

## Symbiotic Relation of CSR and Social Enterprise: A Theoretical Perspective

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**Received:** 25/08/2025

**Revised:** 27/09/2025

**Accepted:** 05/09/2025

**Published:** 12/10/2025

**Abstract**— Social enterprises and corporate social responsibility (CSR) are unique and distinct areas for addressing societal mission through business practices. Social enterprises weave social and environmental aims into their core business strategies, striving for financial sustainability while delivering measurable social impact. In contrast, CSR involves corporations adopting initiatives or policies to reduce their societal or environmental footprint, often as an adjunct to traditional business operations. The commonality between the two lies in their collective commitment to social responsibility. This review helps to navigate the strengths of symbiotic relationship of CSR and social enterprise and highlights core areas for the effectiveness of the dyadic relationship. The findings entail to disclose how the collaboration further bridges this divide by integrating societal objectives into long-term business strategies, fostering innovation and leadership to build consumer behaviour.

**Keywords:** Social Enterprise, Corporate Social Responsibility, Consumer Behaviour, Systematic Review



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### INTRODUCTION

Management-related themes and concepts have gained popularity rapidly over the past decades from both a practitioner and a research standpoint such as social entrepreneurship, social enterprise (de Bell & Bakke, 2025), corporate social responsibility (Jiang et al., 2024) and consumer behaviour (Wu et al., 2022). In the 21st century, a substantial volume of literature on corporate social responsibility and social enterprise have published exhibiting a potential shift from classical entrepreneurship to prevalent non-profit and for-profit enterprise interventions for social impact on community and consumers (Wirba, 2024; Wu et al., 2022). The two distinct streams of literature, have mostly evolved independently, impeding the construction of a robust conceptual as well as theoretical grounding and, eventually, the maturation of the areas collectively (Grant & Palakshappa, 2018; Jiang et al., 2024; de Bell & Bakke, 2025). While the terms, social enterprise, and corporate social responsibility motivation aspire to achieve changes and values generally in society and on consumer behaviour along with sustainability yet embedded with different methods and approaches (Grant & Palakshappa, 2018; Wu et al., 2022). Social enterprises can operate throughout the economic spectrum and tackle a diversity of social problems whereas, a corporate can also successfully conduct

corporate social responsibility projects and can engage in innovation and advance interventions by integrating the potential of social enterprises for achieving social and economic missions (Ng, 2022).

To address a wide spectrum of social challenges and inefficiencies, the United Nations has come up with the wide array of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals that provides a shared framework to immediately address social problems in the year 2015 (Barbieri et al., 2025; Halkos & Gkampoura, 2021). The 17 stated Sustainable Goals, which are an immediate and compelling call to action for all nations and corporations whether developed or developing in a global partnership, are at the center of it (Halkos & Gkampoura, 2021). These goals can be the potential parameters for social enterprises and corporates to trace their objectives for the advancement of communities. Therefore, this synergy may yield consumer loyalty and distinct brand image at large for them (Wu et al., 2022). Sometimes, social enterprise and NGOs are viewed as similar or the same concepts or organizations but they both are differently structured with their own attributes (de Bell & Bakke, 2025; Grant & Palakshappa, 2018). Majority of NGOs are dependent on donations, philanthropy, and donations for pursuing and achieving their social-oriented missions, in contrary, social

enterprise is structured with dominant self-sustainability entrepreneurial approaches and skills such as business skills, technical skills, negotiation skills and interpersonal skills for pursuing social mission (Zhang et al., 2025). Thus, corporates are tempted to escort organisations with self-sustainable model such as social enterprise for achieving social mission through their corporate social responsibility (Grant & Palakshappa, 2018). This strategy of corporates helps to cater wide consumers for their social responsibilities interventions and attract genuine consumers (Wu et al., 2022).

The aim of this study is to acknowledge the research gap and map a viable theoretical perspective that is adaptable for their collaboration and systematic evolution of corporate social responsibility and social enterprise. The studies address the following essential research concerns by pursuing a thorough analysis and clearly conceptualize collaboration for achieving social and economic missions. This study provides descriptive as well as bibliometric coupling of these areas to provide statistics for understanding the synergy followed by the overlapping grounded themes of co- existence for drawing out the scope of social value and influence on consumer behaviours. The intent is to illustrate how social enterprise and corporate social responsibility can strategically be collaborated for achieving mutual social mission and influence social cautious consumers (Wu et al., 2022).

