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Transgender Perspectives on Social Entrepreneurship: An Exploration in the Asian Context

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Abstract

This study highlights the significance of social entrepreneurship from the perspective of transgender entrepreneurs in the Asian context. Social entrepreneurship is increasingly recognized as a sustainable and innovative method for tackling social challenges while fostering economic growth. The view of social entrepreneurship from the perspective of transgender entrepreneurs has distinct motives and impacts in the Asian context. This study explores the motives and impacts of transgender entrepreneurs' engagement in social entrepreneurship across four Asian nations. Interviews were conducted with forty (40) transgender entrepreneurs from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Thailand using a qualitative methodology (grounded theory). The study's outcomes revealed three motivations to engage in social entrepreneurship, including economic necessity, desire for social change, and personal fulfillment. Additionally, this research also identifies three (3) significant societal impacts of social entrepreneurship, promoting diversity and inclusion, challenging stereotypes, and fostering economic empowerment. This article expands our understanding of transgender perspectives on social entrepreneurship while highlighting its challenges and opportunities in the Asian context. The findings of this study also emphasize the crucial role of governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), advocacy and support organization, and policymakers in fostering social entrepreneurship among underprivileged population. This research concludes by outlining its limitations and potential avenues for further investigation.

INTRODUCTION

Asia is often recognized as a key driver of the global economy due to its rapid and sustained economic growth (Matyushok et al., 2021). However, perspectives on the transgender community and the role of social entrepreneurship vary widely across the region (Khalid et al., 2022). While cultures such as the Hijras in Pakistan, Kinner in India, Rupantorito Nari or Purush in Bangladesh, and Kathoeyes in Thailand have historically acknowledged gender diversity, contemporary societal attitudes range from acceptance to discrimination. The transgender population in these nations faces significant socioeconomic barriers, including social stigma, systemic discrimination, and restricted access to employment, education, and essential healthcare services (Akram et al., 2023). Despite these challenges, many transgender individuals exhibit resilience and creativity, leveraging entrepreneurship as a means to achieve financial independence and contribute to their communities through philanthropic initiatives

(Smythe et al., 2021). Social entrepreneurship serves as a promising avenue for empowering transgender individuals while addressing broader societal challenges. By combining business innovation with social impact goals, it offers a sustainable approach to fostering economic inclusion and challenging discriminatory norms (Karatas-Ozkan et al., 2023). The increasing number of transgender individuals in Asia engaging in entrepreneurship despite significant obstacles highlights this trend (Ajiva et al., 2024). What specific factors are driving these transformations? Although research on transgender entrepreneurs is expanding, most studies focus on Western contexts and examine the motivations behind their entrepreneurial pursuits (Sarah & Chellaswamy, 2025). These studies primarily contribute to the literature by highlighting differences between transgender and cisgender entrepreneurs in characteristics, business objectives, and leadership styles, while also addressing challenges unique to transgender business owners (Brady, 2024). However, they often overlook the differences between transgender entrepreneurs in Eastern and Western contexts, particularly in Asia. The economic, cultural, institutional, and social environments of Asia and the West differ significantly, yet this distinction is often overlooked (Di Vaio et al., 2024).

Economic factors inevitably shape the resources available to entrepreneurs, particularly transgender entrepreneurs, as well as their opportunities and constraints. Some scholars attribute the rapid rise of transgender entrepreneurship in Asia to these economic influences (Ozgen et al., 2025). With Asia's economy expanding rapidly, it is reasonable to link this growth to the increasing number of transgender entrepreneurs. Many developed Asian countries have made efforts to shift the perception of transgender individuals from being marginalized figures to equal members of the workforce and society. However, transgender individuals in Asia continue to face unique barriers to entrepreneurship, shaped by their specific social and cultural context, many of which remain underrecognized (Akram et al., 2023). The growing body of theoretical research and the emergence of new academic and professional groups illustrate the increasing interest in social entrepreneurship (SE) among scholars and practitioners (Gupta & Srivastava, 2024). The rapid expansion of SE has led to new research areas across business strategy, entrepreneurship, public sector management, sociology, political science, economics, and education, emphasizing the need for both theoretical and applied contributions.

