoir la santé et le bien-être et qui s'inscrit dans la catégorie plus large des prescriptions sociales que les professionnels de la santé et les travailleurs sociaux peuvent donner à leurs patients. Dans ce cas, les activités culturelles telles que la danse, la peinture et les visites de sites patrimoniaux sont autant d'expériences dans lesquelles les artistes ou les conservateurs de musée peu-

vent devenir des médiateurs et initier les gens à des parcours de bien-être au sein des communautés (Bungay, 2010). L'art-thérapie, également d'origine anglo-saxonne, combinée à la thérapie par la danse et le mouvement, ainsi qu'à une approche psychanalytique et psychodynamique dont Judith Rubin (2016) a été la pionnière, peut également être lue sous cet angle. Dans les années 1980, un partenariat a été établi entre l'association qui représente l'art-thérapie italienne et Goldsmiths (Université de Londres) pour reconnaître un certificat de psychothérapie en art. L'approche d'Arts on Prescription et celle d'art-thérapie partent de l'hypothèse que la promotion de la santé à travers le langage artistique peut favoriser le bien-être mental et, par conséquent, avoir un impact positif sur le bien-être en général.

Si la pratique d'activités créatives peut réduire l'anxiété, le stress et les troubles de l'humeur, ces mêmes activités peuvent devenir un excellent outil pour réduire les coûts de la protection sociale tout en améliorant la qualité de vie. L'approche d'Arts on Prescription englobe les bonnes pratiques qui permettent de promouvoir l'autonomisation, le bien-être subjectif et le capital social individuel lié aux aspects relationnels; de lutter contre les inégalités de santé et d'accès aux ressources; et d'accompagner le vieillissement actif, en luttant contre le déclin psychophysique. De notre point de vue, la Convention de Faro et la reconnaissance des communautés patrimoniales qui, comme nous l'avons vu, favorisent un plus grand intérêt pour le patrimoine et la participation culturels, permettent d'élargir la perspective du bien-être culturel d'une dimension individuelle à une dimension collective et communautaire, en incluant les processus d'innovation sociale et culturelle les plus étendus (Andersen et Grønbæk Pors, 2016) capables de générer de nouveaux modèles de gouvernance (Paltrinieri et Allegrini, 2020). La recherche met aussi en évidence la possibilité que la gestion participative encourage dans les territoires un dialogue important entre le patrimoine et la communauté, permettant une plus grande cohésion sociale et des formes d'agentivité collective. En ce sens, la gestion du patrimoine par les communautés apparaît comme un important dispositif de bien-être culturel.

Pour mieux comprendre ce qui vient d'être dit, il est important de se concentrer sur le type de procédure et de relation qui est encouragé entre le patrimoine culturel et la communauté et sur le résultat que cette relation génère. Les données relatives aux horizons de sens qui animent les activités des communautés patrimoniales, ainsi que celles relatives aux modalités de gouvernance et de promotion de l'accès aux biens, montrent que la génération et la régénération de biens communs sont au cœur de cette relation (Ostron, 1990). Comme le souligne Donolo :

> Les biens communs sont un ensemble de biens nécessairement partagés. Ce sont des biens, car ils permettent le déploiement de la vie sociale, la solution de problèmes collectifs, la subsistance de l'homme dans sa relation avec les écosystèmes dont il fait partie. Ils sont partagés, car, bien que l'exclusion de quelqu'un ou d'un groupe de leur capacité soit souvent possible et même une réalité trop fréquente, ils réussissent davantage et fournissent leurs meilleures qualités lorsqu'ils sont traités et donc également gouvernés et réglementés en tant que biens « communs », accessibles à tous au moins en principe. Ils sont également partagés dans un sens plus fort, car seul leur partage garantit leur reproduction prolongée dans le temps. (2010)

Un bien commun devient tel au moment où la communauté le reconnaît comme tel, en lui donnant une nouvelle identité comme bien appartenant à tous et à toutes, à travers une action qui doit durer dans le temps, pour que le bien puisse rester un bien commun (Arena, 2006).

Les actions envers le patrimoine cartographiées et analysées par la recherche se situent pleinement dans cette perspective d'entretien et de régénération de biens communs (culturels), qui est au cœur de la Convention de Faro. Ces actions constituent donc des pratiques non seulement à « base communautaire », mais aussi un véritable processus de mise en commun (Chatterton, 2010; Dellenbaugh et al., 2015) composé de pratiques orientées vers le partage qui permettent aux patrimoines culturels de devenir des biens communs. Pour comprendre la valeur de la relation entre les communautés et les patrimoines culturels, il convient également de mettre l'accent sur la dimension culturelle qui est au cœur du processus même de « construction » du patrimoine, soit le « patrimoine immatériel » (Nicolini et Andreoli, 2023), un thème central des deux Conventions de l'UNESCO adoptées à Paris le 3 décembre 2003 (« Convention pour la sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel immatériel ») et le 20 octobre 2005 (« Convention pour la protection et la promotion de la diversité des expressions culturelles »), ratifiées en Italie par la L. n° 167/2007 et la L. n° 19/2007.

Au sein de cette construction se trouve une action importante qui se rapporte à la construction de sens et à la production de significations partagées et qui a un effet sur la création d'un lien—d'un sentiment d'appartenance—entre les patrimoines, les territoires et les communautés. Il s'agit d'une construction de sens qui intègre des normes, des orientations de valeurs et des pratiques, mais aussi la création d'imaginaires auxquels nous avons fait référence dans la première partie de notre article. Les différentes activités identifiées par la recherche et menées par les communautés agissent précisément dans cette direction, comme des activités de médiation, facilitant non seulement l'accès à un bien, mais aussi la construction de sens, afin que ce bien soit reconnu comme faisant partie de son environnement personnel, social et culturel. Il s'agit donc d'une relation à double sens (dialogique et récursive) dans laquelle le patrimoine culturel est un dispositif relationnel et créateur de communautés, et dans laquelle les communautés participatives jouent par la même un rôle dans la régénération du patrimoine culturel en tant que bien commun. Les bonnes questions à se poser sont donc : que peuvent faire les gens pour le patrimoine et que peut faire le patrimoine pour les gens? Il est aussi important de savoir quels éléments dans un écosystème de bien-être culturel peuvent agir comme des facteurs habilitants.

Les dires des décideurs, des chercheurs et des opérateurs impliqués dans les différentes phases de la recherche et unis par le fait d'avoir mené à bien ces dernières années des processus de prise en charge des communautés ont révélé à cet égard des éléments d'une grande importance. À notre avis, la recherche met en lumière trois dimensions particulières qui, ensemble, offrent une piste de réflexion. La première concerne les partenariats visant à prendre soin des patrimoines culturels et à les gérer ainsi que le rôle que les dispositifs juridiques et les règlements ont dans leur mise en œuvre. Il convient, en effet, de souligner que ces dispositifs peuvent non seulement favoriser la mise en œuvre de la Convention de Faro, mais aussi définir le cadre de valeurs dans lequel se situe la relation entre les communautés patrimoniales, les institutions et le patrimoine lui-même. Cette dimension publique est au cœur de dispositifs tels que les pactes de collaboration qui, comme nous l'avons indiqué précédemment, ont été parmi les outils les plus utilisés. Il convient

de rappeler que les pactes de collaboration, malgré la variété de leurs formes, sont centrés sur une gouvernance collaborative qui elle-même est basée sur une administration partagée, donc de subsidiarité horizontale et circulaire, et qui reconnaît les principes de confiance, de réciprocité et de collaboration ainsi que d'autonomie civique en vue de la prise en charge d'un élément d'intérêt général. En ce sens, les pactes de collaboration sont des dispositifs à l'appui de cette relation dialogique entre patrimoines et communautés décrite précédemment et centrée sur la régénération des biens communs. De ce point de vue, les communautés patrimoniales peuvent être interprétées comme de véritables communautés de pratique. Selon Étienne Wenger (1998), « Ce sont des groupes de personnes qui partagent un intérêt, des problèmes ou une passion pour un sujet et qui approfondissent leurs connaissances et leurs compétences en interagissant et en évoluant ensemble. » Il s'agit de groupes de personnes associées ou non qui, dans l'esprit de la gouvernance collaborative, se forment spontanément, s'allient autour de thèmes spécifiques et développent des phénomènes de solidarité organisationnelle face aux problèmes qui surviennent. Les membres partagent des objectifs, des connaissances pratiques, des significations, des langages et, de cette manière, génèrent des formes d'organisation caractérisées par des traits particuliers et distinctifs.

Une deuxième dimension concerne le rôle spécifique des institutions publiques, qui s'avère fondamental dans la recomposition d'un paradigme de bien-être culturel. Les institutions culturelles publiques elles-mêmes, telles que les théâtres, les bibliothèques et les musées, peuvent agir en tant que facilitateurs, médiateurs et régulateurs entre le patrimoine et les communautés. Dans le sillage du débat international lancé par Eric Klinenberg (2018), un débat intéressant s'est développé sur la façon dont les infrastructures sociales, telles que les écosystèmes culturels, peuvent aider à lutter contre les inégalités et à développer le sens civique ou le capital social tel qu'il est compris par le politologue Robert Putnam (1998). Les musées et les bibliothèques, tout en étant un « patrimoine de culture et de documents », deviennent de plus en plus des espaces habilitants pour les communautés, favorisant la participation de groupes et de personnes qui génèrent ainsi un capital social surtout qualitatif, en réponse aux processus d'individualisation de la société contemporaine. L'acception de « communauté patrimoniale » proposée par la Convention de Faro permet précisément de resémantiser dans ce sens l'utilisation et la fonction des institutions culturelles. Ainsi observées, les institutions répondent de manière innovante aux besoins sociaux, qu'ils soient nouveaux ou anciens, et deviennent des lieux où l'on expérimente, dans la perspective paradigmatique de la subsidiarité, des parcours de co-conception et de co-programmation territoriale.

Autour de ce thème s'est récemment développé un débat en Italie sur la question des services publics collaboratifs définis ainsi :

> Les services publics collaboratifs sont une nouvelle génération de services qui combinent l'offre de prestations définies, fournies par des opérateurs spécialisés avec des plateformes habilitantes grâce auxquelles les citoyens eux-mêmes peuvent collaborer entre eux et avec d'autres acteurs sociaux, tels que les organismes publics, les universités et les organisations du tiers secteur afin de réaliser de la valeur sociale. (Manzini et Dalena, 2024, p. 15)

À partir de bonnes pratiques d'innovation sociale et des nouvelles cultures fondées sur le principe de proximité et de soin—concept qui replace cet article dans le débat international plus large,

comme en témoignent les travaux de Martha C. Nussbaum (2017) et Catherine Rottenberg (2020)—il peut en effet naître un dépassement de cette antithèse publique/privée sociale en faveur d'un bien-être participatif qui ne soit pas assistancialiste, mais génératif et transformateur. Avec la proposition des services publics collaboratifs, le paradigme collaboratif est mis en œuvre, introduisant un nouveau droit fondamental dans l'explicitation de la citoyenneté : le droit à la collaboration, celui d'imaginer et de réaliser des projets partagés, dans lequel la dimension individuelle se conjugue avec la dimension collective.

Le troisième et dernier élément se rapporte à la variété des voies d'activation des communautés, que nous pouvons envisager dans l'optique d'une redistribution des capacités culturelles, donnant naissance à cette infrastructure culturelle au niveau territorial dont nous avons parlé précédemment. De la base naissent souvent des pratiques non intégrées dans une planification organique qui défient l'administration publique, laquelle a pour tâche de les intégrer dans un projet global qui reconnaît leur fonction d'utilité commune. Dans cette optique, de nombreuses expériences conduisent à l'activation de « nouveaux lieux hybrides » restitués à la ville, à travers des processus de régénération de nature culturelle qui placent le développement des communautés au centre de leurs actions. Comme l'affirme Roberta Franceschinelli (2021), même si les processus de régénération urbaine agissent souvent sur les biens immobiliers publics et doivent toujours être liés aux instruments d'urbanisme et de réglementation en vigueur, il s'agit d'expériences qui ont du mal à être encadrées, car leur caractère innovant soulève des questions et des problèmes pour lesquels la bureaucratie n'est pas toujours préparée. Ces « écosystèmes culturels hybrides » peuvent jouer un rôle fondamental dans les processus d'innovation de la culture administrative. Il est évident en effet que des politiques allant au-delà des distinctions traditionnelles entre les secteurs sont nécessaires, impliquant différents niveaux et domaines (la culture, l'urbanisme et la qualité urbaine, le social, le développement économique, etc.).

LA CULTURE COMME PROCESSUS D'AUTONOMISATION COLLECTIVE

En conclusion, les résultats de la recherche menée par la Fondation du ministère italien de la Culture présentés dans cet article, ainsi que tous les enjeux que nous avons relevés, montrent comment au centre du bien-être culturel se trouve l'activation de processus de développement des communautés, c'est-à-dire de reproduction et de production de capital culturel et social collectif, de régénération des biens communs et de redistribution des capacités culturelles. Au cœur du bien-être culturel, dans une optique plus simplement collective comme celle que nous nous sommes fixées, il y a les questions de l'agentivité et des capacités culturelles des communautés, c'est-à-dire la capacité de générer des paysages alternatifs, suivant la théorie de l'imagination d'Appadurai (1996) et d'Ingold (2020), afin de promouvoir une action sociale orientée culturellement et donc transformatrice. Cela implique une manière de penser et d'agir individuelle et collective qui soit créative, collaborative, responsable et capable d'avoir un impact vertueux sur les façons de vivre, d'habiter, de produire, de consommer et d'organiser, dans l'optique des communautés de pratique proposées par Étienne Wenger, auxquelles nous avons fait référence ci-dessus.

Ce qui caractérise le bien-être culturel par rapport à toutes les autres formes de bien-être, c'est le fait que la dimension culturelle soit au centre des processus de bien-être. Les actes de program-

mation, de production, de distribution, de redistribution et de consommation de la culture produisent une chaîne de valeur qui a un impact social profond. Agir ainsi signifie dépasser—sans nier à quel point cela peut être difficile—la seule dimension artistique des langages artistiques en faveur d'une valeur institutionnelle qui fait de l'acte créatif et artistique un élément d'une chaîne de valeur sociale qui ne porte pas préjudice à la qualité du produit artistique, mais valorise le caractère processuel dans lequel il s'inscrit (Manzoli et Paltrinieri, 2021).