This study stands out from existing studies by its inclusive approach to map overlapping of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility to illuminate the symbiotic relationship for drawing synergetic impact.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The literature traces existing publication, selection, and synthesizes their significant contributions, analyses data, and reports the evidence in a way that enables logical, unambiguous conclusions about what is and is not known (Marzi et al., 2025). Considering systematic literature reviews are often based on a set of underlying structure, they could be influenced by a variety of research questions and systematic procedures (Marzi et al., 2025). In the breadth of

management publications, the goal of this methodology is to provide a thorough analysis of existing researches in the horizon of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility. In this study, we contend embarking on a literature review is a crucial first step in studying, evaluating, and mapping how social enterprise and corporate social responsibility are perceived, practiced, and collaborated to accomplish their goals. As a response, the review techniques employed the PRISMA framework for three-tier filtration of publications to provide best fit results that embedded with research objectives (Page et al., 2021). The study is conducted by an independent researcher and bifurcated approaches into four phases. The first phase confines to descriptive & bibliometric analysis of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility. In second phase, the study aims to conduct thematic analysis of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility. The third phase includes the TCCM framework of the field social enterprise and corporate social responsibility. Finally, in fourth phase, the study aims to develop theoretical underpinning for defining the collaboration of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility for achieving social and economic missions.

## Structure of the study

The researcher establishes the structure of the study to provide the sincerity towards their objectives. Figure 1 depicts the structural procedures of the study to be undertaken. In this immature stage of the study, the researcher focuses on planning which includes identifying the need of the study, the preparation of the study, development of protocol. In second stage, it leads to conduct the study by identifying and selecting the database along with quality check and data extraction. The further three stages are confined to reporting of the study. The third stage depicts the descriptive as well as bibliometric analysis. Fourth stage defines the thematic analysis of the field of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility. Finally, the last stage of reporting the data, the study provides TCCM framework and developing the viable theoretical framework for strategic collaboration of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility.

Figure 1: The structure of the study.



Source: Author's compilation  
Data Collection:

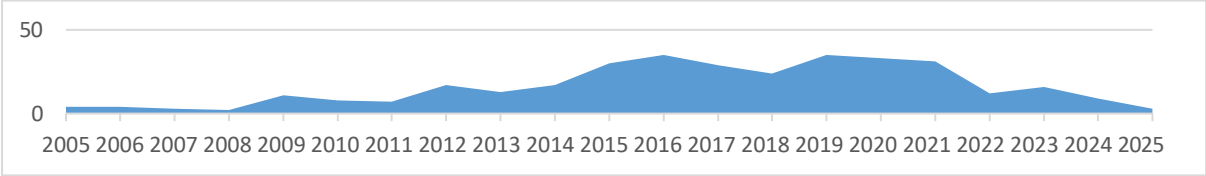
The ideology is to establish a comprehensive and

diverse database of articles that provides an overview of the core features regarding existing literature on social enterprise and corporate social responsibility. For this study, the SCOPUS database is selected for their considerate number of publications in this area of study. To define the keywords string, the researchers first evaluated existing publications such as Palakshappa, N., & Grant, S. (2018); based on their keywords, the study develops final list of keywords. Social entrepreneurship OR social enterprise OR social entrepreneur AND corporate social responsibility OR CSR were the study's search keywords in SCOPUS database to accommodate both social enterprise and corporate social responsibility research at the same time. Finally, the final list of 339 publications is

extracted data published before March, 2025 for the study. The only timeline clause is kept for last 30 years in eligibility criteria.

**The Descriptive Analysis: The current state of the field**  
To develop theoretical understanding for social enterprise and corporate social responsibility, researcher first examines the publications' breakdown by year. Understanding the progression of research in the field is facilitated by considering at the distribution of publication throughout time. The researcher initiates the study of the literature; in 2005 first study is identified on social enterprise and corporate social responsibility. The studies that were shortlisted for inclusion were conducted between 2005 and 2025.