However, SE remains theoretically unstructured, facing challenges from conflicting definitions, conceptual frameworks, and limited empirical research (Kamaludin et al., 2024). Existing SE research lacks comprehensive comparative studies and exhibits inconsistencies in terminology and focus areas. A detailed review of studies on social entrepreneurship highlights both overlaps and distinctions in different levels of analysis, ranging from macro-level research on organizations and socio-economic contexts to micro-level studies of individual entrepreneurs (Suriyankietkaew et al., 2022). SE definitions encompass diverse activities and models worldwide but often lack clarity, making it difficult to establish a unified framework. The wide range of actors in social entrepreneurship—from profit-driven enterprises to voluntary and altruistic non-profits—often results in varying interpretations of the term (El-Mohtadi, 2024). The motivations driving social entrepreneurship and the challenges hindering its growth remain

underexplored. Further research is needed to examine how SE varies across countries, as existing studies often lack generalizability. Some scholars suggest investigating the cultural values that may either foster or hinder SE (Neuberger et al., 2023). Building on these gaps, this study employs grounded theory to explore the relationship between cultural values, transgender entrepreneurs, and SE across different countries. By analyzing the relationship between cultural traits, transgender entrepreneurship, and SE in four Asian nations, this study seeks to understand how values and beliefs shape entrepreneurs' pursuit of social goals. The challenges faced by transgender social entrepreneurs in Asia is variant as transgender individuals often face barriers in securing funding due to discrimination or lack of collateral (Duranti-Martínez & Walker, 2024). They also face social stigma which limit networking opportunities, mentorship, and partnerships essential for entrepreneurial success (Qadir & Chaudhry, 2024). It is pertinent to mention here that the legal recognition of transgender rights varies in the different Asian countries like India and Thailand, have recognized a third gender, while others like Pakistan and Bangladesh are lacking in comprehensive protections, affecting access to resources for transgender entrepreneurs (Banik et al., 2023).

The transgender entrepreneurs have limited access education and entrepreneurial training programs tailored to transgender needs can impede skill development (Darden et al., 2022). Therefore, this study explores the perspectives of transgender individuals on social entrepreneurship within the Asian context. It aims to understand their motivations, challenges, and contributions to social change through entrepreneurial ventures. By examining the intersection of gender identity, entrepreneurship, and social impact, this article sheds light on how social entrepreneurship can serve as a transformative tool for marginalized communities. This manuscript is structured as follows. The first two sections provide an overview of social entrepreneurship, with a specific focus on transgender entrepreneurs and their role in four Asian nations. Section 3 outlines the methodological approach, including data collection and statistical procedures. Section 4 presents the findings and discussion. Section 5 highlights the implications and future research directions, while Section 6 concludes with final remarks.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A transgender person is someone whose gender identity differs from the gender typically associated with their sex assigned at birth and is often referred to as "Trans" (Anderson, 2023). Transsexual individuals often seek medical interventions to facilitate their transition from one sex to another (Kite et al., 2024). Although the term "transgender" is commonly used as an umbrella term, it lacks a universally accepted definition, even among scholars. In addition to binary transgender men and women, non-binary or genderqueer individuals may also be included in this definition. Some broader definitions further encompass drag queens, drag kings, cross-dressers, and third-gender individuals as related groups. In general, the term "transgender" refers to individuals whose gender identity differs from the sex assigned to them at birth (Noor et al., 2024). Sexual orientation is not the same as being transgender; transgender individuals may choose not to identify as such, or they may identify as heterosexual (straight), homosexual (gay or lesbian), bisexual, asexual, or another sexual orientation. Cisgender is the reverse of transgender and refers to those whose gender identity corresponds with their assigned sex (Reiman et

al., 2023). Due in part to differing definitions of what it means to be transgender, accurate figures on the number of transgender persons vary greatly. In 2021, Canada became the first country to gather census data on transgender individuals (Kinitz et al., 2022). Transgender people typically make up less than 1% of the global population, with estimates ranging from less than 0.1% to 0.6%. Before the mid-1900s, a variety of terms were used both inside and outside of the Western medical and psychological sciences to refer to people and identities that were labeled transsexual, and subsequently transgender from the middle of the century onward (Stutterheim et al., 2021). The English term transsexual was imported from the German and eventually modeled after German *Transsexualismus* (coined in 1923), and it has gained international acceptance, although transgender has become more popular than transsexual. The term transgender gained its current meaning as an umbrella term in the 1990s (Doan & Johnston, 2022). Health practitioner manuals, professional journalistic style guides, and LGBT advocacy groups all recommend that others use the name and pronouns identified by the transgender person, including current references to their past. This group often faces societal stigma, discrimination, and legal challenges, which can impact their economic and social opportunities (Baker et al., 2024).