Cependant, si la culture est un lieu de développement des capacités culturelles, celles-ci ne sont pas également réparties, comme nous l'avons rappelé ci-dessus en parlant de Bourdieu, selon lequel le capital culturel, à l'instar des capitaux social et économique, reste aux mains des classes socialement supérieures. En ce qui concerne la diffusion de la culture et la promotion de la participation culturelle, les inégalités relatives aux ressources matérielles, cognitives et sociales demeurent un obstacle à l'accès. Ces inégalités ont ainsi une incidence sur la capacité à progresser parmi un ensemble complexe de règles à partir desquelles on peut tout de même se réapproprier une manière de représenter l'avenir. Cependant, s'il est vrai que Pierre Bourdieu, dans son raisonnement sur les classes sociales, parle de capital culturel appartenant aux individus, nous voulons souligner dans cet article que les communautés patrimoniales et la participation du troisième secteur dans le domaine culturel doivent être orientées vers la production d'un capital culturel *collectif*, lequel est à la fois la condition préalable et le produit d'une action transformatrice des acteurs du troisième secteur. Enfin, la relation dialogique entre communauté et patrimoine, souvent médiatisée par les institutions, se déroule dans le cadre d'une variété d'expériences au sein de différents territoires, où les dimensions de lieu et de temps apparaissent centrales, notamment dans la perspective des biens communs et des pratiques de mise en commun.

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Analysing the Social Economy Business Survey Index (S-BSI): Development, Features, and Effectiveness in Social Economy Policymaking and Evaluation

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ABSTRACT

This study delves into the Social Economy Business Survey Index (S-BSI), a tool designed to monitor the social and economic value generated within the social economy (SE) to furnish vital insights for timely public policy interventions. The study aims to comprehensively analyze the S-BSI, encompassing its development, distinctive features, and effectiveness as an advanced instrument for policymaking and evaluating the SE policy. The research methodology comprises an in-depth analysis of the S-BSI's development process, followed by multiple comparative analyses of similar surveys on a domestic and international scale. Furthermore, the study utilizes qualitative evaluation techniques grounded in the next-generation public policy framework for the SE sector. This multifaceted research approach aims to offer a holistic understanding of the S-BSI, delivering valuable insights tailored for policymakers and stakeholders engaged in shaping public policies for the SE.

RÉSUMÉ

Cette étude explore l'Indice des enquêtes de conjoncture en économie sociale, un outil conçu pour évaluer la valeur sociale et économique réalisée dans l'économie sociale afin d'obtenir un savoir qui pourrait s'avérer utile pour mener des interventions opportunes dans les politiques publiques. L'étude a pour but d'effectuer une analyse compréhensive de l'Indice en tenant compte de son développement, de ses caractéristiques distinctives et de son efficacité comme instrument avancé pour formuler et évaluer des politiques en économie sociale. La méthodologie employée comprend une analyse en profondeur du processus de développement de l'Indice, suivie de multiples analyses comparatives d'enquêtes semblables à l'échelle domestique et internationale. En outre, l'étude recourt à des techniques d'évaluation qualitative fondées sur un cadre « prochaine génération » pour formuler des politiques publiques en économie sociale. Cette approche de recherche à multiples facettes vise à inspirer une compréhension holistique de l'Indice, offrant des observations qui pourraient s'avérer utiles pour les décideurs et les bailleurs de fonds responsables de développer les politiques publiques en économie sociale.

Keywords / Mots clés : Social Economy Business Survey Index, social economy, social and economic value creation, policy effectiveness, next generation of public policy / Indice des enquêtes de conjoncture en économie sociale, économie sociale, création de valeur sociale et économique, efficacité des politiques, politiques publiques de la prochaine génération

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INTRODUCTION

What if we could systematically and comprehensively evaluate the vitality of the social and economic value produced by the social economy (SE) sector, akin to conducting regular health checkups? Subsequently, what if we could devise specialized policies tailored to the specific needs identified during these assessments? Such a practice would enhance the efficacy of achieving policy goals and foster evidence-based policymaking. In the realm of the conventional economy, numerous business surveys serve as instruments for conducting an economic health check. However, when it comes to the SE, only a few are available.

A growing trend underscores the strengthening of the SE role within national and international strategies (Utting, 2017; World Economic Forum, 2022). Many central and local governments are formulating public policies for the SE sector in countries such as Spain, Italy, Australia, Brazil, South Africa, India, and Mexico (United Nations, 2023). The success of these policies depends on their adaptability to changing circumstances (Pape, Brandsen, Pahl, Pieliński, Baturina, Brookes et al., 2020; Seo, 2024a). Just as it is crucial to put in place effective business adjustment policies for a country to achieve long-lasting and steady economic growth (Killick, 1993), it is vital to constantly track and forecast social and economic trends in the SE sector and create policies based on this information to ensure the ongoing progress of the SE (Kim, 2022). Social enterprise organizations have fundamentally different goals from conventional for-profit companies (Defourny, 2001). Depending solely on data from traditional for-profit businesses, such as small or medium-sized enterprises, when shaping and assessing SE policies can result in misinformed decisions.

However, the availability of data crucial for SE policymaking—encompassing aspects such as the current status, size, change trends, and impact of SE enterprises—remains notably limited in many regions and countries (Bouri, Fonzi, Gelfand, Gromis, Lankester, Leung, McCarthy et al., 2011; Bouchard & Rousselière, 2015). Previous research endeavours, such as the construction of social and solidarity economy statistics in France, production of Statistics for the Social Economy in Belgium and Spain, conducting a study on the economic impact of co-operatives in the USA, organizing the field of the SE of Québec; and mapping Social Enterprise in the UK, are valuable (Bouchard & Rousselière, 2015). However, responding proactively to rapidly changing policy environments, especially those prompted by events such as a pandemic, necessitates timely data. While these research efforts provide a "map" of the third sector with collected data, mapping data alone cannot fulfil this requirement (Appe, 2012).

Measuring social value is a topic that has been at the forefront for over three decades (Mulgan, 2010; Murphy, Ackermann, & Handgraaf, 2011; Rawhouser, Cummings, & Newbert, 2019; Kroeger & Weber, 2014). While numerous measurement tools have been developed, they focus on assessing impact at the organizational level (Florman, Klinger-Vidra, & Facada, 2016; Kah & Akenroye, 2020), leaving a gap in addressing broader sectoral and national-level assessments. The Social Economy Business Survey Index (S-BSI) developed by Korea Social Enterprise Promotion Agency (KoSEA) provides valuable insights into existing social value measurement methodologies. It monitors social value generated by the SE sector at the sectorial and national levels. Moreover, instead of solely focusing on output and result-based indicators related to social value, it also incorporates inputs and processes (Kim & Kim, 2021). This comprehensive approach ensures a holistic understanding of the

entire social value creation process, addressing crucial aspects often neglected by other methodologies. By considering both the vitality of social and economic value generated by the SE and the status of internal and external factors for value creation, the S-BSI could offer valuable lessons for devising specialized policies tailored to specific needs identified during these assessments.

This study investigates the S-BSI by addressing key research questions regarding its development, unique features compared with similar tools, and its role as an advanced SE public policymaking and evaluation tool. The research methodology involves an in-depth analysis of the S-BSI's development process, followed by comparative studies on an international and domestic scale with similar surveys. Additionally, the qualitative evaluation technique is applied within the second-generation public policy framework for the SE sector, facilitating an assessment of the evolution of public policymaking and evaluation tools for SE. This holistic research framework yields valuable insights for policymakers and stakeholders engaged in the SE sector.

This article comprises five key stages: 1) a literature review and detailed overview of the data collection and methodology; 2) an introduction to the development of the S-BSI, including the methodology, sampling, and indicators of the S-BSI; 3) a comparative analysis with similar surveys in the United Kingdom, Spain, and South Korea, both internationally and domestically, encompassing the SE, the third sector, and the conventional for-profit economy; 4) an empirical evaluation of the evolution of tools for SE public policymaking and evaluation; and 5) conclusions, including a qualitative assessment of the S-BSI's utility, limitations, and potentials.

This study makes several theoretical contributions. Firstly, it addresses a research gap by analysing a specific tool for monitoring social value creation at the national and integrated SE sectoral levels. Secondly, comparing similar tools domestically and internationally deepens our understanding of the tools and their methodologies for tracking social and economic value creation, encompassing the SE, the third sector, and the conventional for-profit economy. Thirdly, the study evaluates the advancement of SE public policy evaluation grounded in the second-generation public policy framework for the SE sector.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section provides a literature foundation from three perspectives: the application of Economic Tendency Surveys (ETS) and business sentiment index to the SE sector, the evolution of SE policy tools, and the tracking of social value creation in the SE sector at a sectoral or national level.

Government officials and business leaders depend on economic forecasts to shape fiscal and monetary policies and plan future operational strategies (Petropoulos, Apiletti, Assimakopoulos, Babai, Barrow, Taieb et al., 2022). These forecasts employ various economic analysis methods, ranging from individual and comprehensive economic indicators to surveys and econometric models (Kim, 2022). The ETS has proven successful in numerous countries and diverse economic and social contexts (United Nations, 2015). Numerous studies have explored the effectiveness of the ETS based on business sentiment. For example, using Granger causality analysis, Gelper, Lemmens, and Croux (2007) substantiated that the Consumer Sentiment Index effectively predicts actual consumption four to five months later.

However, despite the significance and reliability of the ETS based on the business sentiment, their application had not been actively extended to the SE, except for a few cases, such as the Social Enterprise Barometer by Social Enterprise UK (SEUK) and the Barometer of the Third Sector of Social Action by NGO's Platform for Social Action. It provides a "map" of the social enterprises and third sector publishing collected data on civil society and nonprofit organizations (Appe, 2012). The S-BSI, a modified version of the Business Survey Index traditionally employed for evaluating and predicting the economic performance of conventional commercial enterprises, has been adapted for use in the SE context.

A new generation of SE policies has emerged, gaining traction in Europe and globally (Utting, 2017; Chaves & Gallego, 2020; Seo, 2024b). Unlike the earlier generation, which mainly relied on budgetary measures and fiscal benefits, the current public policies promoting SE encompass a broader range of strategies (Chaves & Monzon, 2018; 2020; Chaves & Gallego, 2020). Compared with the previous generation, the new approach is complex, involving diverse policymakers, implementation methods, policy conception, specific tools, integration into broad government policies, and policy evaluation, as presented in Table 1. However, despite the evolution of public policy measures for the next generation, more research needs to be done on advancing policy evaluation methodologies to match this progression.

Table 1: Comparison of the first and second-generation policies

Policy characteristics	First generation policies	Second generation policies
Degree of complexity	Fast policies (emerging, not systematic)	Systematic policies (complex, systematic)
Nature of the policymakers involved in policymaking	Direct approach. Policymakers in a restricted sense	Partnership approach. Policymakers in a broad sense, with broad citizen participation
Nature of the policymakers involved in the application	Direct approach. Policymakers in a restricted sense primarily	Ecosystem approach. Policymakers in a broad sense, with wide involvement in the implementation
Conception of the policy	Simple and budgetary devices	Holistic and strategic approach to policy
Concrete policy instruments	Provision of a single employment, technical, and investment payment: subsidies for diffusion and structures	Athenaeums, social facilitators, public contracting, co-working, specialized training, etc.
Degree of integration of the policy into general government policies	Sectorized, limited integration in the general policies	Mainstreaming approach high-integration into general policies, including centrality in them
Policy evaluation	Criteria of efficiency, effectiveness, and relevance	Quantitative and qualitative criteria, including participation, coherence, and sustainability

Source: Chaves, 2020, pp. 430–431.

The integration of stakeholders' perceptions of public policy evaluation offers valuable insights (Bryson, Cunningham, & Lokkesmoe, 2002). By collecting and analysing their opinions and viewpoints, one can understand how the policy program affects the achievement of its objectives and

meets the needs of stakeholders (Burger, Gochfeld, Kosson, Powers, Friedlander, Eichelberger et al., 2005). This approach enables a more comprehensive and realistic assessment, ultimately improving policies or programs as an evolved policy evaluation tool (Papineau & Kiely, 1996). It involves stakeholders who may not directly benefit from the policy, enabling a comprehensive assessment of its effectiveness (Nie, 2004).

Last but not least, there has been a growing emphasis on measuring the social value or impact generated by various organizations. Social value is defined differently across academic fields such as business and society studies, management accounting, and strategic management (Emerson, Wachowicz, & Chun, 2001; Ebrahim & Rangan, 2010). Variations exist in terms of impact, output, effect, and outcome (Maas & Liket, 2011). Nevertheless, *social value* is often interchangeable with phrases such as *social impact creation* and *social return* (Emerson et al., 2001; Clark, Rosenzweig, Long, & Olsen, 2004).

Numerous studies have focused on measuring the social impact of SE entities. On an international level, the 1990s marked the emergence of the first social impact assessment methods. Researchers developed several approaches in the late 1990s and 2000, including the Social Return on Investment (SROI), the Global Reporting Initiative, the Impact Reporting and Investment Standards (IRIS), and the B Impact Assessment (Grieco, 2015; Florman et al., 2016; Bouri et al., 2011; Silva, Lima, Sá, Fonseca, & Santos, 2022). On a domestic level in South Korea, various social value assessment tools were developed, including the Social Progress Credit (SPC), the Korean Environmental, Social, and Governance (K-ESG) tool, the Social Enterprise Evaluation Model, the Social Value Index (SVI), and the Social Venture Evaluation Model, among others (Yi & Chun, 2022; KoSEA, 2019).

Most existing research has primarily concentrated on social impact measures at the organizational level. Researchers need to conduct more studies at both the sectoral and national levels. At the sectoral level, only a handful of federations or national institutes analyze integrated social impact by collecting reports from each entity or through specific research projects, such as Spain and France (Castro, Santero, Martínez, & De Diego, 2020; Demoustier, Draperi, Lambert, Fretel, Lethielleux, Ramirez et al., 2020). Specifically, there is a need for more research concerning the impact of public policies aimed at the SE and developing information tools to address this gap despite their increasing importance. This study aims to bridge this gap by analyzing the S-BSI. Although the S-BSI is an organizational-level survey, researchers can use its results to interpret sectoral and national social impacts, and to improve and evaluate public policy for the SE.