**Figure 2: Total number of publications in the field of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility**

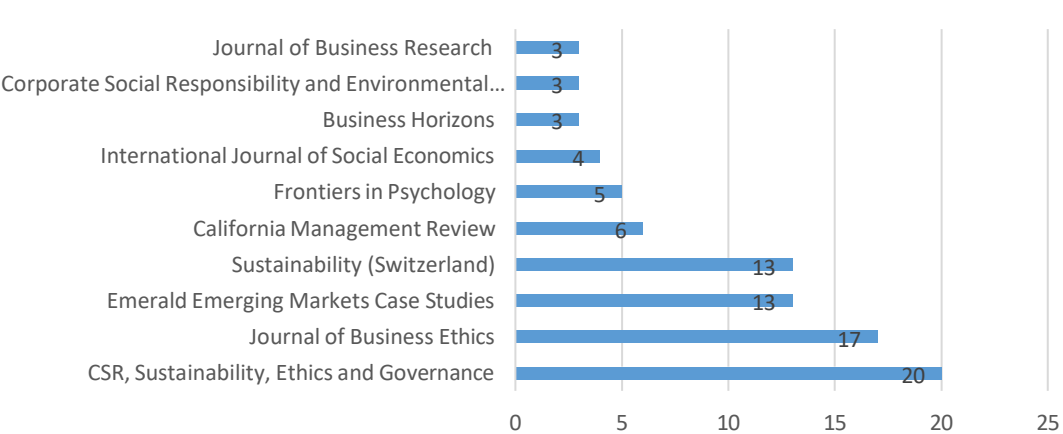


Source: Authors' compilation

The study synthesizes the publications based on publication outlets that is journal of publication. Figure 3 illustrate the researches in the fields of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility that have been published in academic journals indexed in Scopus database. Figure 3 quantifies the top ten journals that have made a significant contribution to the field's development and published the maximum number of research articles such as CSR,

Sustainability, Ethics and Governance, Journal of Business Ethics, Emerald Emerging Markets Case Studies, Sustainability (Switzerland), California Management Review, Frontiers in Psychology, International Journal of Social Economics, Business Horizons, Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management & Journal of Business Research.

**Figure 3: Influential Journals of Publication**

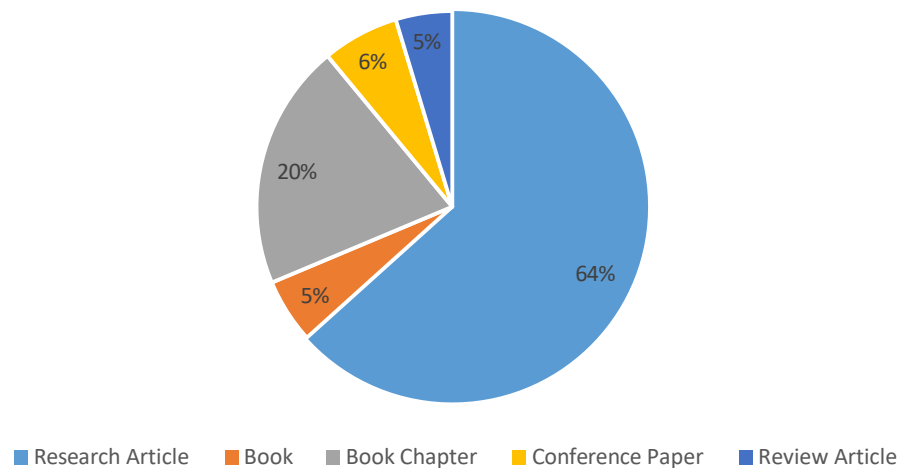


Source: Author's compilation

Research publications are the evidence provided by the researchers to disseminate the conducted study by them to general public. For this, the researcher uses different approaches to conduct the study. Figure 4 depicts the

various types of documents such as research articles, books, book chapters, review articles & conference papers.

**Figure 4: Types of Documents**



Source: Author's compilation

### BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

The analysis of books, papers, and other publications using statistical techniques with an emphasis on scientific content is known as bibliometrics analysis (Passas, 2024). The prominent authors who have significantly advanced the fields of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility are highlighted in this section. An analysis of authors based merely on the number of papers published may not be the most appropriate technique to discover their contributions in the field. However, it was identified from SCOPUS database that most of the authors only contributed a single publication in the field except few such as Loosemore M, (2020, 2019, 2016, 2015); Chen C.-Y,

(2021, 2016); Mair J., (2016, 2005). According to the information retrieved from SCOPUS, it is identified that there are more than 470 authors who have contributed in the study field of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility. Seelos C. & Mair J. were the most prolific author, with 625 citations on their publication in the discipline of "social enterprise and corporate social responsibility." Four additional authors, including S. Ansari, W. Phillips, B. Doherty & Dawson P, rounded up the top ten prolific authors, in addition to Seelos. C (Table 1).