For-profit entrepreneurs typically measure performance using financial indicators such as profit, revenue, and stock price growth. In contrast, social entrepreneurs operate as non-profits or blend profit-making with societal impact, leading them to use different evaluation metrics (Tomasevic & Abramovic, 2023). Social entrepreneurship is an approach adopted by individuals, groups, startups, and entrepreneurs to develop, fund, and implement solutions for social, cultural, or environmental challenges (Baquero & Monsalve, 2024). Such actors typically strive to advance broad social, cultural, and environmental goals, often linked to the voluntary sector, including poverty alleviation, healthcare, and community development (Khan et al., 2023). Profit-generating social enterprises are often established to advance an organization's cultural or social mission rather than solely for financial gain. For example, an organization supporting the homeless may operate a restaurant to generate revenue and create employment opportunities for them (Ko & Liu, 2021). The usage of the Internet, especially social networking and social media websites, enabled social entrepreneurship in 2010 (Ali et al., 2023).

These websites give social entrepreneurs the opportunity to connect with a large number of individuals who are geographically distant but have similar objectives (Ali et al., 2023). They also motivate them to work together online, educate themselves about the issues, exchange information about the group's events and activities, and raise money through crowd funding (Al-Edrus et al., 2023). The practice of identifying, starting, and growing ventures, whether non-profit or for-profit, that aim to solve social problems or effect social change is known as social entrepreneurship. In recent years, researchers have been calling for a deeper understanding of the ecosystem that supports social ventures and social entrepreneurship, arguing that doing so will enable them to develop a more effective plan and achieve their goal (Busch & Barkema, 2022). In Asia, the transgender community is facing many social, economic, and cultural challenges (Statham & Scuzzarello, 2023). Although the identity of transgender people has historical significance

in nations like Bangladesh, Thailand, Pakistan, and India, these people are frequently marginalized even in modern societies (Banik et al., 2023). For instance, transgender people face prejudice at workplaces, healthcare organizations, and educational systems in South Asia, despite being recognized as a third gender in that part of the world (Suleman et al., 2024). Similarly, transgender people in East Asia have diverse degrees of acceptance in the society, as different nations have different legal, cultural, and societal recognition of the transgender community (Suleman et al., 2024). According to a study, transgender individuals are financially vulnerable as compared to cisgender individuals because they frequently switch over their employment options and rely on unofficial or stigmatized labor (Jenness & Rowland, 2024). For example, a study shows that the transgender people often turn to begging or sex work in Thailand and India because they have no other option available for their survival (Panchanadeswaran et al., 2024). These monetary constraints highlight how crucial it is to look for alternate sources of income, such as social entrepreneurship.

Social entrepreneurship involves the utilization of commercial aspects to address social problems (Ahmad & Bajwa, 2023). It focuses on developing sustainable businesses that give equal importance to financial gains as well as social or environmental concerns. Social entrepreneurship provides a pathway for underprivileged groups, such as the transgender community, to overcome structural injustices and promote financial stability. According to the literature, various advantages of social entrepreneurship for the transgender community have been identified (Teasdale et al., 2023). Social entrepreneurship provides economic empowerment by income-generating opportunities and reducing dependency on external support (Adenutsi, 2023). It also enhances societal recognition and acceptance through visibility and contributions to transgender community welfare (Mogotsi et al., 2024). Social entrepreneurship also provides a platform for advocacy and change for this marginalized community, leveraging business ventures to challenge discriminatory norms and advocate for policy reforms (Qureshi et al., 2023). As per our limited knowledge, very research available is the literature, specifically, focusing on transgender individuals' participation in social entrepreneurship in Asian settings. This research gap highlights the need for a further deeper exploration of their unique experiences, motivations, and barriers in this context.

Transgender entrepreneurs face unique challenges in social entrepreneurship in Asian societies (Khalid et al., 2022). These challenges range from individual to community level and vary in their intensity between four Asian nations, consisting of Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Thailand (Chen et al., 2022). The primary and most significant challenge is discrimination and social stigma experienced by transgender entrepreneurs while contributing to social entrepreneurship. Societal bias and lack of acceptance hinder their access to resources, networks, and customers (Diwakar et al., 2024). Another challenge is legal and institutional barriers, as the legal status of third genders and their legal identity varies in all four Asian countries, with limited legal recognition and protection exacerbating challenges in establishing and running businesses (Ahmad et al., 2024). Access to capital is the third most critical challenge faced by transgender entrepreneurs. The financial institutions often deny loans to transgender individuals due to discriminatory practices or lack of collateral (Osunmuyiwa & Ahlborg, 2022). Last but