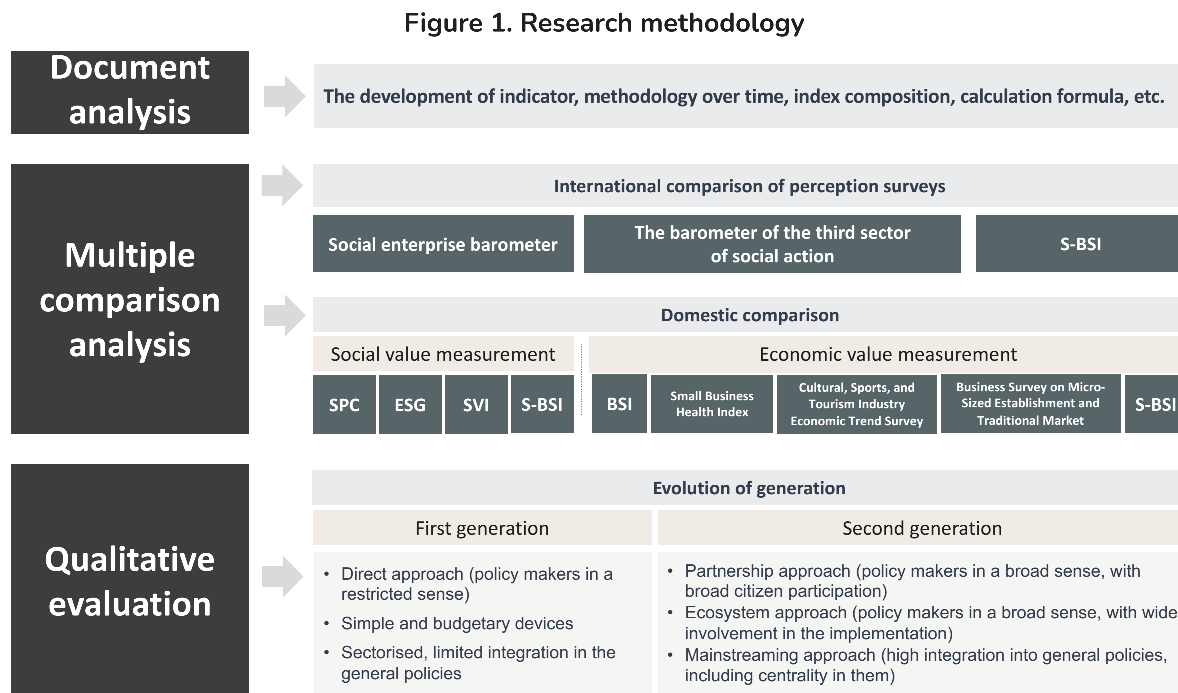
DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a comprehensive approach to investigate the S-BSI. First, it thoroughly analyzes the S-BSI's development process, methodology, sampling, and indicators. Second, it conducts a multiple comparative analysis to identify similarities and differences among selected international and domestic surveys. This method aims to identify similarities, differences, patterns, and unique features among the compared subjects or variables. By examining multiple aspects simultaneously, the study enables a thorough evaluation and meaningful conclusions based on the comparative findings. The analysis is structured around three dimensions: 1) an international comparative study

focusing on the three regular tendency surveys based on the perception of stakeholders of SE (the United Kingdom's Social Enterprise Barometer, Spain's Barometer of the Third Sector of Social Action, and the Republic of Korea's S-BSI); 2) domestic measuring social impact tools (SPC, K-ESG, SVI, and the S-BSI); and 3) surveys on economic tendency (the Business Survey Index, the Small Business Health Index, the Business Survey on Micro-Sized Establishment and Traditional Market and Cultural, Sports, and Tourism Industry Economic Trend Survey, and the B-SBI). These surveys were selected due to their similarities in regular tendency surveys based on the perception of stakeholders targeting similar sectors, measuring social impact generation and surveys on economic tendency, respectively.

Third, this study employs a qualitative evaluation methodology based on the theory of the next generation of SE policy (Chaves & Gallego, 2020) to assess the evolution of public policy evaluation methods, as depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Research methodology



This study undertakes a comprehensive analysis of a wide range of relevant documents, including government reports, annual reports, publications, official documentation, and research articles. The primary data used in this study spans from November 2015 to September 2023 and was sourced from survey reports of the S-BSI conducted by KoSEA, as well as government reports on SE promotion policy efforts and achievements covering the period from 2000 to 2023. It is important to note that a similar survey conducted by the U.K. government (Departments for Business Innovation and Skills) before SEUK's Social Enterprise Barometer survey is not covered in this study.

ANALYSIS

Crafting the S-BSI: Composition and sampling, indicator development

The S-BSI is a quarterly survey designed to monitor trends in social and economic value creation

of SE enterprises in South Korea. The initial survey in 2020 targeted the so-called four major SE enterprises—social enterprises, cooperatives, village companies, and self-sufficiency enterprises—as the survey population. The *Social Enterprise Promotion Act* of 2007 legally recognizes social enterprises and introduces accreditation and support systems. The 2012 *Framework Act on Cooperatives* provides legal recognition for cooperatives and outlines the guidelines for their formation and operations. Self-sufficiency enterprises assist the unemployed in achieving a basic standard of living through the Self-sufficiency Support Programme, established under the *National Basic Life Security Act*. Village companies conduct community businesses as outlined in the *Village Company Promotion Program Implementation Guide*, enacted in 2010 (Seo, 2024b).

In 2022, the S-BSI underwent improvements in four ways. First, the researchers refined the survey index to include business productivity factors, such as the production facility utilization rate in the manufacturing sector and productivity per employee in the service sector. Second, the researchers corrected the irregular survey frequency (monthly in 2020, once a year in 2021) and established a regular survey schedule (see Table 2). Third, the sampling process involved stratified systematic sampling, considering industry and sales, which are recognized as significant factors in the corporate economy. Fourth, the business industries of the SE enterprises were categorized into 11 major groups, adjusting from the 21 major categories of the Korean Standard Industrial Classification to better align with the characteristics and distribution of SE enterprises.

Table 2. The change of S-BSI indicators over time

Category	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of respondents	655	404	562	620
Number of the survey sample	945 SE enterprises	1,461 SE enterprises	564 SE enterprises	620 SE enterprises
Number of the survey population	1020	1623	2711	3091
Frequency	Monthly (Pilot project, from March to August)	Annually (November)	Quarterly (June, September, December)	Quarterly (March, June, September)
Method	Online survey	Online survey	Online survey	Online survey
Improvement of survey	N/A	N/A	The addition of "business productivity," a transition to a regular quarterly survey, and the enhancement of the sampling process	N/A

The survey examines the internal capabilities and external environment for social value creation of the SE, as presented in Table 3. Internal capabilities for social value creation encompass organizational and individual member capabilities necessary for creating social value. This includes business model development, business structure innovation, members' willingness to participate, and problem-solving abilities. Cooperation and networks between companies cover tangible and intangible collaborations with SE companies and private enterprises (value chains). The external environment includes policy influences such as relevant laws, support systems, social awareness, and citizen involvement. Policy influence incorporates laws directly related to the SE (such as the *Framework*

Act on Cooperatives) and laws significantly impacting SE enterprises (such as the *Public Property Management Act*).

Table 3. S-BSI survey items composition

Category	Survey items
Entity information	Company name, representative, contact information, location, business registration number, industry, number of full-time employees, detailed types within the SE sector (e.g., cooperatives, self-sufficiency enterprises), and social values
Social value creation performance and outlook	1) Social Value Creation Status: an evaluation of the current status; 2) Internal Capabilities for Social Value Creation; 3) Collaboration and Network for Social Value Creation: overall collaboration and networking status, cooperation with other SE entities, and cooperation with citizens and local communities; 4) External Environment for Social Value Creation: social awareness and participation. 5) Current quarter's performance and next quarter's outlook
Policy influence	1) Collaboration and Network for Social Value Creation: cooperation with central/local governments; 2) External Environment for Social Value Creation: relevant laws and support systems
Economic performance and outlook	1) Sales Trends: overall sales, the public sector sales, and private sector sales; 2) Funding Trends: overall funds, equity capital, debt, operating profit, new investments, government support, and private support; 3) Workforce Trends: workforce, including paid workers and volunteers; 4) Corporate Productivity: current quarter performance and outlook for the next quarter
Other	Management Challenges: difficulties in management

The survey also considers support systems targeting SE enterprises. Citizen involvement includes citizens' voluntary participation in the SE, ethical consumption, volunteer activities, social awareness, the level of understanding, and empathy for social values among citizens. The survey is evaluated on a 5-point scale. This assessment is based on feedback from SE entrepreneurs or managers. The current economic status and outlook consider the sales in both public and private markets, financial conditions, workforce supply and demand, and productivity for the current quarter and the outlook for the following quarter.

The calculated index value ranges from 0 to 200, where 0 represents a complete recession, 200 signifies a complete boom, and 100 denotes a neutral level, as presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2. S-BSI formula

$$BSI = \frac{1}{N}\left(50\sum n_1 + 100\sum n_2 + 150\sum n_3 + 200\sum n_4\right)$$

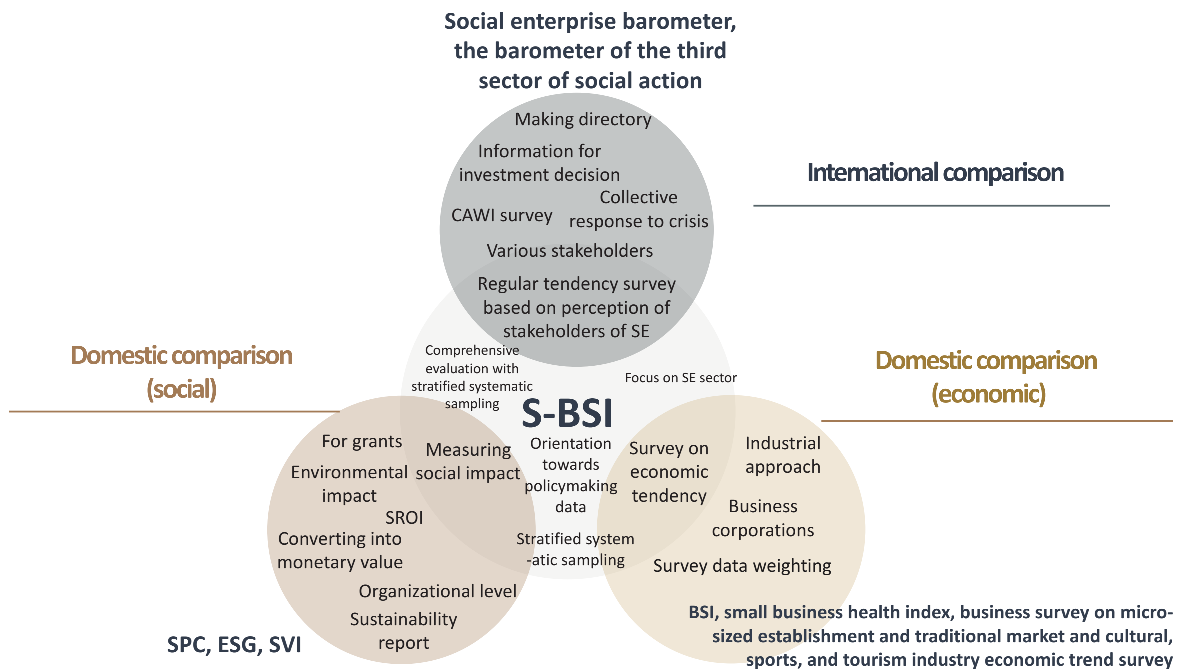
Notes: η_1: Entities indicating "slightly worsened"; η_2: Entities indicating "same or average"; η_3: Entities indicating "slightly improved"; η_4: Entities indicating "very improved"; N: Total responses. (KoSEA, 2022, p. 2)

International and domestic comparative study of similar surveys

The international comparison reveals the varying priorities of the respective surveys, as illustrated in Figure 3 and Table 4. The SEUK's Social Enterprise Barometer focuses on stakeholders such as donors who need effective fund allocation, reflecting its charitable tradition (Richez-Battesti, Petrella, & Vallade, 2012). In contrast, KoSEA's S-BSI targets policymakers and government officials

who require evidence to support budgetary decisions, given its emphasis on policy development (Seo, 2024b). The NGO's Platform for Social Action, via The Barometer of the Third Sector of Social Action, focuses on social organizations that aim to demonstrate their impact on funders, partners, and beneficiaries. This emphasis arises because civil society networks have shaped the political discourse on SE (Chaves & Gallego, 2020).

Figure 3. Multiple comparison analysis of the S-BSI



The target entities and populations also vary, including social enterprises, third-sector organizations, and SE enterprises, each with distinct characteristics and networks. The Barometer of the Third Sector of Social Action focuses on organizations within the Tercer Sector de Acción Social in Spain, which includes 27,962 entities according to the Directory of the Third Social Action Sector managed by the NGO's Platform for Social Action. In contrast, the Social Enterprise Barometer targets the member organizations of its social enterprise council. Conversely, the S-BSI covers four types of SE enterprises: social enterprises, cooperatives, village companies, and self-sufficiency enterprises.

Methodologically, The Barometer of the Third Sector of Social Action utilizes telephone support and computer-assisted web interviews (CAWI). The CAWIs are online surveys or interviews, with telephone agents providing assistance and encouragement, where respondents answer questions through a web browser. Conversely, the Social Enterprise Barometer and the S-BSI use online questionnaires for data collection.

From the international comparative analysis, the S-BSI distinguishes itself from other surveys through several key features. First, it focuses specifically on the SE sector, which encompasses various entities such as social enterprises, cooperatives, village companies, and self-sufficiency enterprises. This allows for a comprehensive evaluation of social and economic value creation within this sector. Second, the S-BSI adopts a stratified systematic sampling method to ensure a representative

sample and enhance data reliability. Third, it is an outcome-based evaluation model that prioritizes social and economic value creation of the SE sector, offering insights for policy formulation and decision-making, which is different from the other two surveys.

Table 4. International comparison of the Social Enterprise Barometer, the Barometer of the Third Sector of Social Action, and the S-BSI

Category	Social Enterprise Barometer. (The United Kingdom)	Barometer of the Third Sector of Social Action (Spain)	Business Survey Index for Social Economy (South Korea)
Objective	To raise awareness, influence policymakers, promote social enterprise, attract investment, and inform product and service delivery for SEUK members	To offer data on the sector, such as activities, future development, and the changes that are taking place to improve the effectiveness of these organizations according to the new social needs	To monitor and produce statistics on the business conditions and value creation trends of SE enterprises to establish a foundation for evidence-based policies
Institution	Social Enterprise UK	NGO's Platform for Social Action	Korea Social Enterprise Promotion Agency
Start year	May 2020	March 2015	March 2020
Survey cycle	Quarterly	Every 2–3 years	Quarterly
Universe	Social enterprises	Third Sector entities	SE enterprises
Population	Members within the SEUK network	Organizations that fall within the third sector in Spain, as indicated by the Directory of the Third Social Action Sector	4 types of SE entities (social enterprises, cooperatives, village companies, self-sufficiency enterprises)
Sampling	Panel sampling	—	Two-step stratified extraction method
Target	Around 300 Social Enterprise Advisory Panel	703 entities	620 SE entities(as of 2023)
Method	Online	CAWI survey with telephone support for attracting entities	Online
Survey item	Location, turnover, growth expectations breakdown (6 scales), turnover position (3 scales), turnover expectations (4 scale), expected Profit (4 scales), change in staff numbers (3 scales), cashflow position (3 scales), reserve positions (3 scales)	A questionnaire with a length of 345 variables such as identification data on expectations regarding the organization, activities, people, economic resources and financing sources, external relations and communications, regulatory-institutional framework, strategic management, digital transformation, organization, and perception of the third sector	Company name, representative, contact, location, business registration number, industry, number of full-time employees, detailed types within the SE sector, social values pursued, sales trends, funding trends, workforce trends, corporate productivity, social value creation status, internal capabilities for social value creation, collaboration and network for social value creation, the external environment for social value creation, management challenges (5 scales)

However, the comparison reveals that S-BSI faces challenges such as potential survey bias and the need for improved response rates, which could be addressed through methods such as the CAWI survey and validation with quantitative data. This hybrid approach offers several advantages, including: convenience, as respondents can participate at their preferred time and place; automation, which reduces time and costs for data collection and processing; and immediate feedback, allowing for real-time data analysis upon survey completion.