**Table 1: Highlights most prolific authors**

Author	Publication	Citation Received
Seelos C., Mair J.	Social entrepreneurship: Creating new business models to serve the poor	625
Phillips W., Lee H., Ghobadian A., O'Regan N., James P.	Social Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship: A Systematic Review	316
Ansari S., Munir K., Gregg T.	Impact at the 'Bottom of the Pyramid': The role of social capital in capability development and community empowerment	309
Hemingway C.A.	Personal values as a catalyst for corporate social entrepreneurship	298
Thompson J. & Doherty B.	The diverse world of social enterprise: A collection of social enterprise stories	224
Dawson P., Daniel L.	Understanding social innovation: A provisional framework	213
Dixon S.E.A., Clifford A.	Ecopreneurship - A new approach to managing the triple bottom line	205
Baron D.P.	Corporate social responsibility and social entrepreneurship	195
Murphy P.J., Coombes S.M.	A model of social entrepreneurial discovery	193
Glavas A.	Corporate Social Responsibility and Organizational Psychology: An Integrative Review	192

Source: Authors' compilation

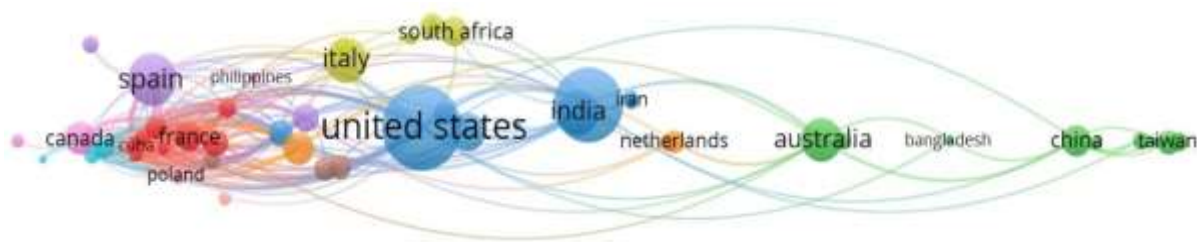
The SCOPUS database was used to find about the

authors' countries contribution in this field. The co-

authorship among authors and analysis pertaining to their nationality, the VOS-viewer software has been employed for this wherein, based on minimum number of publications was one examined. Therefore, the analysis provided the active as well as emerging countries and their contribution in the development of this field of research. It is evident from the figure 5

that United States, Spain, France, Australia, China, India, South Africa, Taiwan, Cuba, and other emerging countries are playing cardinal role in the field. India is also emerging as a base for development of literature in respect to this area which provides a significance direction for researchers for future to conduct research in this domain.

**Figure 5: Countries-wise analysis in the area the field of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility**



Authors’ compilation

**THEMATIC ANALYSIS**

After assessing the descriptive trend along with bibliometric coupling of the field, this analysis is confined to thematic analysis in the field of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility for identifying the socio-economic aspect of collaboration. PRISMA framework is incorporated for the purpose of identifying, filtering, and analyzing the existing literature to conduct thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2024; Page et al., 2021). The purpose of the study is also to present the foundation of the amalgamation between these two distinct yet overlapping areas for their synergetic significances. Data analysis follows a systematic process to achieve the goal for the findings to be disseminated with others in a transparent manner. Due to the method's effectiveness in locating, analyzing, organizing, summarizing, and reporting themes revealed in a data set, thematic analysis is used to analyze the final

included study. The study specifically explores the content of the included studies, their objectives, the important results in regards to the collaboration of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility for seeking the impact of social value on them and consumer as well, the techniques used for data analysis, and, ultimately leads to the validity and reliability of the included studies as it replied on systematic protocols from the identification to final selection of publications. The final sets of included studies were in-depth reviewed then themes the homogeneity of content aligned with the research objective of this paper. The inclusions and exclusions criteria were set to be executed. Researcher used the database extracted for section 3 from SCOPUS database. Table 2 defines the inclusion and exclusion criteria for final included study and Figure 6 provides a flow diagram of PRISMA framework.