not least is the capacity building of transgender entrepreneurs. Most transgender people in all the aforementioned Asian countries have limited access to education and training, which constrains their entrepreneurial skill development (Sharma, 2024). The socioeconomic and cultural diversity of Asia has heavily impacted social entrepreneurship (Gupta & Srivastava, 2024). The huge number of social enterprises in Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Thailand are attempting to solve problems like gender equality, transgender education, and poverty minimization in the transgender community (Banik et al., 2023). On the other hand, while of all efforts, the poverty of the transgender community has increased in nations like Bangladesh and Pakistan. Even considering the social welfare programs at an advanced level, most of the transgender people are still not fully included (Banik et al., 2023). The Mamoriam (India): A social enterprise that offers fashion products designed by transgender artisans, gives them training, and promotes both economic empowerment and social acceptance regarding the transgender community (Reubens & Kachru, 2024).

The Khawaja Sira Society (Pakistan): All the employees of this organization are transgender; even the head of the organization is also a khawaja sira. This is focusing on providing basic healthcare services, along with giving awareness, especially on sexually transmitted diseases to transgender individuals. It also provides vocational training and employment opportunities to underprivileged communities (Reubens & Kachru, 2024). The Badsha Group (Bangladesh): This organization is also led by a transgender entrepreneur. The primary focus of this organization is providing vocational training and employment opportunities to the transgender community. It also helps them in empowering economically or financially (Ahmed et al., 2023). The WynL (Thailand): This is another example of a beauty and wellness brand founded by transgender individuals, emphasizing inclusivity and representation in the beauty industry of this marginalized community (Heath, 2023).

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative research methodology to capture the complex viewpoints of transgender entrepreneurs regarding social entrepreneurship. The semi-structured interviews were designed with grounded theory as the research strategy, followed by focus group discussions and case studies, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the topic while considering the complexity of the data. Due to the paucity of literature in this area, this research strategy is appropriate.

DATA COLLECTION

Sampling: A purposeful sampling technique was used to identify transgender entrepreneurs who are engaged in or aspire to social entrepreneurship in selected Asian countries, including Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Thailand.

Inclusion Criteria: The following inclusion criteria are used to shortlist the possible participants:

1. Self-identify transgender
2. Adults only

3. Engage in social entrepreneurship
4. Consented to take part in the research

Interviews: The forty (40) transgender entrepreneurs participated in in-depth online interviews from Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Thailand, consisting of 60 to 90 minutes per interview, to learn more about their experiences, challenges, impacts, and motives for pursuing social entrepreneurship as their career options.

Focus Groups Discussions: The total four (4) online focus groups discussion were also organized in Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Thailand, each comprising 8 to 10 transgender entrepreneurs. The agenda is to discuss the collective perspectives and identify common themes of social entrepreneurship in Asia.

Case Studies: This study also included above mentioned four (4) successful case studies of social enterprises, led by the transgender entrepreneurs in Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Thailand, which were thoroughly analyzed to understand best practices and impact of social entrepreneurship from the perspective of transgender entrepreneurs.

Ethical Considerations: The study adhered to ethical research practices, including informed consent, confidentiality, and sensitivity to participants' experiences. Pseudonyms were used to protect the identities of participants.