Furthermore, a detailed comparative analysis of the evolution of survey index compositions highlights the unique responsiveness of the Social Enterprise Barometer to societal changes, as presented in Table 5. This feature sets it apart from the S-BSI. The Barometer has been pivotal in tracking impacts, gathering insightful reaction measures to address the challenges, and identifying support needs for policy advocacy. The Barometer of the Third Sector of Social Action, however, has been particularly effective in assessing the enduring impact of the economic crisis, adapting to new sociopolitical transitions such as digitalization, and, most importantly, evaluating the sector's response and resilience during the pandemic, providing reassurance about its adaptability.

Table 5. Change of survey index compositions

Improvement of survey	Social Enterprise Barometer	The Barometer of the Third Sector of Social Action	Social Economy Business Survey Index
2015	—	Impact of the crisis, prospective analysis of the current and future challenges of the Third Sector of Social Action	—
2019	—	New horizons for a new sociopolitical context	N/A
2021	Reaction to the arrival of the Omicron variant	Response and resilience during the pandemic	N/A
2022	Impact and reaction to the cost-of-living crisis, cost-saving measures, energy costs, support requirements	Innovation and transformation for a fairer society	Examination of business productivity
2023	Areas of cost increases, impact of cost of living		N/A

At the domestic level (see Table 6), South Korea has various social value assessment tools, such as the SPC and the K-ESG guidelines. However, a critical examination reveals that these tools often focus on output and result-based indicators, neglecting crucial aspects related to inputs and processes. This limitation hinders a comprehensive understanding of the entire social value creation process, highlighting the need for a more comprehensive tool such as S-BSI.

Moreover, compared with similar social value assessment tools, one of the significant characteristics that sets S-BSI apart from other assessment tools is its orientation toward providing essential data for policymaking and policy impact. Unlike other tools that predominantly focus on output and results-based indicators at the organizational level, the S-BSI takes a unique approach. Rather than evaluating the impact of individual SE entities, it focuses on monitoring the tendencies and status

of the entire sector for policymaking. The S-BSI broadens its scope by considering interactions with central and local governments, relevant laws, and support systems.

Table 6. Domestic comparison of S-BSI, SPC, K-ESG, and SVI

Category	SPC	K-ESG	SVI	S-BSI
Objective	Measuring the social value created by social enterprises and compensating in cash	Evaluating the sustainability performance of businesses to enhance their sustainable management	Assessing the social value and impact generated by the SE organizations to inform various government support programs	Monitoring and producing statistics on the business conditions and trends of SE enterprises to establish a foundation for evidence-based policies
Measuring institution	Center for Social Value Enhancement Studies	Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy	Ministry of Employment and Labour/Korea Social Enterprise Promotion Agency	Korea Social Enterprise Promotion Agency
Target	Social enterprise	Enterprises	SE enterprises	SE enterprises
Evaluation criteria	Social service, employment, environment, social ecosystem performance	Environmental responsibility, social responsibility, governance	Social value performance, economic value performance, innovation performance, etc.	Social and economic value-creation performance and outlook, etc.
Indicators	Applied differently for each company (converting social performance into monetary value)	Renewable energy consumption, greenhouse gas emission intensity (per sales), percentage of permanent employees, industrial accident rate over the past three years, representation of women on the board of directors, status of internal misconduct and disclosure	Measuring with 14 measurement indicators in 7 areas (score out of 100): social mission, social value of main business activities, establishment of SE ecosystem, reinvestment for social purposes,democracy of operation, worker orientation, job creation and financial performance, labour performance, innovativeness of corporate activities	Responses on a 5-point scale, the calculated index value ranges from 0 to 200, where 0 signifies a complete recession, 200 denotes a complete boom, and 100 indicates a flat level

When it comes to analysis with the economic tendency surveys, the shared objective of each survey is to continually monitor the perceived economic performance of targeted companies and leverage this data as foundational information for comprehending the economic status of related industries and future economic forecasts. The main attributes and methodologies of each surveyed category are outlined in Table 7. What distinguishes the S-BSI from other assessment tools is its examination of social value creation status across diverse industries within the SE sector, maintaining an organizational focus. The survey provides a thorough assessment of social value creation, focusing on four main dimensions: social value creation status, internal capabilities, cooperation and networks, and the external environment.

Table 7. Domestic comparison of the Social Economy Business Survey Index, Business Survey Index, Small Business Health Index, Business Survey on Micro-Sized Establishment and Traditional Market, and the Cultural, Sports, and Tourism Industry Economic Trend Survey

Contents	Business Survey Index	Small Business Health Index	Business Survey on Micro-Sized Establishment and Traditional Market	Cultural, Sports, and Tourism Industry Economic Trend Survey	Social Economy Business Survey Index
Institution	Bank of Korea	Korea Federation of Small and Medium Businesses	Small Enterprise and Market Service	Korea Culture and Tourism Institute	Korea Social Enterprise Promotion Agency
Cycle	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Quarterly	Quarterly
Target	Corporations	(Non-) manufact-uring small and medium-sized businesses	Small business establishments, shops within traditional markets	Cultural, sports, and tourism industry enterprises	SE enterprise
Population	National Tax Service registered corporation	Enterprises with annual revenue exceeding 500 million KRW	Micro enterprises with less than 5 employees,traditional markets and retail stores	Enterprises with five or more employees in the cultural and arts industry, sports industry, and tourism industry	4 sectors related to SE (social enterprises, cooperatives, village companies, self-sufficiency enterprises)
Sampling	Stratified Systematic Sampling				
	Industry and sales	Industry and sales	Industry, region	Industry, number of employees	Industry and sales
Sampling size	3255	3150 (Manu-facturing) 1500 (Non-manufacturing) 1650	3700 (small business establishments) 2400 (traditional markets) 1300	2200	620 (as of 2023)
Weight criteria	GDP by industry	Sales by industry	—	Industry, size of employees	—
Methods	Online, mail, fax survey	Email, fax, in-person survey	Phone survey	Online and phone survey	Online survey
Period	Middle of each month	5 days around the 15th of every month	5 days from the 18th to the 22nd of every month	Third week at the end of March, June, September, and December	First week at the end of March, June, September, and December

Source: Adapted from Kim, 2022, p. 130

Evolution of SE public policymaking and evaluation tool

The qualitative analysis of the evolution of the S-BSI shows that the public policy evaluation tool evolves. Initially, in the 2000s and 2010s, evaluations focused on compliance with laws and regu-

lations, conducted separately by ministries overseeing specific types of SE entities. The second phase introduced more targeted measures to support SE entities, evaluating the effectiveness and social impact but remaining limited to each entity type. The SE Promotion Plan (2017) shifted toward an integrated SE concept in public policy (Seo, 2024b). Policies were developed for various SE enterprises (social enterprise, cooperative, self-sufficiency enterprise, community business), with evaluations covering the entire SE sector, as shown in Figure 4. However, evaluations were still centred on individual policy programs, collecting outputs from each type of SE entity.

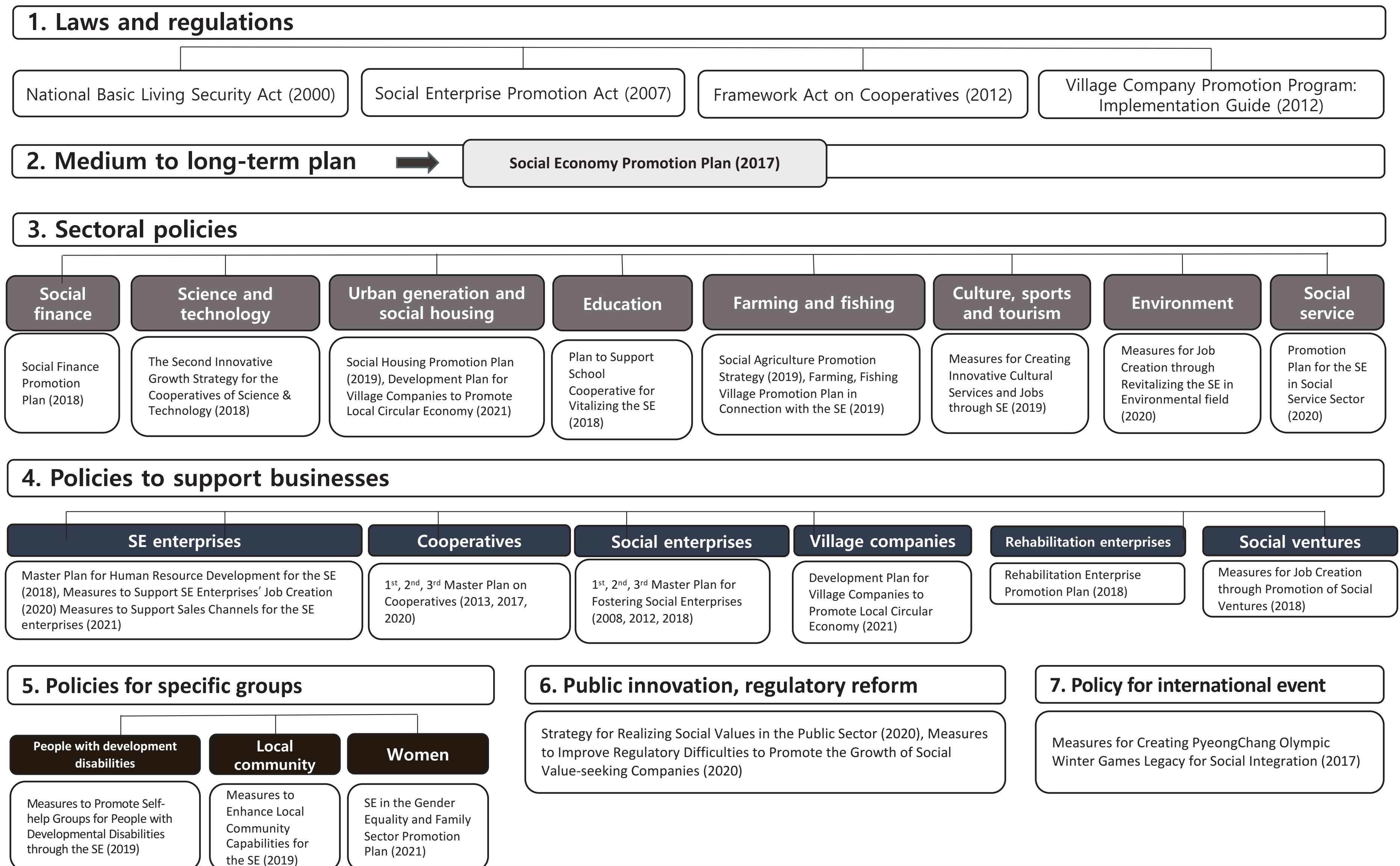
Previous methods assessed the actual effects of policies on their intended goals, such as the number of recipients and implementation performance. However, S-BSI does not just gather policy outputs; it also monitors social value creation within the SE sector with an ecosystem and mainstreaming approach.

First, the survey items reflect this ecosystem approach by focusing on various aspects: social value creation status measures overall social impact within the ecosystem; internal capabilities for social value creation assess how an enterprise's resources support its role in the ecosystem; collaboration and networking for social value creation highlights the importance of partnerships within the ecosystem; external environment for social value creation evaluates how external factors affect the ecosystem; and current quarter's performance and next quarter's outlook tracks performance trends and prospects in the context of ecosystem dynamics. These elements collectively reflect the ecosystem approach to evaluating social value creation.

Second, the survey items, such as SE enterprises' internal capabilities, external environment, collaboration, and network for creating social value, indicate that SE policies have evolved beyond their original role of fostering social businesses and developed to be integrated into broader economic, social, and environmental policy frameworks. The approach illustrates that SE enterprises are no longer passive recipients of policy support but actively contribute to society (Bidet & Richez-Batesti, 2022). It underscores the integration of policies that foster the creation of diverse social and economic values through collaboration with other businesses, government entities, and local communities (Jang, 2017; Seo, 2024b). It is also important to note that SE policies are increasingly aligned with the government's sustainable development goals, and practices, such as preferential procurement of goods from SE enterprises by public agencies and expanded support for these enterprises by central and local governments, are becoming standard components of economic policy (Lee, Yoon, & Lee, 2022).

Third, the survey items of economic indicators are intricately linked to various policy tools that support SE enterprises. Sales trends are assessed to gauge public contracting policies' effectiveness, prioritizing purchasing from SE enterprises. Funding trends reflect the role of social facilitators, who aid in securing financial resources for enterprises. Workforce trends highlight the impact of co-working spaces, which foster collaboration and affect staffing dynamics. Corporate productivity is evaluated to understand the benefits of specialized training programs to enhance enterprise capabilities. Lastly, management challenges are analyzed to measure how Athenaeums, which provide knowledge-sharing and problem-solving spaces, help enterprises overcome operational difficulties. Each survey item thus connects with specific policy tools, illustrating their impact on the performance and development of SE enterprises.