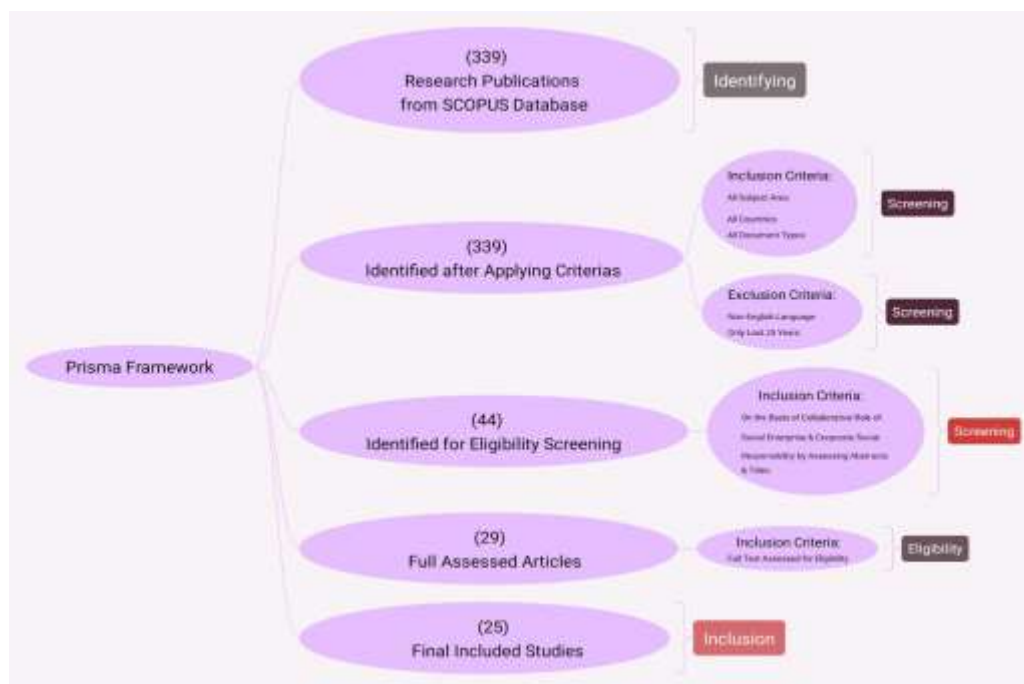
**Table 2: Inclusion and exclusion criteria**

Criteria	Reason for Inclusion
Subject Area	To capture entire landscape of the area, All the subject areas are considered for this study
Countries	To ensure contribution from across the globe, No limitation of region is set.
Document type	All the existing literature is considered such as research articles, review articles, books, book chapter, conference papers
Criteria	Reason for Exclusion
Pre-30 years	To consider only last 30 years publication for this study.
Language	Only English language is considered for this study

Source: Author’s compilation

**Figure 6: PRISMA flowchart**





Authors' compilation

Based on the themes identified in the final included publication, the study examines the research's objective, findings, and content. Considering that the overlapping areas under evaluation and their interrelations have evolved over the last three decades, this section could potentially provide an overview of the comparative and co-existence of literature on social enterprise and corporate social responsibility, concentrating on the types of discussions used, potential trends, and adjustments in the research has been especially in comparison and discussion. In first decade (2002-2012), the introductory publication which pioneered the link and interrelation between social enterprise and corporate social responsibility that was published in 2005 by Paul Tracey, Nelson Phillips & Helen Haugh, who have well-articulated study to seek to address the formation of an effective and efficient form of organisation for community such as social enterprise that offers a different avenue for corporations to engage themselves in corporate social responsibility. In 2007, the second study was published with well-versed with the concepts (i.e., social enterprise and corporate social responsibility) by incorporating corporate social responsibility theory (Baron, 2007). Cornelius et al. (2008) puts forward a considerable addition to the body of knowledge and laid the groundwork for comparisons between internal as well as external corporate social responsibility of social enterprise to form sustainable social impact and values. The study conducted in 2010 shed light on collaboration of social enterprises and corporations within a network to overcome resource constraints (Meyskens, Carsrud & Cardozo, 2010).

In second decade (2013-2025), there has been a potential call in the literature for social enterprise to

further engage with and evolve toward using established theories, including corporate social responsibility theories for the social enterprise (Nicolopoulou, 2014) and to pave the potential collaboration in the literature of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility (Jammulamadaka, 2016; Kim & Kim, 2016; Permana & Mursitama, 2018; Littlewood and Holt 2018) for robust understanding of consumer relationship, brand image and marketing techniques (). The latest study conducted in 2025 highlights CSR and financial performance in social enterprise (Wejesiri, 2025). To define the themes for addressing the collaboration of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility, the final included studies paved the cardinal role. Following are the themes which define the bridging-content between social enterprise and corporate social responsibility for influencing consumer behavior (Wu et al., 2022).

### Theme 1: Importance of mutual support:

This theme particularly illustrates the support of corporate social responsibility on social enterprise and vice versa and bridging the gap to create social impact and build trust in consumers. The study identified publications which applies various corporate social responsibility value in the context of social enterprise. They specifically emphasize on notion of social enterprise as a potential driver of corporate social responsibility (Page & Katz, 2011; Palakshappa & Grant, 2018). The agenda to support social enterprise can open avenues for corporates in various domains such as customer retention, values, willingness to pay for products and services of the corporates, similarly with the support of corporate social responsibility, social enterprise can also inculcate entrepreneurial approaches and system to form innovative as well as