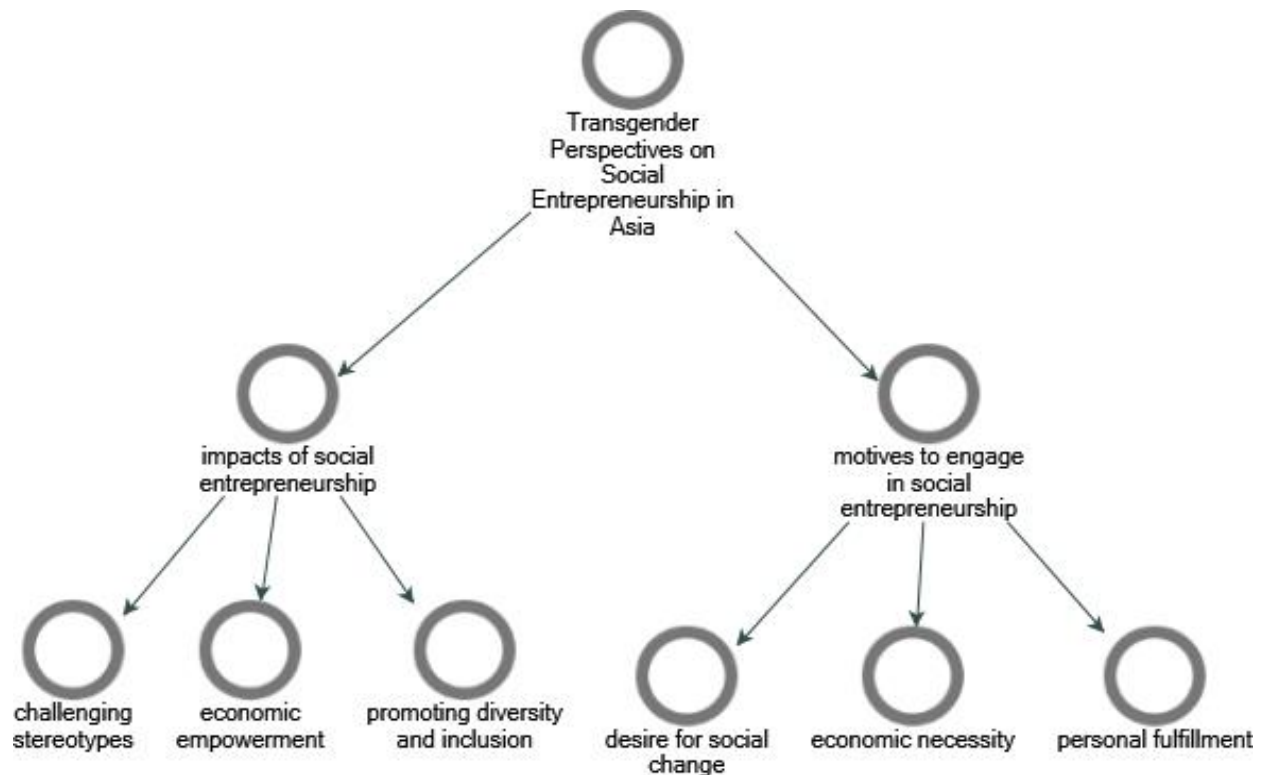


Figure 1:
Impacts and Motives of Social Entrepreneurship from the Prospective of Transgender Entrepreneurs in the Asian Context
 (Source: Authors)

DATA ANALYSIS

The grounded theory method was used. To find patterns and themes in the qualitative data, the thematic analysis was first performed. The goal of the investigation was to comprehend how social entrepreneurship, transgender entrepreneurs, and cultural variations of aforesaid Asian nation interact. The forty (40) transgender entrepreneurs of Asian nations, including Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Thailand, were interviewed. The findings of the study explained the following three (3) major social entrepreneurial motives, which actually pushed transgender entrepreneurs towards social entrepreneurship, including economic necessity, desire for social change, and lastly personal fulfillment. Along with this, the finding also revealed (3) significant impacts on society due to social entrepreneurship, including promoting diversity and inclusion, challenging stereotypes, and economic empowerment:

Motivations for Engaging in Social Entrepreneurship

Participants highlighted the following motivations for pursuing social entrepreneurship as their career options:

Economic Necessity: It is the vital fact that the money is the actual motive behind all the transactions of life; few just need it for their survival, while others require it for influence over other lives and decisions. Many participants turned to social entrepreneurship due to the realization of their financial hardship during the entrepreneurship journey; entrepreneurship helped them in exclusion from their poor financial conditions, and now they are trying to help their community in the same way. The participants' remarks that follow highlight economic necessity as a motivating factor for social entrepreneurship mentioned below: "I involved in social entrepreneurship, because I realized my financial problems." (Participant 08) "Uncertainty in income inspires me to pursue social entrepreneurship not only for me but for my community." (Participant 12) "The actually reason I involve in social entrepreneurship is because I want my community to be financially independent." (Participant 25). These statements reflect the transgender perspective on social entrepreneurship, considering economic necessity as the primary motive.

Desire for Social Change: A strong motivation to address societal inequities and advocate for transgender rights emerged as a common theme in the desire for social change. Many transgender entrepreneurs believe that they should bring the change for their community, which pushed them towards social entrepreneurship. "I want society to accept our community. They ought to treat us equally, in my opinion." (Participant 11) "Since I work in a field that is dominated by men, I want the freedom and equity of decision-making when it comes to my community." (Participant 23) "As a transgender entrepreneur, I possess both genders qualities and their power, and I am able to view things from both a male and female point of view, therefore I want bring change in society considering my community." (Participant 35). These statements reflect the interviewee's point of view regarding desire for social change, considering social entrepreneurship as a tool to bring this change.