Figure 4. Segmentation of Korean SE policies according to sector and function

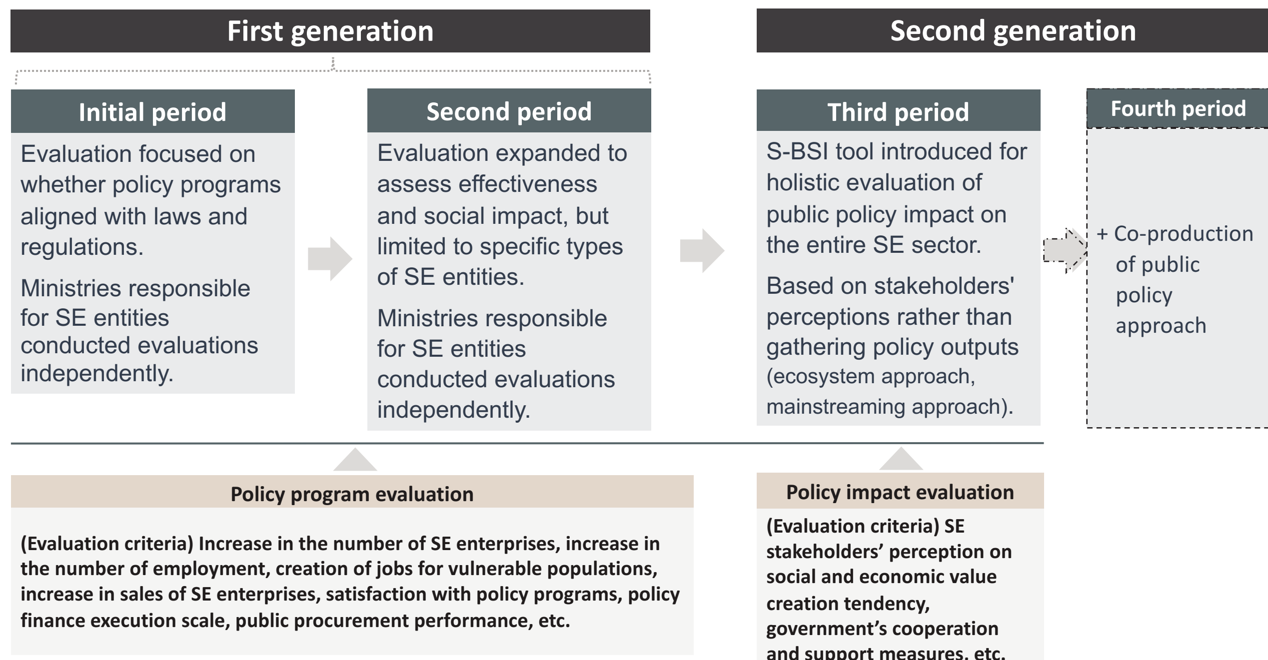


However, the S-BSI needs to improve in fostering a partnership approach. In terms of collaboration (Pestoff, 2012), the survey implementation process did not collect the stakeholders' opinions, and the partners did not use the results. The survey results have been used only to analyze policy effects, provide several trend briefs published by KoSEA, and inform government policy, such as the Social Economy Sales Channel Support Measures (2021) (Kim & Seo, 2020). It has yet to fully reach the second generation, as presented in Table 8 and Figure 5.

Table 8. Survey items and feature of second-generation of public policy for the SE

Survey items	Feature of second generation
1. Social Value Creation Status 2. Internal Capabilities for Social Value Creation 3. Collaboration and Network for Social Value Creation 4. External Environment for Social Value Creation 5. Current Quarter's Performance and Next Quarter's Outlook	• Systematic (complex, systematic) policies • Ecosystem approach • Holistic and strategic approach • Mainstreaming approach (integration into general policies)
1. Collaboration and Network for Social Value Creation 2. External Environment for Social Value Creation	• Ecosystem approach • Mainstreaming approach (integration into general policies)
1. Sales Trends 2. Funding Trends 3. Workforce Trends 4. Corporate Productivity 5. Management Challenges	• Athenaeums, social facilitators, public contracting, co-working, specialised training, etc.
—	• Partnership approach. Policymakers in a broad sense, with broad citizen participation

Figure 5. Evolution of SE policy evaluation



DISCUSSION

This article contributes significantly by introducing a new approach to evaluating SE public policies. It analyzes the development of policy tools considering the perceptions of SE stakeholders and offers suggestions for enhancing SE policy evaluation to improve overall SE value creation and policy effectiveness. Unlike previous methods, this approach focuses on the next generation of SE policies (Chaves & Gallego, 2020), providing valuable insights into the advancement of policy evaluation tools and their impact on the sector.

The emergence of S-BSI, an outcome-based evaluation model for assessing SE public policy, offers an alternative to the conventional goal-attainment evaluation of each policy program (Vedung, 1997; Enjolras, 2009). Policy evaluation based on the barometer of social value, which corresponds to stakeholder evaluation, can be a potentially effective tool for assessing public policy within the SE sector. This evaluation method can achieve effectiveness without directly influencing the behaviours and organizational characteristics of the implementing agents (Papineau & Kiely, 1996; Porter & Shortall, 2009). This effectiveness arises because the method facilitates the assessment of policy impact with timely information and examines the opinions and perspectives of various stakeholders affected by the policy, including secondary beneficiaries of public policy initiatives (Nie, 2004). Moreover, assuming the S-BSI is conducted concurrently with the existing construction of basic statistics, the S-BSI may enhance the visibility of the SE sector, thereby providing a foundation for data-driven policymaking (Kim, 2022). Introducing the S-BSI system is anticipated to improve the prediction of the impact on the scope of economic recovery, underscoring the crucial role of future policy directions.

Another contribution arises from addressing the research gap related to tools for monitoring the tendency of social value creation at the national and integrated SE sector levels (Martinos, Johnson, & Tödtling-Schönhofer, 2020). Existing methodologies often prioritize output and results-oriented indicators, sometimes overlooking crucial input and process elements (Kim & Kim, 2021). This study reveals that S-BSI aids in identifying trends and patterns in social value across different sectors and regions within the SE. It enables the prediction of actual social and economic value conditions based on perceived performance of social value creation (Kim, 2022). The S-BSI also examines the status of various factors for social value creation in the sector. It fills this gap by providing a more holistic perspective beyond measuring output and resultant social value.

The S-BSI has several limitations compared with similar overseas and domestic cases. First, even though the S-BSI extends beyond mere government mapping, it needs to improve in fostering a partnership approach. Regarding the co-production of public policy, it has yet to reach the second generation fully, but it is developing. Second, the S-BSI needs to be more responsive to societal changes. The international comparison analysis underscores the critical role of risk management during uncertain times, with surveys serving as early warning systems that aid in assessing sector impacts based on stakeholder perception. The S-BSI could be improved to fulfil this function and respond to societal changes. Third, the S-BSI explicitly targets SE enterprises' leaders and does not include open-ended questions. Open-ended questions could provide more meaningful and accurate responses.

Fourth, compared with similar surveys, the survey method exhibits bias due to reliance on simple online survey links, prompting the need for measures to improve the response rate. Adopting the

CAWI survey with telephone support, as seen in The Barometer of the Third Sector of Social Action, could address this bias. Furthermore, validation through comparisons with quantitative data, such as gross domestic product (GDP), consumption, and employment records, is crucial. Fifth, despite going beyond mere outputs and results, survey items related to social value creation need refinement, focusing on the utility of policymaking data. Sixth, the S-BSI is subjective and not audited, so one should be careful when interpreting and reusing the data. Seventh, its use was limited to publishing policy papers such as Social Economy Sales Channel Support Measures in 2021. Finally, but certainly not least, it is imperative to acknowledge the environmental impact within the assessment framework. This enhancement would facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of social and economic value creation, accounting for the broader environmental impact.

Limitations and future research

While this study conducted multiple comparison analyses and revealed the distinctive features of the S-BSI survey, questions remain on the comparability of the international and domestic cases. Due to this limitation, comparing the measurement results in the international and domestic comparison sections was impossible. For instance, the social enterprise approach in the United Kingdom, the third sector approach in Spain, and the SE approach in South Korea each have distinct backgrounds and operating environments. However, this study did not thoroughly analyze the survey results concerning these approaches. Furthermore, this study has yet to thoroughly examine or elucidate the extent to which it was developed for evidence-based public policy for the SE.

This study suggests future research avenues. First, examining the exact correlation between social value creation trends and internal/external factors can enhance understanding of their relationship. It is necessary to investigate the interplay among internal capabilities, collaboration, citizen/community engagement, governmental cooperation, relevant legislation/support systems, societal awareness/participation, and social value creation performance of the SE sector.

Second, empirical research is crucial to validate the relevance between the S-BSI results and the actual social and economic conditions of SE enterprises. The S-BSI may be strengthened by incorporating validation through comparisons with quantitative data, such as GDP, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of social and economic value creation in the SE sector. Third, further exploration is warranted to understand the correlation among various factors impacting economic value creation. Fourth, there is scope for researching the evolution of public policy evaluation through a stakeholder evaluation approach. Examining the potential transformation of the barometer into a policy evaluation tool based on a stakeholder approach is recommended. Fifth, this study needs more discussion on how policymakers and stakeholders could use the tool's results. Finally, as a potential resource for evidence-based policymaking, more explicit guidelines for developing survey items to enhance their effectiveness in informing public policy is recommended.

CONCLUSION

This study empirically analyzes the S-BSI, conducting multiple comparisons to grasp its distinctive features. A qualitative evaluation approach demonstrates a significant transition of public policy tools toward next-generation in South Korea. Specifically, the study reveals that the S-BSI is in the

ongoing second generation of policies, emphasizing stakeholders' perceptions with an ecosystem and mainstreaming approach. However, despite its merits, such as outcome-based evaluation that prioritizes social and economic value creation of the SE sector, the S-BSI has several limitations. For instance, it needs to improve its partnership approach and address biased survey methods and unclear application of results for evidence-based policy development. Further exploration into correlation with internal/external factors and validation against actual SE conditions is also warranted.

For policymakers and stakeholders, this study underscores the critical importance of systematically and comprehensively evaluating the social and economic value generated by the SE sector. The S-BSI's holistic approach, which includes inputs, processes, and outcomes, accurately reflects the SE sector's vitality and helps formulate evidence-based policies tailored to its specific needs. By adopting tools like the S-BSI, which assesses social value at both sectoral and national levels, policymakers can better understand the unique characteristics of SE organizations and avoid the pitfalls of relying solely on data from traditional for-profit enterprises. This study's in-depth analysis of the S-BSI's development and comparative evaluations highlights its potential as an advanced tool for public policymaking and evaluation. Addressing the identified limitations and incorporating the suggested improvements will significantly enhance the S-BSI's effectiveness as a public policymaking and evaluation tool.

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The Impact of Support in Collective Entrepreneurship: The Case of the SISMIC Program in Québec

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, interest of the positive impact of collective entrepreneurship has been growing. Launched by the Chantier de l'économie sociale, SISMIC is one example of an entrepreneurial support program designed to capitalize on this potential. This article assesses the program's outcomes based on a qualitative analysis of data gathered through interviews with participating entrepreneurs. The results show that entrepreneurial support promotes strategic thinking, builds confidence, and strengthens reputations. The program enhanced entrepreneurs' knowledge, resources, and operational structure. The incubator has also provided new insights into the unique participatory governance processes and legal structures that define the social economy. Furthermore, the authors found that the synergy between coaching and financing support enables entrepreneurs to fully focus on their projects, easing their mental burden.

RÉSUMÉ

Depuis quelques années, l'impact positif de l'entrepreneuriat collectif suscite de plus en plus d'intérêt. Le Chantier de l'économie sociale, conscient de ce potentiel, a initié des programmes d'accompagnement dédié aux entrepreneurs collectifs, dont le programme « SISMIC ». Cet article examine les retombées de ce dernier à travers une étude qualitative basée sur des entretiens menés auprès des entrepreneurs ayant participé au programme. Les résultats montrent que le programme a amélioré les connaissances, les ressources et la structuration des projets. L'incubateur a permis de mieux comprendre les mécanismes de gouvernance participative requis par l'économie sociale et les structures juridiques propres à celle-ci. La synergie entre l'accompagnement et le financement permet aux entrepreneurs de se concentrer pleinement sur leurs projets en allégeant leur charge mentale.

Keywords / Mots clés : collective entrepreneurship, incubator, entrepreneurial support, social economy / entrepreneuriat collectif, incubateur, accompagnement entrepreneurial; économie sociale

INTRODUCTION

The social economy plays an important role in Québec's socio-economic landscape. Rooted in values of solidarity and democratic governance, it helps foster sustainable and inclusive forms of development. The phenomenon is largely driven by collective entrepreneurs who establish co-operatives and non-profit organizations dedicated to meeting local community needs. This approach can help to galvanize the regional economy while also promoting social and economic justice. In Québec, collective entrepreneurship (often associated with the social economy) includes 11,200 collective enterprises with a combined turnover of $47.8 billion and a total workforce of roughly 220,000 (Institut de la statistique du Québec, 2019). These figures also reflect the impact of a wide range of government initiatives designed to support collective entrepreneurship and strengthen the social economy.

At the same time, young people have brought new energy, innovative ideas, and unique perspectives to bear in tackling contemporary challenges. Support for their efforts not only promotes the sustainability and renewal of collective entrepreneurship, but also helps ensure that the social economy can adapt to the realities and aspirations of younger generations. Moreover, entrepreneurial support can provide emerging entrepreneurs with access to the tools and resources they need to achieve long-term success.

With these goals in mind, Chantier de l'économie sociale teamed up with Pôles d'économie sociale du Québec to launch SISMIC, a collective entrepreneurship program for youth aged 18 to 29. The program was intended to help young people take charge of their future through an innovative approach to organization development.

As part of a research project undertaken jointly with the Chantier de l'économie sociale, we conducted interviews with 22 participating entrepreneurs from different regions of Québec. Based on a qualitative analysis of the interview data, this article aims to identify the benefits of the SISMIC program.

COLLECTIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUSINESS INCUBATION

In recent years, researchers have shown growing interest in concepts such as social entrepreneurship (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2020; Gupta & Srivastava, 2024), collective entrepreneurship (Razafindrazaka & Fourcade, 2016), and high-impact entrepreneurship (Kleinhempel & Estrin, 2024; Markman, Waldron, Gianiodis, & Espina, 2019). These concepts challenge the traditional view of entrepreneurship as a matter of individual action and pave the way toward a collective approach that positions entrepreneurship as a driver of social change (Ben-Hafaïedh, Champenois, Cooney, & Schjoedt, 2024).

Laville and Nyssens (2001) point out that collective entrepreneurship prioritizes the public interest over private profit. This sets it apart from other types of business ventures. Recently, Deschamps and Slitine (2024) highlighted a renewed interest in collective entrepreneurship, which is also accompanied by the emergence of dedicated support structures called social incubators (Casasnovas & Bruno, 2013; Pandey, Lall, Pandey, & Ahlawat, 2017). While much of the literature addresses the definition of these incubators, their differentiation from other incubation models, and the description of their services (Miller & Stacey, 2014; Nicolopoulou, Karataş-Özkan, Vas, & Nouman,

2017; Pandey et al., 2017; Sansone, Andreotti, Colombelli, & Landoni, 2020), little attention has been paid to explore the impact of these social incubators on the entrepreneurs they are designed to support. This study addresses this gap by examining the case of the SISMIC support program and its outcomes for beneficiaries.