advance mechanism to address and achieve social goals which is aligned with corporate social responsibility's sponsor's goal (Cezarino et al., 2022). Corporate social responsibility as an element to social enterprise such as economic, ethical along with discretionary responsibility can act as a core-competence and contribute to robustness of business model (Wevers & Voinea, 2021). The significance of mutual support between corporate social responsibility and social enterprise can also been seen in the marketing segment of organisation. The purchase intension and attitude of customers are positively influenced by corporate social responsibility expectation based on subjective knowledge and costumers perceived social responsibility (Ng M., 2020). The theme also addresses social enterprise as a motivating spark, enthusiasm, and commitment for corporate social responsibility for empowering community as reflected in case study of Tangan Terampil (Ekopriyono & Darmanto, 2020) and entails the benefits for corporates in terms to achieve distinctive reputation in the society, attract loyal and potential employees and customers (Eweje and Bentley, 2006), receive appreciation from stakeholders (Sakarya, Bodur, Yildirim-Öktem & Selekler-Göksen, 2012), return on investment (de Bell & Bakker, 2025). Successful social enterprise and corporate social responsibility play as an irreplaceable role for achieving community empowerment. The mutual integration embraces the need of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility practices to mitigate with poverty and inequality through collaborative efforts including community and government to build social sustainable development by strengthening income generation for community (Zeng & Wang, 2019).

The overlapping and fair trade of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility have been identified by a study of Grant & Palakshappa (2018). The customers are encouraged to make purchase decision of products and services based on philanthropy of the corporate rather than purely marketing strategies. Therefore, supporting social enterprises financially can bring fair trade and new dimension for corporates through corporate social responsibility. The incorporation of innovation also brings light on combining social enterprise and corporate social responsibility for more robust solutions. Innovation is considered as a tool for social enterprises for creating and inventing updated ideas and knowledge to processes and operational methods for deriving new and convergent changes (Qing & Jin, 2022). It is also reflected that application of social enterprise's strategies and structures in pursuit to corporate social responsibility could unleash insightful benefits for corporates as similar as for social enterprise to incorporate corporates engagement in their funding and activities mechanism for generating social value (Nicolopoulou & Karatas-Ozkan, 2009; Wejesiri, 2025)

## **Theme 2: Social Enterprise as an actor of a corporate social responsibility**

The theme examines the social enterprise as a natural progression of corporate social responsibility for effectively and efficiently creating social impact and value. The aim of theme is to illustrate a robustness of social enterprise efficacy for implementation of corporate social responsibility for community empowerment. The case study of Tata Class Edge elucidates to pursue corporate social responsibility supported projects may face constraint of resources in terms of operations that confines to time, money, and efficient manpower to address and solve social problems therefore, social enterprise emerges as a true and potential driver of holistic operations for empowering society than corporate social responsibility self-driven projects (Patwardhan, 2017). Social enterprise acts as a potential and flexible engine to bridge corporates to engage in corporate social responsibility as it emerges as a movement of more libertarian in orientation for creating social value (Palakshappa & Grant, 2018; Patwardhan, 2017). The ideology of entrepreneurship in the practices of social enterprise consider as a model of corporate social responsibility application that emphasize independence of objective, sustainability of practices and creating value in society. Another frame identified the dimensions of corporate social responsibility-based social enterprise for leadership for achieving social value and integrate community in decision making hence, the principal decisions are remained in the control of corporate social responsibility of corporate (Permana & Mursitama, 2018). The social enterprise can also be a fruitful subsidiary for corporates for achieving efficiency through corporate social responsibility. The sustainable model of corporate social responsibility forms a social enterprise as a non-profit subsidiary as a strategy to achieve community empowerment. The vertical relationship between parent corporate and social enterprise as subsidiary can create opportunities such as consulting and employees volunteering for social cause (Kim & Kim, 2016; Wejesiri, 2025).

## **Theme 3: Collaboration and Partnership**

This theme identified and addresses the co-operation of social enterprise and corporates through corporate social responsibility achieving social impact and benefits such as market support by collaborating and partnering. The study identifies the various domains of co-existence operation between social enterprise and large corporation that facilitate the sustainable economic and market. The potential of social alliances and partnership can proliferate opportunities of co-operation such as sponsorship, subcontracts, counselling, and network & development for sustainable growth (Yeasmin & Koivurova, 2021; Wejesiri, 2025). This themes also embed with resource- based view literature for drawing

interpersonal relationship of social entrepreneurs and commercial organisation for influencing social value and derives the avenues aligned with social mission and goals based on collaboration and partnership within social enterprises and commercial organisation therefore, access to trust-based relationship (Patwardhan, 2017). Also, the collaborative state can be achieved by incorporating common strategies such as getting support from personal networks, resource acquisition, implementation of social-based practices, enhance trust development based on expansion to new markets, co-evolution, and trust competencies, etc.