Personal Fulfillment: Many transgender entrepreneurs involve in social entrepreneurship because it provided them a sense of purpose, self-expression, and empowerment. "I made the decision to involve in social entrepreneurship because I wanted to make something that reflected my vision and ideals for the betterment of my community. I also yearned for the freedom to express for all of us." (Participant 02) "I want to take care of my community people and accomplish things on my own terms." (Participant 19) "I decided to involve in social entrepreneurship, because I wanted to create something innovative and manage my career along with do something meaningful for my community." (Participant 22) "I want to do something for my community, so that they look at me as inspiration and consider me as their role model" (Participant 31). These quotations highlight the participant's personal fulfillment, which they felt for their drive towards social entrepreneurship.

Impact on Society due to Social Entrepreneurship from the perspective of transgender entrepreneurs

The following impacts on society were noted due to social entrepreneurship from the perspective of transgender entrepreneurs revealed during the data analysis. The transgender entrepreneurs lead social enterprises contributing to broader societal change for their people and the public at large:

Promoting Diversity and Inclusion: The most prominent impact happen to the society due to social entrepreneurship that the transgender entrepreneurs are able to promote diversity and diverse leadership in solving social issues. As well as they are succeeded in demonstrating the value of third gender in the main-stream binary gender society. "Due to social entrepreneurship, I provided solution to the market need by niche marketing and relevant products and services, build a profitable organization, and make a great impact on my community, in order to promote diversity." (Participant 04) "I think social entrepreneurship heavily impacted on the society, being transgender entrepreneurs, they society view ourselves, being the part of them. I think this is wonderful feeling" (Participant 07) "I social entrepreneurship provide us a platform, where we can express ourselves freely and feel acceptance from all other communities of the society" (Participant 40). The quotes demonstrate a strong commitment to social entrepreneurship, with participants demonstrating responsibility and a willingness to use entrepreneurship as a tool to bring about positive change. This demonstrates a commitment to using one's entrepreneurial drive to improve the lives of those in the transgender community.

Challenging the Stereotypes: The second impact held due to social entrepreneurship is the breaking down of misconceptions about the transgender community and believing in their capabilities and roles in society. The following quotations demonstrate how skillfully transgender entrepreneurs handled social and cultural rejection. Like other typical cisgender people, they are attempting to serve the community. "When I started my organization to make profit, I was treated with disdain and disgrace by society. Due to my initiative of social entrepreneurship, everything changed completely." (Participant 03) "I gained respect of my family, friends, and community when I was able to earn money for myself as well as provided a platform for my community for their respectful

survival." (Participant 17) "I started my business for challenging the stereotypes labeled with me by the society" (Participant 34)

Economic Empowerment: the third and most significant impact that is the result of social entrepreneurship from the transgender entrepreneurs is the economic empowerment of their-selves as well as their community. As economic factor is essential for survival, therefore it is also consider very prominent impact for transgender individuals through social entrepreneurship. The following quotes are a reflection of the economic empowerment due to social entrepreneurship. "For an entrepreneur to be stable and scalable, financial backing is always required at every level, therefore, social entrepreneurship help our community in financial stability" (Participant 01) "Money is everything not only for entrepreneurs but also for other peoples" (Participant 14) "My community greatly assisted me in starting and growing my business, and I am currently assisting my community in becoming self-sufficient" (Participant 27). "The first thing that sprang to me when I made the decision to become entrepreneur was how I would raise the money? Than transgender entrepreneurs helped me through their influence of social entrepreneurship" (Participant 39)

DISCUSSION

As previously discussed, the main theme of this study is to identify the driving forces that encourage transgender entrepreneurs to engage in social entrepreneurship and understand the impacts of social entrepreneurship on the transgender community from the perspective of transgender entrepreneurs in the Asian context. The research also highlights the significance of grounded theory as a qualitative methodology, as very little research has been conducted on transgender entrepreneurs involved in social entrepreneurship, particularly in Asian settings (Khalid et al., 2022). The finding of the study suggests the three (3) major motives that engage transgender entrepreneurs in social entrepreneurship, including economic necessity, desire for social change, and personal fulfillment. On the other hand, this research also discussed three (3) noteworthy impacts on society, including promoting diversity and inclusion, challenging stereotypes, and economic empowerment from the perspective of transgender entrepreneurs due to social entrepreneurship. Based on this study's findings, transgender entrepreneurs faced greater obstacles when deciding to get involved in social entrepreneurship because of the stereotyped behaviors in society and a hostile atmosphere than cisgender entrepreneurs.