METHODOLOGY

Between September 2023 and February 2024, we conducted 22 semi-structured interviews with entrepreneurs who had participated in the SISMIC program. Our sample included individuals whose projects were at different stages of maturity. The interview data were manually processed using thematic content analysis.

KEY FINDINGS

Entrepreneurial support as a source of knowledge and resources for collective entrepreneurs

According to participants, the SISMIC program provided access to various resources that fostered their personal growth and improved the structure of their projects. Indeed, they emphasized how both individual and group coaching sessions enhanced their technical, managerial, and interpersonal skills. They gained knowledge vital to the success of their ventures, including how to prepare a business plan and develop a value proposition. The incubator's focus on collective entrepreneurship ensured that participants learned about governance models and legal structures adapted to the needs of social economy enterprises.

The SISMIC program also provided entrepreneurs with opportunities to improve interpersonal skills, including self-confidence, non-violent communication, and active listening. Similar emphasis was placed on managerial skills such as managing human resources, financial assets, and schedules. Moreover, the program strengthened participants' ability to understand the local entrepreneurial ecosystem and navigate regional specificities. The SISMIC experience also helped dispel certain myths surrounding collective entrepreneurship such as demonstrating that starting a social enterprise does not require personal debt and that a social mission can coexist with economic profitability.

Entrepreneurial support as a source of legitimacy and visibility

Entrepreneurial support plays a key role in legitimizing and increasing the visibility of entrepreneurs and their projects. Beyond knowledge transfer, SISMIC participants described how the program enhanced their credibility by helping them gain recognition within their respective entrepreneurship ecosystems. Participating in such a program allows them to showcase their achievements, which facilitates access to financial support and helps burnish their reputation. One participant stated, "To raise funding, the participation in SISMIC gave us a certain level of credibility to be able to say, we were part of an incubator, it allows us to say we're not just anyone. We have done this, here are our accomplishments."

Moreover, these programs help increase the visibility of projects, promoting regional outreach and fostering strategic partnerships: "We've been able to forge partnerships that have given us a real

foothold in the Laval market. People get in touch because of the level of visibility I've managed to achieve. And in large part, that visibility is thanks to my participation in the program."

The mix of entrepreneurial support and funding as a catalyst for social economy projects

When combined with funding, entrepreneurial support fosters both the development of social economy initiatives and the commitment of entrepreneurs. Financial support, such as grants or subsidies, allows entrepreneurs to fully dedicate themselves to their projects by reducing financial concerns and easing their mental burdens. Some treat the financial aid as a remuneration for devoting themselves fully to their projects: "It meant that I could make this initiative my main priority for several months." Others choose to reinvest these funds into their project, covering essential expenses such as acquiring equipment, paying service providers, or improving communication tools. This type of support facilitates more organized development, enhancing the sustainability and impact of their social economy projects: "We used what we could … it also provides seed funding to buy equipment initially."

CONCLUSION AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

This contribution confirms the importance and usefulness of entrepreneurial support programs for the development of the social economy sector and the need to multiply them among young people. Many participants saw SISMIC as a springboard for success. In particular, the incubator allowed them to transform ideas into concrete action and to effectively structure their projects.

Through individual coaching sessions, peer-to-peer discussions, and tools tailored to the social economy sector, entrepreneurs have been able to refine their value proposition, adjust their offerings, and better target their customers. These support dynamics encourage strategic thinking, strengthen confidence, and legitimize entrepreneurs, helping them persevere in their endeavors.

Our findings also highlight the vital importance of supporting nascent collective entrepreneurs with a combination of one-on-one coaching and funding. Financial support enables entrepreneurs to focus on their projects by alleviating mental burdens and reducing financial barriers. This synergy between entrepreneurial support and funding helps stabilize projects in their initial phase and ensures their sustainability by facilitating necessary investments to address logistical needs, including equipment and professional services.

This study reveals several avenues for enhancing entrepreneurial support programs. For instance, these programs should facilitate entrepreneurs' integration into the local ecosystem, particularly for those new to the area, to help them expand their network, access local resources, and build legitimacy. Additionally, programs can better meet the needs of collective entrepreneurs by offering specialized workshops and practical exercises on topics relevant to the social economy, such as governance and financial sustainability. Finally, engaging specialized mentors who can provide valuable insights and personalized guidance is also recommended to foster resilience and encourage innovation among collective entrepreneurs.

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L'accompagnement au démarrage de projets collectifs jeunesse : défis et perspectives de l'incubateur SISMIC Capitale-Nationale

Philippe Hamel & Frédérique Moisan
Pôle des entreprises d'économie sociale de la région de la Capitale-Nationale

ABSTRACT
Committed young people are aware of the issues affecting our societies and are seeking to find solutions and contribute to developing a fairer and more inclusive economic model. There is growing interest in alternative business models, such as social economy enterprises. Even so, the transition from idea to project is for many project leaders a difficult hurdle to overcome. The SISMIC program, run by regional social economy clusters, offers support to young people in their efforts to launch social economy businesses. Although the support offered by the poles is highly relevant to the many projects they shepherd, the proportion of actual collective enterprises that result from the SISMIC incubators remains low. Basing itself on regional perspective, the Pôle des entreprises d'économie sociale de la région de la Capitale-Nationale (Pôle CN) explains in this article the reasons behind the difficulty in bringing young people's collective projects to fruition.

RÉSUMÉ
La jeunesse engagée est consciente des enjeux qui affectent nos sociétés et cherche à trouver des solutions et contribuer à développer un modèle économique plus juste et solidaire. On assiste à une montée de l'engouement pour des modèles alternatifs d'entreprises, comme les entreprises d'économie sociale. Cependant, on constate que le passage de l'idée à la concrétisation d'un projet est un écueil difficile à contourner pour de nombreux porteurs de projets. Le programme SISMIC, porté par les pôles régionaux d'économie sociale, offre un soutien aux jeunes dans leurs démarches de démarrage d'entreprises d'économie sociale. Bien que l'appui offert par les pôles soit des plus pertinents au regard des nombreux projets accompagnés, on observe que la proportion de constitutions d'entreprises collectives issues des incubateurs SISMIC demeure faible. En se basant sur sa perspective régionale, le Pôle des entreprises d'économie sociale de la région de la Capitale-Nationale (Pôle CN) expose dans cet article les raisons de la difficile concrétisation des projets collectifs portés par les jeunes.

Keywords / Mots clés : social economy, youth, project concretization, regional support, social economy hub / économie sociale, jeunes, concrétisation de projet, soutien régional, pôle d'économie sociale

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Face aux défis de la transition socioécologique et à l'élargissement des inégalités économiques, l'économie sociale est perçue comme un modèle de développement alternatif et apparaît, pour plusieurs, comme cruciale dans la société de demain. Les jeunes adultes ont un engouement grandissant pour ces modèles alternatifs d'entreprises qu'ils perçoivent comme des vecteurs de changement et de positionnement social. Généralement engagés, ces jeunes sont soucieux de contribuer à une société plus juste, équitable et résiliente. Cependant, concilier les exigences de leurs différentes sphères de vie—études, travail, engagement social et vie personnelle—demeure un défi de taille. Ils sont nombreux à être conscients des enjeux et à reconnaître les besoins de leur communauté, mais devant la lourdeur que peut impliquer le démarrage d'un projet et la prise en charge des besoins individuels et collectifs, plusieurs se sentent impuissants ou se découragent.

Comment, dès lors, jongler avec ces multiples responsabilités, rester fidèle à ses valeurs et maintenir une motivation forte pour s'engager dans des projets collectifs porteurs de sens pour la société? C'est précisément dans cet esprit que les pôles d'économie sociale se sont donné pour mission de promouvoir l'entrepreneuriat collectif jeunesse (18-35 ans) via le programme SISMIC.

Offert dans les 22 pôles régionaux d'économie sociale du Québec, le programme SISMIC (Chantier de l'économie sociale, 2024a) est un parcours d'idéation et de soutien au prédémarrage de projets en économie sociale pour les jeunes de 18 à 35 ans. Bien que, depuis sa création en 2019, des centaines de jeunes aient bénéficié de l'accompagnement SISMIC dans leur région, le taux de projets d'OSBL ou de coopératives qui ont réellement vu le jour à la suite de l'accompagnement SISMIC demeure limité. Jusqu'où ces jeunes visionnaires sont-ils prêts à aller pour concrétiser leurs idéaux? Avant de s'aventurer dans les pistes d'explication de ce phénomène, il importe de revenir sur le parcours d'accompagnement SISMIC et l'idée derrière cette volonté nationale de stimuler l'entrepreneuriat collectif jeunesse.

Né d'une vision nationale, le programme SISMIC est une initiative du Chantier de l'économie sociale, financé par le Secrétariat à la jeunesse et déployé localement par les pôles régionaux d'économie sociale qui, chacun à sa manière, adaptent le programme à leur réalité territoriale. Véritable ancrage local et régional, le Pôle des entreprises d'économie sociale de la région de la Capitale-Nationale ou Pôle CN (2024) déploie l'initiative dans la grande région 03. Avec plusieurs établissements collégiaux et l'Université Laval sur son territoire, la région offre un environnement fertile pour la création d'entreprises. Au cours des dernières années, c'est une quarantaine de projets que nous avons accompagnés annuellement via le programme SISMIC Capitale-Nationale, permettant ainsi à des centaines de jeunes de bénéficier du soutien nécessaire pour imaginer et concrétiser des projets à impact, en phase avec les valeurs qu'ils souhaitent incarner. Cependant, malgré la richesse de leurs idées et le potentiel de leur impact, force est de constater qu'ils parviennent à mener bien peu de projets jusqu'au stade de la constitution formelle. Pourtant, chacune de leurs idées est porteuse d'espoir, de valeur et de changement social.

Pourquoi, bien que nous rejoignions des centaines de jeunes annuellement, pouvons-nous compter sur nos doigts la constitution réelle des projets que nous accompagnons? Nous offrons dans les prochaines lignes plusieurs pistes d'explication de ce phénomène, toujours tirées de notre perspective sur le terrain au Pôle CN.

D'abord, ce constat s'explique de manière plus générale par un manque de connaissance de ce qu'est l'économie sociale. Celle-ci reste encore très marginale dans les cursus scolaires, non seulement dans les facultés d'administration, mais également dans les autres facultés, qui gagneraient à l'enseigner (rappelons que l'économie sociale est transversale à tous les secteurs d'activités et qu'il n'est absolument pas nécessaire d'avoir étudié en administration des affaires pour démarrer un projet collectif). Il est donc essentiel d'accorder une place à l'économie sociale dans nos manuels scolaires. En réponse à ce manque, le Pôle CN propose des ateliers et formations, notamment aux étudiants des niveaux collégial et universitaire, ainsi qu'un parcours d'accompagnement en formule cohorte, pour l'idéation et la construction de projets d'économie sociale pour les jeunes de 18 à 35 ans, qu'ils soient issus d'établissements scolaires postsecondaires ou non. Cette offre permet de mettre en valeur le modèle de l'économie sociale auprès d'étudiants, de citoyens, de professeurs et d'acteurs de l'écosystème entrepreneurial qui autrement n'y seraient pas exposés.

Une autre piste d'explication au défi soulevé réside dans l'accès aux financements, qui constitue un obstacle majeur pour les projets en incubation. La création d'une entreprise collective exige souvent un engagement bénévole soutenu de la part de jeunes déjà occupés à concilier études, stages (non rémunérés dans bien des cas), emplois et vie sociale. La concrétisation de leur projet peut donc être un véritable parcours du combattant. C'est ici que le choc entre idéalisme et réalité devient apparent. Pour tenter d'alléger la pression financière vécue par les porteurs de projets et les soutenir dans leurs démarches d'idéation, le Pôle CN mobilise son écosystème pour trouver du financement et des bourses auprès de ses partenaires. Bien qu'insuffisantes, ces mesures constituent un réel apport à la motivation des jeunes à s'engager dans la création de projets collectifs, mais le taux de constitution de projets issus de nos cohortes demeure néanmoins faible.

La difficile concrétisation des projets s'explique aussi par le fait que les jeunes qui intègrent SISMIC se trouvent souvent aux premiers stades de l'idéation, là où leur projet est encore une idée qui doit être mûrie, structurée et confrontée aux réalités du terrain pour en évaluer la réalisabilité. Ces jeunes, ambitieux et idéalistes, arrivent avec des rêves solides mais parfois éloignés des contraintes pratiques. Notre rôle d'accompagnateurs consiste donc à équilibrer l'enthousiasme avec le pragmatisme, en maintenant leur motivation et en les aidant à anticiper les obstacles potentiels sur leur parcours. Cela représente un véritable défi : en tant que pôle, nous allons parfois au-delà de nos mandats pour guider les projets les plus prometteurs, utilisant la force de notre écosystème pour permettre à ces jeunes de progresser. Grâce à cette approche, nous commençons à observer une augmentation de la proportion de projets aboutis, ce qui démontre la valeur de cet accompagnement ciblé.

On entend souvent dire qu'il faut une certaine audace pour se lancer en entrepreneuriat. Dans l'économie sociale, ce défi est d'autant plus grand qu'il faut mobiliser plusieurs personnes autour de l'idée, c'est-à-dire convaincre un groupe de trois à cinq cofondateurs de s'engager dans un modèle collectif et démocratique. Or, même si la volonté de changement social est forte chez les jeunes, il n'est pas simple de rassembler autour de soi un réseau de soutien solide, surtout entre 18 et 35 ans, des âges où le réseau professionnel reste limité. Traditionnellement, on se lance en entrepreneuriat après quelques années d'expérience professionnelle, mais le volet jeunesse de SISMIC met

de côté cet ordre établi en soutenant les jeunes dans la construction d'entreprises dès leurs années d'études. Une telle approche exige donc non seulement de défendre une vision entrepreneuriale encore considérée comme marginale, mais aussi de déconstruire des stéréotypes sur l'économie sociale, notamment sur les conditions de travail modestes et la redistribution des profits.

À titre d'employé(e)s du Pôle, nous partageons avec ces jeunes la volonté de changer la donne. Nombre d'entre nous ont porté ces mêmes aspirations au cours de notre propre parcours, notamment en nous engageant socialement, en faisant de la recherche scientifique, ou encore en fondant ou en travaillant au sein de projets collectifs porteurs de sens pour nos communautés. Nous continuons aujourd'hui de croire à ce modèle économique comme vecteur de changement. C'est pour cette raison que nous nous investissons dans la promotion de l'économie sociale et appelons aussi les acteurs publics à soutenir ce modèle par des appuis financiers, des accompagnements spécialisés et un accès simplifié aux ressources de l'écosystème. En abaissant les obstacles d'accès et en misant sur une incubation plus soutenue, nous sommes convaincus que davantage de jeunes oseront se lancer dans cette aventure collective.