The notion of social engagement network indicates the corporate social responsibility collaboration and partnership is deriving the integral role among farmer groups, cooperatives, social enterprise or NGO, educational institutions, and large

corporates as facilitators and core-competent for establishing collective benefits and impact (Sirine, Andadari & Suharti, 2020). It further illustrates the nine-scale of partnering program: defining problem, coordinating with interested and feasible parties, resource acquisition & commitment, collaboration with social enterprises & government, creation of innovative approaches, documentation of practices & activities, followed by reporting and monitoring and evaluation. The asymmetric power partnership between large corporate and social enterprise can potentially form long-term and sustainable social partnership incorporating strategies for social capital and relational governance to achieve societal empowerment (Park, Hwang & Kim, 2018; Wejesiri, 2025). Also, the collaborative role of value creation for seeking long term partnership, wherein, social enterprise can obtain goodwill and reputation along with other benefits for sustainability of operations. Through social partnership, each party can mobilize and leverage the required resources and develop mutual dependency. In the reference to Swachh Bharat Abhiyan in India, explored the vital efforts of corporate social responsibility in collaboration with community-based agencies such as social enterprise and government for implementing social campaigns (Lawania & Kapoor, 2018; Wejesiri, 2025). The study reveals corporates aggressive participation in achieving development goals can highly impact the community while unleash their financial and capacity support for the cause. Thus, this collaboration highlights four potential contributions from corporate social responsibility to support social enterprise lists as identification of potential agency such as social enterprise, for development of funds for cause, optimum utilization of corporate strength for the cause under corporate social responsibility and efficient monitoring and evaluation for effective impact (Lawania & Kapoor, 2018, Wejesiri, 2025). The multi-dimensional societal problems cannot be addressed and solved by one party therefore, strategic alliance and collaboration embark a hope to transform society. The

cross-section collaboration between business through corporate social responsibility and social enterprise aims to develop competencies, corporate seeks for stakeholder appreciation whereas, social enterprise seeks for financial as well as technical support (Sakarya, Bodur, Yildirim-Oktem, Seleklér-Goksen, 2012; Wejesiri, 2025).

#### **Theme 4: Sustainability, continuity, community empowerment and scalability**

This theme depicts the significance of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility with the reflection of sustainability, continuity, community empowerment and scalability. Corporate social responsibility is viewed under the umbrella of sustainability as it is the integral element of being social responsibility and interrelated with continuity whereas, social enterprise is itself a model of self-sustainability and continuity for achieving community empowerment (Jiang et al., 2024; Wirba, 2024; Carroll, 2021). The inter-organisation relationship highlights impact of corporate social responsibility on social enterprise's sustainability in context to performance which has positive relationship to the sustainability of social enterprise based on improved social and economic performance by strengthening revenue generation through product & services by gaining competitive advantages, instilling strategies, creativity, and innovation (Wejesiri et al., 2025; Qing & Jin, 2022; Palakshappa & Grant, 2018). The transformation of corporates practices to sustainable development is mostly communicated by incorporating corporate social responsibility for sustainable and continue social as well as economic benefits and co-existence of social enterprise and corporates can collectively achieve sustainable goals by utilizing social enterprise at efficient engine to boost corporate social responsibility initiative to achieve community empowerment, sustainability and scalability of operations through innovating new effective solutions to chronic social-oriented problems by collaborating and associating with social actors (Wejesiri et al., 2025; Rahdari, Sepasi & Moradi, 2016). The commonalities of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility share sustainability aspiration as well as social value creation wherein corporate social responsibility often referred as sustainability in practice whereas, social enterprise is also embedded with the objective of sustainable social empowerment and value creation (Palakshappa & Grant, 2018). The sustainability and continuous flow of financial and technical assistance by corporates through corporate social responsibility model to social enterprises for creating core-competencies and sustainable shared value such as provides job to disadvantage & disable segment of community, improving quality of life and protecting environment (Wejesiri et al., 2025; Palakshappa & Grant, 2018; Kim & Kim, 2016). Therefore, encourages inter-organisation relationship to establish dyadic business