As they have already limited access to the resources, which also restricts their ability to help others through social entrepreneurship. In addition to this, the experiences of the transgender entrepreneurs vary due to their unique socioeconomic and biological characteristics, but the motives they experienced are often similar to those of cisgender entrepreneurs. Most of the time, the same drivers, drive all entrepreneurs to be involved in social entrepreneurship, which is just for welfare society, but transgender persons are complex in Asian culture, and their motivation is not limited to the welfare of the society but also to creating an impact (Suleman et al., 2024). The three main factors that encourage transgender entrepreneurs to pursue social entrepreneurship are economic necessity, personal fulfillment, and the desire for social change. Economic necessity is the

primary and most important factor that stimulates social entrepreneurship among transgender entrepreneurs. As noted earlier, the most important aspect of any business activity is the creation of wealth, but transgender entrepreneurs view finances as more than that; they see it as a tool for their survival. Considering the limited economic support, they are still motivated for social entrepreneurship, which is a big thing. The desire for social change is the second factor that made transgender entrepreneurs more aware of social entrepreneurship. People's social environments contribute to the development of their desire for social change. However, since transgender people can gain respect and recognition in their communities by contributing in the social change, this thing provide them societal acceptability. By demonstrating one's skill and knowledge, social entrepreneurship provides an opportunity to challenge social conventional systems. Creating inclusive workplaces for underrepresented groups like transgender community, is a goal shared by many transgender entrepreneurs.

The final motivation is personal fulfillment; transgender persons can express their individuality and identity as social entrepreneurs, allowing them to be authentic without fear of judgment and try to help other. Its help in achieving career goals promotes personal growth and a feeling of achievement, which boosts self-esteem and confidence. Many transgender entrepreneurs aspire to inspire the next generation of transgender people and leave a positive impact on the community. Promoting diversity and inclusion, on the other hand, is the first of the three impacts considered for the purposes of social entrepreneurship. Social entrepreneurship has played a significant role in promoting social change, fostering diversity and inclusion, clearing up myths, and enhancing the lives of transgender people. It offers a platform for raising awareness of transgender issues and promoting positive change. Some transgender entrepreneurs are motivated by a desire to enhance their community within the local workforce by increasing workforce diversity through charitable endeavors. Challenging stereotypes is another effect of social entrepreneurship in the Asian setting.

The transgender business owners are reacting to societal and cultural marginalization. In addition to improving the transgender community's quality of life, social entrepreneurship helps them overcome cultural and social exclusion and dispel stereotypes. This includes overcoming rejection from family, developing a survival strategy, and adjusting to the informal economy. Through social entrepreneurship, transgender people, particularly those who are estranged from their families, can achieve financial independence. In the face of insufficient social welfare and support systems, many people see social entrepreneurship as an essential survival strategy. By launching modest businesses with their existing abilities, many transgender people transition from informal to formal entrepreneurship. The last and most significant impact of social entrepreneurship entrepreneurs is the economic empowerment. Social entrepreneurship opened many door of both the transgender entrepreneurs and the transgender community. It provided them economic empowerment (Chin, 2021).

CONCLUSION

The exploration of transgender perspectives on social entrepreneurship in the Asian context reveals a complex relationship between challenges, opportunities, motivations,

and impacts. Despite facing systemic barriers, few transgender entrepreneurs demonstrate resilience and innovation, highlighting the transformative potential of social entrepreneurship as a tool for empowerment and social change (Aluko et al., 2024). The key takeaways from this study include the dire need for targeted policies and programs to support transgender entrepreneurs, such as inclusive access to funding, training, and legal protections. Furthermore, creating awareness and fostering acceptance within society, while building an enabling environment for transgender entrepreneurs to actively engage in social entrepreneurship. However, transgender perspectives have added a valuable contribution to social entrepreneurship in Asia by offering unique insights, solutions to the societal challenges, and grabbing the available opportunities. While navigating social entrepreneurial barriers, targeted support and inclusive policies can empower transgender entrepreneurs to lead impactful social enterprises, fostering an environment that values diversity and inclusion of the transgender community in the mainstream gender taxonomy.