Le programme SISMIC, en offrant aux jeunes un cadre unique de formation et de mentorat, contribue à transformer le modèle entrepreneurial et à ancrer l'économie sociale comme une alternative viable. Au fil des années, nous avons vu des exemples concrets, allant de l'OSBL en éducation sexuelle à la coopérative de solidarité dans le secteur de la santé en passant par toutes sortes d'initiatives solidaires en culture et en agroalimentaire, qui témoignent de la diversité et du potentiel de ce modèle. Avec une équipe riche en savoirs diversifiés, nous innovons dans notre accompagnement en utilisant la force de l'intelligence collective et en encourageant le mentorat entre experts, anciens et nouveaux participants au programme SISMIC. Par exemple, dans le cadre des ateliers du parcours SISMIC, nous faisons appel à la force du groupe en amenant les participants à échanger des conseils, à partager de bonnes et moins bonnes pratiques, à parler des enjeux qu'ils vivent et à s'entraider par des méthodes éprouvées comme le co-développement. De plus, nous créons des ponts entre d'anciens et nouveaux participants, en invitant ces premiers à venir partager leur expérience dans le cadre d'ateliers et formations. D'autre part, nous invitons des experts du milieu à mentorer les jeunes des cohortes actuelles. Cette approche d'accompagnement collaboratif, ancrée dans une communauté de pratique dynamique, reste au cœur de notre engagement.

L'impulsion donnée par la jeunesse dans le domaine de l'économie sociale est, selon nous, un moteur puissant pour stimuler le changement social. Les jeunes apportent à la fois une énergie et une vision renouvelée qui peuvent revitaliser le tissu économique et social. Cependant, il est clair que le parcours pour concrétiser ces aspirations demeure ardu, marqué par des obstacles financiers, organisationnels et sociaux. Dans ce contexte, l'accompagnement offert par SISMIC au sein des pôles régionaux d'économie sociale joue un rôle crucial pour guider les jeunes dans leurs démarches, en leur offrant un cadre où ils peuvent explorer, construire et structurer leurs projets collectifs.

En somme, l'économie sociale n'est pas seulement un modèle entrepreneurial alternatif; elle est une réponse aux aspirations d'une jeunesse en quête de sens et de justice sociale. Avec des initiatives comme SISMIC, le Pôle CN entend continuer à accompagner et inspirer celles et ceux qui choisissent cette voie. Les projets qui voient le jour à travers ce parcours témoignent de l'espoir et de la détermination d'une jeunesse qui rêve, qui ose et qui, surtout, s'engage.

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Les défis dans les parcours entrepreneuriaux des jeunes en économie sociale au Québec

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ABSTRACT

The social economy (SE) is a model of entrepreneurship that is becoming increasingly attractive to young people, many of whom are involved in it in a variety of roles. However, this interest does not come without its share of challenges. A deeper understanding of these challenges would allow for a better response to the needs of young people in the field. This article presents the results of a qualitative study conducted among 20 young collective entrepreneurs and 12 coaches working in SE in Québec. Several categories of challenges were identified, covering ideation and design, governance and management, finances, articulation between spheres of life, lack of support, as well as challenges specific to SE, such as a widespread lack of knowledge about what it is. In the end, we find that the challenges begin to manifest themselves even before the start of entrepreneurial practices. These challenges are frequently experienced outside SE, but the lack of knowledge about collective models and the inadequate resources for these models will amplify them.

RÉSUMÉ

L'économie sociale (ÉS) est un modèle d'entrepreneuriat de plus en plus attirant pour les jeunes, qui sont nombreux(euses) à y prendre place à travers différents rôles. Cependant, cet intérêt ne vient pas sans son lot de défis. Mieux connaître ces enjeux permettrait de mieux répondre aux besoins des jeunes sur le terrain. Cet article présente des résultats issus d'une recherche qualitative menée auprès de 20 jeunes entrepreneur(euse)s collectif(ive)s et 12 accompagnateur(trice)s en ÉS au Québec. Plusieurs catégories de défis ont été identifiées, et touchent à l'idéation et la conception, la gouvernance et la gestion, les finances, l'articulation entre les sphères de vie, le manque de soutien, ainsi qu'aux défis spécifiques à l'ÉS, comme une méconnaissance répandue à son sujet. Au bout du compte, nous constatons que les défis commencent à se manifester avant même le début des pratiques entrepreneuriales. Ces défis sont fréquemment vécus en dehors de l'ÉS, mais le manque de connaissances sur les modèles collectifs ainsi que les ressources inadaptées à ces modèles vont les amplifier.

Keywords / Mots clés : youth, social economy, collective entrepreneurship, challenges / jeunes, économie sociale, entrepreneuriat collectif, défis

INTRODUCTION

L'économie sociale (ÉS) est un mode de développement d'entreprises encourageant de nombreuses innovations dans divers secteurs d'activités (Lévesque et Petitclerc, 2010). Depuis les années 2000, les jeunes sont de plus en plus nombreux(euses) à y prendre place et à monter des projets novateurs, avec près d'un(e) administrateur(trice) sur cinq âgé(e) de moins de 35 ans au Québec (Guidicelli, Jolin, Milette et Robitaille, 2002; Chantier de l'Économe sociale, 2020). Revendiquant une économie plus humaine et en accord avec leurs valeurs, plusieurs jeunes désirent se distancier du système capitaliste actuel et être utiles à la société, ce qui explique en partie leur engouement pour des modèles d'entreprises alternatifs (Gabarret, Vedel et Etzol, 2016; Moisan, 2023). Cependant, cet intérêt ne vient pas sans son lot de défis. Cet article brosse un portrait des multiples catégories de défis que rencontrent les jeunes à différents moments de leur parcours d'entrepreneuriat collectif au Québec pour permettre notamment de mieux répondre à leurs besoins sur le terrain, et contribuer à la croissance et à la survie des entreprises d'ÉS (Murillo-Luna, García-Uceda et Asín-Lafuente, 2021). Les données mobilisées ont été produites dans le cadre d'une recherche qualitative, composée d'une vingtaine d'entretiens individuels auprès de jeunes entrepreneur(euse)s collectif(ive)s de 35 ans et moins et de deux groupes de discussion auprès d'intervenant(e)s accompagnant des jeunes en ÉS.

PRINCIPAUX DÉFIS RENCONTRÉS

Idéation et conception

Tout d'abord, les défis peuvent commencer dès le début du processus de création d'entreprise collective, lorsque les jeunes définissent la vision de ce qu'ils et elles veulent mettre en place. Ces dernier(ière)s ne savent pas toujours comment opérationnaliser et concrétiser leurs idées en un modèle d'affaire viable, ou comment reconnaître le besoin réel de la communauté et s'ancrer dans leur milieu. Le choix et la mise en place de la structure du projet sont également souvent difficiles pour les jeunes, qui ne connaissent pas toutes les formes juridiques possibles, la compatibilité de celles-ci avec leur projet, ou l'ordre dans lequel effectuer les étapes du démarrage. Enfin, plusieurs ont de la difficulté à assurer la rentabilité au sein du projet et à identifier des sources et méthodes de financement permettant le développement et la survie de l'entreprise :

> Tsé nous, [dans mon premier projet, ce qui fait] que ça n'a pas si bien fonctionné, c'est [qu'on n'a pas bien statué les valeurs ou la hiérarchie], fais que l'accessibilité pis la qualité de service, c'était sur le même pied d'égalité, pis ça a fait quelque chose qui ne permettait pas d'assurer la pérennité. (J19)

Gestion et gouvernance

Une fois le projet plus établi, des défis en lien avec la gestion des ressources humaines sont très fréquents, particulièrement en ce qui a trait au manque de personnel. En plus de la pénurie de main-d'œuvre observée partout au Québec, les jeunes identifient plusieurs causes : la méconnaissance de l'ÉS, la faible capacité des entreprises en démarrage à offrir des salaires compétitifs, et la difficulté à trouver « les bonnes personnes » pour composer son équipe entrepreneuriale. Une des conséquences de ce manque de main-d'œuvre est que les jeunes arrivent difficilement à trou-

ver des personnes compétentes répondant à leurs besoins et restant mobilisées à long terme sur le projet. Les jeunes sont également limité(e)s dans le développement de leur entreprise et, selon leur secteur, ne savent pas comment rejoindre leur clientèle, se démarquer sur leur marché ou établir des partenariats fiables.

Un autre enjeu de gestion concerne les inégalités et les conflits au sein des équipes. Il est fréquent que certain(e)s membres soient plus impliqué(e)s que d'autres, ce qui peut parfois être la source de frustrations. De plus, des enjeux de communication peuvent aussi causer des tensions et avoir un effet sur les activités de l'entreprise. L'administration, la coordination des activités et la mise en place de la gouvernance peuvent également poser un problème en raison du manque de connaissances des jeunes quant aux procédures administratives et de l'accès difficile aux informations. Le fait que l'entreprise collective soit dans un secteur d'activité n'ayant pas beaucoup d'expérience avec ce type d'entreprise peut aussi engendrer un fardeau administratif supplémentaire, notamment au niveau juridico-légal.

Finances

Les défis financiers sont omniprésents dans les parcours des jeunes entrepreneur(euse)s collectif(ive)s. D'abord, des complexités d'accès au financement peuvent se manifester par des difficultés pour obtenir de l'information et par un manque concret d'occasions pour acquérir des fonds. Les entreprises collectives ont souvent des offres de services qui ne rentrent pas dans les offres de financement traditionnelles, et il est souvent plus complexe pour les jeunes de faire leurs preuves de faisabilité aux bailleurs et bailleuses de fonds. Des critères de sélection trop rigides vont aussi fréquemment les exclure de certaines formes de soutien.

D'autres obstacles financiers sont l'insuffisance de fonds disponibles pour l'entreprise, le faible salaire reçu par les entrepreneur(e)s et les impacts de ce manque d'argent sur leurs finances personnelles. En raison du manque de fonds, les projets sont limités et n'arrivent pas toujours à se développer comme on le souhaiterait. Les jeunes sont rares à pouvoir s'octroyer un salaire en début de projet et à pouvoir y travailler à temps plein sans avoir un autre emploi. L'insécurité financière que plusieurs vivent est ainsi une forte cause de décrochage entrepreneurial.

Finalement, les demandes de financement engendrent souvent une lourdeur administrative pour les jeunes, non seulement en fonction de temps pour les remplir, mais aussi d'exigences difficiles à répondre pour obtenir et conserver le financement. Les jeunes doivent dépenser beaucoup d'énergie et de moyens pour être financés, tandis que les ressources financières ne sont pas toutes adaptées aux entreprises collectives, et que leurs services ne sont pas suffisamment flexibles, accessibles et conséquents avec leurs besoins. L'un de ces jeunes dit à ce sujet :

> Quand tu es vraiment niché, tu ne te positionnes pas bien dans les offres de subventions, fais que c'est comme vraiment difficile de te faufiler pis d'aller chercher du financement. (J14)

Articulation des sphères de vie

Les jeunes ont souvent de la difficulté à trouver un équilibre entre leur projet, leur travail, leurs

études, leur vie personnelle et leurs autres engagements, et ils et elles sont susceptibles de prendre du retard et de s'épuiser à cause de la forte charge de travail. La conciliation travail/famille a été un obstacle important pour certain(e)s jeunes, en particulier durant la pandémie, et a compliqué leur organisation. À ce titre, les accompagnateur(trice)s ont remarqué que le fait d'avoir des enfants va significativement augmenter le temps pour mener à bien un projet. De plus, les jeunes constatent parfois une démobilisation des membres d'un projet lorsque la plupart occupent un emploi, ou ont d'autres engagements, en plus du projet. Il leur est alors plus difficile d'y consacrer le temps nécessaire et de trouver des moments pour travailler ensemble.

Manque de soutien
D'autre part, les jeunes entrepreneur(e)s collectif(ive)s vivent souvent des enjeux de santé mentale, car le manque de soutien peut les emmener à s'épuiser intellectuellement et physiquement. Plusieurs jeunes se sentent seul(e)s, et le manque de support relationnel et psychologique peut se manifester par des pertes de motivation. De plus, certain(e)s jeunes qui sont allé(e)s chercher un accompagnement entrepreneurial auprès d'organismes peuvent l'avoir trouvé incomplet et trop diffus pour leurs besoins, ils et elles n'ayant pas reçu les conseils, l'encadrement et les suivis personnalisés recherchés. En outre, certain(e)s accompagnateur(trice)s ne connaissent pas assez les entreprises collectives ou les spécificités de leur secteur, étant donné la large diversité possible des projets.

Méconnaissance de l'économie sociale
Le choix d'un modèle d'ÉS pour porter leur projet pose parfois des défis aux jeunes, comme celui de devoir prouver leur crédibilité en tant qu'entreprise collective. Il y a parfois une certaine réticence de la part des financeur(euse)s et partenaires potentiel(le)s, et de nombreux(euses) jeunes doivent faire leurs preuves avant qu'on puisse les prendre au sérieux. Aussi, plusieurs domaines d'activité sont encore peu explorés en ÉS, et des jeunes sont confronté(e)s au manque d'expérience et de réglementation de leur milieu.

Enfin, l'un des obstacles les plus importants est le manque de connaissance sur l'ÉS, autant de la part des jeunes entrepreneur(euse)s que de la population générale et des lacunes dans les ressources d'accompagnement et d'enseignement. Des idées préconçues sur l'ÉS et le manque de formation et d'expérience avec ces modèles nuisent grandement aux jeunes. La population générale est souvent réticente à s'impliquer dans des entreprises collectives, et certains organismes régionaux, partenaires et ressources d'accompagnement ne savent pas nécessairement comment aider la personne moyenne ou collaborer avec elle. L'enseignement de l'ÉS offert dans les programmes scolaires est souvent faible ou manquant, et certain(e)s enseignant(e)s perpétuent des stéréotypes nocifs, ne sont pas en mesure de répondre correctement aux questions des élèves et ne parlent que des entreprises privées, de sorte que les jeunes ne se sentent pas bien outillé(e)s pour se lancer dans le démarrage d'un projet collectif.

CONCLUSION
En fin de compte, nous constatons que les défis commencent à se manifester avant même le début des pratiques entrepreneuriales, lors de l'élaboration de l'idée et du modèle d'affaires d'un projet,

et surviennent à différents moments et niveaux de son développement. Certains défis, qui peuvent différer selon le projet, influencent plus directement son fonctionnement et sa croissance, tandis que d'autres influencent plus directement les entrepreneur(euse)s mêmes. On ne peut donc pas penser les défis sans penser au processus complet qui construit l'entrepreneuriat chez les jeunes. De plus, si ces défis sont aussi fréquemment vécus en dehors de l'ÉS, le manque de connaissances sur les modèles collectifs ainsi que les ressources inadaptées à ces modèles contribuent particulièrement à les amplifier. Il reste donc beaucoup à accomplir pour améliorer l'appui aux entrepreneur(euse)s et mettre de l'avant l'ÉS au sein des différentes structures interagissant avec les jeunes. La bonification de la diffusion interne et externe des informations sur l'ÉS au sein de ces structures, la révision et la multiplication des ressources d'accompagnement (qui ne sont pas spécifiques à l'ÉS) pour qu'elles incluent les entreprises collectives et s'y adaptent davantage, ainsi que l'amélioration de l'enseignement de l'ÉS dans les programmes et cursus scolaires—et ce à tous les niveaux—sont des pistes de solutions pour répondre aux nombreux défis rencontrés par les jeunes.

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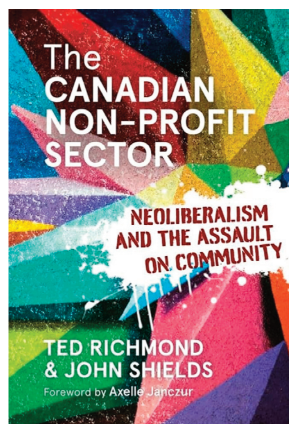
Book Review / Compte-rendu

Luc Thériault



The Canadian Non-Profit Sector: Neoliberalism and the Assault on Community. By Ted Richmond & John Shields. Halifax & Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing, 2024, 160 pp. ISBN: 9781773636696.

Richmond and Shields published an accessible short book (144 pages) offering a fresh look at the Canadian nonprofit sector in the current environment ruled by neoliberalism. The book contains six chapters. Even if some fuzziness remains about its scope, the nonprofit sector is bigger and wider than many people realize. It is made up of a few large organizations and a multitude of small ones.

Chapter one situates the nonprofit sector in the neoliberal environment of Canada. Canada's nonprofit sector is characterized by both *precarity* (in funding and employment for instance) and *resilience* (in its capacity to adapt, survive, and innovate). It has suffered in a transition from program funding to short term project funding. As a policy instrument, it is always being asked to do more with diminishing resources, while governments abandon some of their responsibilities to care for the most vulnerable populations.

Neoliberalism proposes to shrink the state and offer market solutions for everything; the health and social services components of the nonprofit sector have been re-engineered by the New Public Management (NPM) approach and the false and unequal partnerships it proposes. A strange mechanism of indirect control ("centralized decentralization") has been instituted along with a system of narrowly defined accountability. As a result, nonprofit service providers are placed in a permanent state of precarity. Neoliberalism, the authors argue, has with its market and atomized worldview, undermined the true values of civil society.

Even the scholarly studies about the sector came under the influence of business school approaches that orient the investigation toward the notion of voluntarism and the necessity for the sector to become more professional, business-like, and entrepreneurial. Long gone are the studies of the sector framed in the participatory perspective of utopian socialism.

Terminology used to describe the nonprofit sector is, itself, still contentious. Some place emphasis on the sector's voluntary nature, while others prefer to restrict themselves to the charitable portion of what Kendall and Knapp (1994) call a "loose and baggy monster." Regardless of how we speak of them, nonprofit organizations serve as agents of change and are key voices in a healthy democracy.

The tension arises from the neoliberal use of the nonprofit sector to replace some public services that existed during the Keynesian welfare state era, on the one hand, and on the other hand, the nonprofit sector's opposition to this retrenchment agenda.

Chapter two offers an overview of the sector in all its diversity. Definitions are presented, and the twin focus of the sector on services and advocacy is underlined. With reference to surveys and reports, the architecture of the sector is outlined despite a lack of good and exhaustive statistical data. Of the many findings presented, we can mention the local or neighbourhood focus of many nonprofit organizations as well as the funding precarity they experience. Passing remarks are made about cooperatives, as well as about the social economy in Québec. A discussion helps inform the understanding of various types (private, public, community) of philanthropic foundations. Overall, the picture that emerges is that "Canada has one of the largest and most vibrant nonprofit and voluntary sectors in the world" (p. 41). This calls for a better understanding of its reality by the Canadian public.

Chapter three focuses on the issues of financial and human resources in the sector. It stresses the mismatches between the needs and demands on one side and the capacity of the sector to respond. This situation represents an enormous "social deficit." Donations have an uncertain future as the number of donors is diminishing. Fundraising is increasingly difficult and competitive. Social impact bonds are unlikely to present a sustainable solution.

The greatest resource of the sector is its people—both paid employees and volunteers. It is a gendered (female) sector where working conditions leave much to be desired and where the objectives of the "decent work movement" are still but a mirage. As a result of low pay, few opportunities for advancement, subpar benefits, and often the absence of a pension fund, recruitment efforts are difficult. To add to this, the leaders of the sector are aging and will be retiring soon.

Work in the sector is often precarious given the short-term funding austerity regimes in place. From contract to contract, workers become "permanently temporary" (p. 63). Some of the immediate priorities should be to introduce longer-term contracts and pay a living wage. Funded organizations should have more flexibility on how contract money is spent, and project accountability and evaluation activities should be redesigned. Evaluating the long-term impacts of a short-term project is an unrealistic ask.

Chapter four analyzes the vital issue of advocacy. The neoliberal domination has contributed to depoliticize the sector and has attempted to mute many of its critics of government social policy. This "advocacy chill" (p. 70) was particularly felt during the years of the Harper government. Some observers have expressed concerns that the Canada Revenue Agency might be weaponized in this climate.

The Voluntary Sector Initiative is examined in some detail. While some good emerged from this period, the lack of provincial involvement, the internal division within the sector, and the imbalance between it and the federal government resulted in a situation in which the potential was greater than the outcome. But advocacy is too important for the sector to be curtailed, and organizations always find ways to continue to have their voices heard.

Chapter five looks at the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on the sector. The year 2020 was a turbulent one for the sector. Donations decreased as fundraising events were cancelled at a time when demand for services and support exploded. This was a stressful and disrupting time. Many funders

showed some flexibility in responding to the crisis, but this departure from the NPM's "control and command" approach was short lived, especially on the government side. But nonprofit organizations learned to work with a hybrid service delivery model that will be a legacy of the COVID-19 pandemic. Now these organizations need further support from funders in terms of information technology services, distance delivery tools, etc. In a time of adversity, the sector showed resilience and innovation. These innovations might enable the sector to better serve (and advocate for) certain underserved populations such as Indigenous and Black communities.

Current challenges (such as higher inflation) persist. The gap between the needs of the population and the service capacity of the nonprofit sector is increasing in some key areas such as food banks, which are faced with skyrocketing demand. The situation of food banks is an indicator that some segments of the Canadian population are not bouncing back from the pandemic.

Chapter six brings the findings of the book together by pointing to the complex and contradictory relationships existing between the neoliberal state and the nonprofit sector. The sector is used as a safety valve by governments by mediating tensions with vulnerable communities. But, at the same time, it supports transformative progressive social movements that resist the logic of neoliberalism.

The sector is only partially recognized by governments where it often has no clear "home" under a ministerial responsibility. The lack of data on the sector contributes to its invisibility among other stakeholders and the population in general in a world where data rules.

The insufficient funding levels, the impending human resource crisis, and the over-reliance on volunteers are weakening the sector while expectations placed upon it are at their highest. This precarious state of the nonprofit sector limits what it can do to moderate the excess of capitalism. Learning about the state of the sector by reading a book such as this one is a good first step to increase our familiarity with the issues and our capacity to work on some solutions.

Ted Richmond and John Shields have offered us a great introduction to the nonprofit sector in Canada using a political economy approach. Their contribution is easy to read and clearly written. It could have gone into more details about the role of provincial governments, but this would have made the manuscript much longer. It could have also better covered the dynamic reality of the social economy in Québec, but that is difficult when relying primarily on sources in the English language.

Whatever shortcomings one might identify in this book, it is worth reading, sharing with friends and colleagues, using in classrooms with students, and debating in the public sphere. The authors and Fernwood Publishing should be congratulated for this contribution to the field of nonprofit studies.

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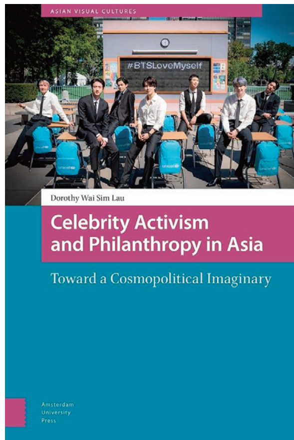
Book Review / Compte-rendu

Muh Ikbal, Aldi Alqadry, & Muhammad Anas



Celebrity Activism and Philanthropy in Asia: Toward a Cosmopolitical Imaginary (Asian Visual Cultures). By Dorothy Wai Sim Lau. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2024, 160 pp. ISBN 946372009X.

Celebrity Activism and Philanthropy in Asia by Dorothy Wai Sim Lau navigates the complicated interrelationship between celebrity culture, activism, and philanthropy within the Asian context. Serving as a testament to the fact that Asian celebrities have indeed contributed to shaping humanitarian narratives and influencing public awareness, these have challenged the dominant European-centred frames of thought with regard to global activism. The book looks at a number of case studies, ranging from the K-pop phenomenon BTS to Bollywood star Aamir Khan, in order to show how these figures deploy their celebrity in speaking to social issues and mobilizing fan communities for political ends. In so doing, the book analyses a cosmopolitical consciousness that cuts across national borders and means by which celebrities function within global problematics.

Lau's work sits within the broader trend of an "Asian spin" in studies, which attempts to reframe understandings of humanitarianism and activism from an Asian perspective. Thus, it critiques historical and cultural narratives that often marginalize the voices of Asians in global discourse, proposing instead a framework that would take into consideration the diversities and complexities of Asian identities and experiences. The book also becomes particularly apposite for readers concerned with cultural studies, media studies, and at the juncture where celebrity culture meets social activism, as it further contextualizes how Asian celebrities contribute to redefining humanitarian efforts in a globalized world.

The book adds several new directions to the literature on celebrity culture and activism, especially through its particular emphasis on the distinctive role of Asian celebrities within the framework of global humanitarianism. The important contribution here is the idea of "multiversal consciousness," which, for the first time, opens up a significant challenge to the dominant Western-centred narrative of cosmopolitanism. This perspective underlines the diversity of the identities and temporary attachments that Asian celebrities possess and thus can offer an in-depth approach to how celebrity activism can reflect and engage with diverse cultural contexts. It is particularly important for community development researchers and practitioners to note, as it suggests considerations about local cultural dynamics and identities in the design and implementation of humanitarian initiatives.

By surpassing this kind of simplistic dichotomy, Lau's analysis enables a more complex understanding of how celebrity activism works in today's intermedial and multimediated landscape in Asia. That is an important insight, particularly for community development practitioners, as the fact that strategies should incorporate the interplay between commercial interests and altruistic motives is underscored. Truly understanding such complexity may result in better collaborations with celebrities and influencers that will enhance the impact of community development initiatives within the region.

There are a few definite points in *Celebrity Activism and Philanthropy in Asia* that are unique contributions and hence peculiarly interesting. First is the concept of "multiversal consciousness," which is an important contribution in itself, given that it challenges the single and universal category of identity. This idea underlines the importance of the acknowledgment of diverse identities and transient attachments that Asian celebrities possess and it therefore yields a more inclusive understanding of how individuals navigate their identities in a globalized world. The second insight provided by Lau is the challenge to binary oppositions such as profit versus politics, nationalism versus globalization, and thus calls for nuance regarding celebrity motivations for activism. It is important to note for the community development practitioners that the suggestions here try to indicate a multifaceted approach that might arise between the commercial interests, the cultural context in which the celebrity rises, and altruistic motives of community engagement. Further, the investigation into the intermedial dynamics of celebrity activism is of special interest in that Lau researches how different media platforms and cultural contexts influence the perception and implementation of celebrity activism. It is relevant in the present world, which is increasingly becoming interconnected, where understanding these dynamics will help community development researchers and practitioners to effectively make use of media to magnify their messages. This latter point, placing Asian celebrities within a global humanitarian framework, contributes to something akin to an "Asian turn" in academic studies important in the history of marginalized Asian voices in global discourse, while simultaneously affording them greater equity in the representation of diversity in perspectives in activism. These are important points because they enrich not only the academic discourse related to celebrity activism but also provide more practical insights about community development. Therefore, both researchers and practitioners can devise more effective and culturally relevant strategies suiting the specific needs of the local communities.

Reading *Celebrity Activism and Philanthropy in Asia* will go a long way in influencing our work and practice, particularly in the line of community development and social engagement. The knowledge we get from this book will surely influence us toward more effective and culturally responsive approaches in working with diverse communities. Understanding multiversal consciousness beckons us to understand and value diversity in the identities and experiences that exist in those communities, thus allowing interventions to be more responsive and effective.

The critique of binary oppositions will inspire us to exceed mere categorization in the analysis of issues. This will enable us to understand fully the various diversities involved in activism and philanthropy and hence devise ways in which such an interplay of different motivations and contexts must go into account. It follows that once we take into account intermedial dynamics pointed out in this book, we will also be more aware of how different media platforms can shape public perception and engagement—an important consideration in today's digital landscape.

This will likely be a permanent adjustment in our practice. The emphasis on a cosmopolitical perspective will push us to constantly reflect on the cultural and ideological context of our work and assist us in instituting a dedication to lifelong learning and evolution. If the lessons of postmodernism are intertwined into our approach, then the efforts we do make will likely bear more fruit, thereby contributing toward a just and more equitable society. Generally, the insight derived from this work will play a foundational role in shaping our future practice, keeping it relevant and responsive to the needs of the communities we will serve.

We highly recommend Lau's book. It gives a fresh and critical look at the role of celebrities regarding social activism and philanthropy, with a particular touch on the Asian perspective. This is often an area that is under-explored within academic discourse; hence, Lau brings in lessons worthy of mention to enhance our understanding of the particular complexities involved in celebrity-led initiatives. This may relate to the concept of "multiversal consciousness" developed in the book, which has implications for those working in community development and social engagement who are working toward a more inclusive approach that truly respects cultural diversity.

In this respect, Lau's critical examinations of binary oppositions and the intermedial dynamics of activism will prove essential reading for anyone interested in the intersection of media, culture, and social change. Such insights can inform our practice and help us navigate the challenges of modern activism in this day and age. In general, we consider this a milestone in celebrity studies, cultural studies, and social activism, and we encourage our colleagues to take note and go through this book for consideration in practice.

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