Furthermore, the benefits of social entrepreneurship enrich transgender entrepreneurs to broaden their social and economic fabric of Asian societies (Noureen, 2023). In this context, the policy reform needs urgent attention from the policymakers and legislature; these policies must advocate for comprehensive anti-discrimination laws that support the rights of the transgender community. The governments and NGOs should start inclusive entrepreneurial programs immediately, which are designed for the transgender individuals, providing them tailored-made support and resources. The NGOs and civil society should start awareness campaigns, which will increase societal awareness about the contributions of transgender entrepreneurs to reduce stigma and foster acceptance of this marginalized community. The four Asian nations of the study, including Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Thailand, can fully utilize the potential of transgender entrepreneurs for social entrepreneurship by addressing the aforementioned issues, resulting in significant social transformation and the development of more inclusive and egalitarian communities.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

There are few practical implications of the study that give direction to the concerned stakeholders, including governments, NGOs, businesses, and educational institutions, in creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for transgender entrepreneurs considering social entrepreneurship in Asia. First of all, this research can guide policymakers about the unique challenges and opportunities faced by transgender individuals in social entrepreneurship. This can lead to the creation of inclusive policies, such as financial support, legal protections, and anti-discrimination laws, to foster a more equitable entrepreneurial ecosystem. This study is also highlighting the need for tailored training and capacity-building programs for transgender entrepreneurs. These programs could focus on skill development, business management, and access to networks, empowering transgender individuals to succeed in social entrepreneurship. Furthermore, this study can raise awareness about the contributions of transgender individuals to social entrepreneurship, challenging stereotypes and reducing stigma. Advocacy campaigns can be designed to promote acceptance and support for transgender-led initiatives.

In addition to this, this study can encourage educational institutions to incorporate transgender perspectives into entrepreneurship curricula. It can also inspire further research on the intersection of gender identity and social entrepreneurship, fostering a deeper understanding of this underexplored area. Organizations and stakeholders working with transgender entrepreneurs can use this research as a framework to develop cultural sensitivity training programs. This can help create a more inclusive and respectful environment for transgender individuals in the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Lastly, this study can encourage cross-border collaboration among transgender entrepreneurs in Asia and beyond. Sharing best practices and lessons learned can help build a stronger, more interconnected community of social entrepreneurs.

LIMITATION AND FUTURE DIRECTION

Like other research projects, this study has a number of limitations that should be addressed in future studies. First of all, this study is restricted to the four Asian nations, including Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, and Thailand, which could question the generalizability of the study in an Asian setting; therefore, other Asian nations may kindly be included, like China, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, etc. Furthermore, this study presented an urban bias because the majority of participants (transgender entrepreneurs) were from urban regions of the four Asian nations; therefore, the finding may not accurately represent the experiences of transgender perspectives on social entrepreneurship in rural settings, where social behaviors and attitudes along with the availability of the concerned resource can greatly vary. All four of the aforementioned Asian nations have variations in their values, customs, and culture; this variation is not considered while conducting this research. In addition to this, as the intersectionality is not the primary objective of the study, it may not have looked at how overlapping identities such as religion and ethnicity intersect with gender identity and social entrepreneurship.

A longitudinal study may be conducted to monitor changes over time in the lives of transgender entrepreneurs, by taking into account the research's future directions. These changes may include the effects of changing laws, social acceptability, and access to healthcare or education. The research can be expanded in the future to examine transgender people's experiences in urban and rural areas, across socioeconomic categories, and at different educational levels. The intersectional element can also be the focus of future research, which will examine how transgender people's lives in Asia and elsewhere are impacted by intersecting identities like caste, religion, or race. Future study can be policy-oriented, analyzing the efficacy of current measures to support transgender people and pointing out any gaps that policymakers should fill. Lastly, social entrepreneurship can help create a more equal and inclusive society by elevating transgender voices and acknowledging their achievements. Future studies should examine the long-term effects of social entrepreneurship on transgender communities and find scalable approaches for empowering and promoting inclusiveness.

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Consent to Participate: All participants involved in this research provided informed consent prior to their participation. They were fully informed about the purpose, procedures, and potential implications of the study, and their participation was entirely voluntary. Confidentiality and anonymity were assured throughout the research process.

Consent for publication and Ethical approval: All participants will be informed about the purpose of the study, and their participation will be voluntary.

- Participants' privacy and confidentiality will be maintained at all times.
- There are no known risks to the participants. Participants will have the right to withdraw at any stage without penalty.

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