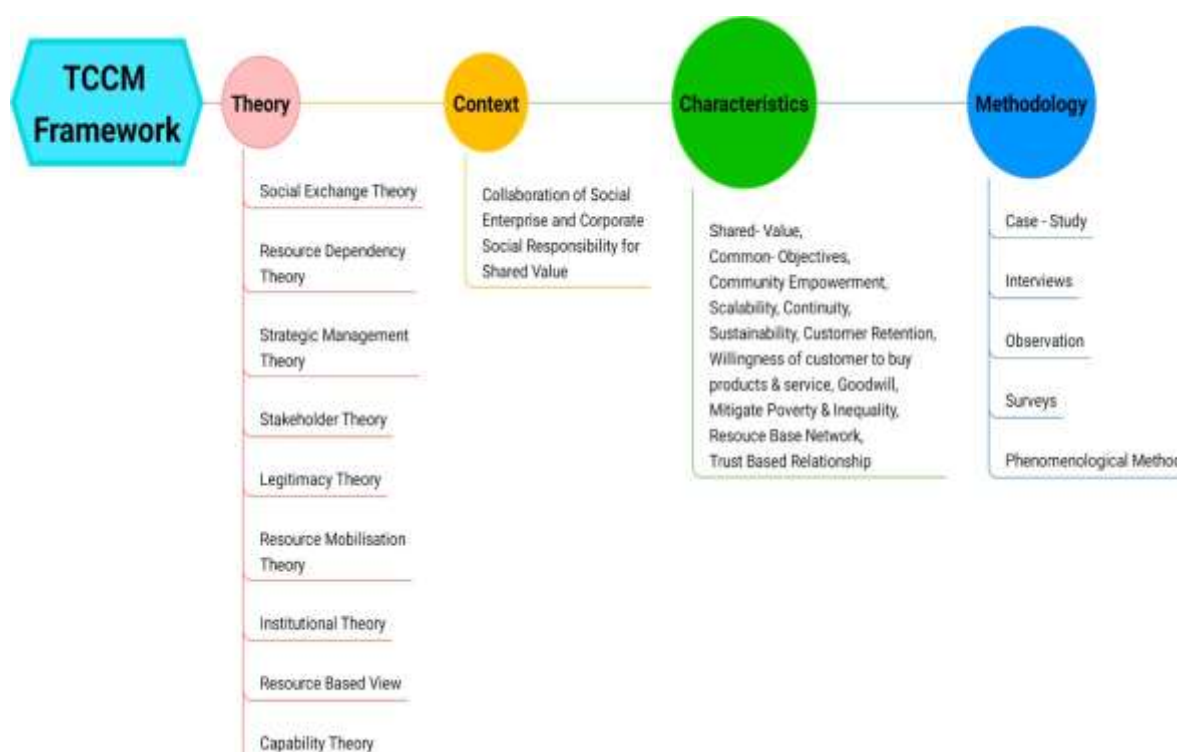
model of social entrepreneurial alliances towards illuminating the competent pathways by which social enterprises can successfully achieve co-value creation, could achieve scalability, continuity and sustainability while catering the primary objectives and promises of social impact (Barnabas, Ravikumar & Narasimhan, 2020). However, the final included studies provide that social enterprise and corporate social responsibility could also lead to form a relationship based on sustainability, continuity, scalability, and community empowerment but did not provide clarity and has not been studies extensively in how social enterprise and corporate social responsibility could lead to scalability clearly. This research gap provides a direction to this study to further address the collaboration of corporate social responsibility and social enterprise on the principles of sustainability, continuity, community empowerment and scalability through exploratory and empirical research.

Having discussed the identified foundation of collaboration of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility from the existing literature, the next section discusses briefly the TCCM framework analysis.

### Theory, Context, Characteristics and Methodology (TCCM) Analysis:

Literature review attempts to identify and provide pertinent in development of theoretical perspective for establishing collaboration of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility. The TCCM frame has been incorporated to provide a focused analysis to classify theories, context, characteristics, and methodology of existing literature to further adopt most convenient and appropriate TCCM frame to develop theoretical framework for collaborating social enterprise and corporate social responsibility (Paul & Rosado-Serrano, 2019). For this, the final included studies are used which have been obtained from PRISMA framework in above section. The final included studies are critically assessed to illustrate the TCCM framework. The framework was pioneered by Paul & Rosado-Serrano (2019). Under this, the researcher first reviews the theories followed by context, characteristics and finally the methodology of final included studies. This framework has been acknowledged as a tool to provide future research directions (Paul & Rosado-Serrano, 2019). This section aims to address the ground of literature in social enterprise and corporate social responsibility to build collaborative state efficiently.

Figure 7: TCCM framework



Source: Authors' compilation

### Review of Theories:

The researcher has identified and reviewed the theoretical approaches in the field of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility collectively by fully assessing final included studies. The theoretical

approaches which have been used in published articles are: (1) Social Exchange theory, (2) Resource Dependency Theory, (3) Strategic Management Perspective, (4) Stakeholder Theory, (5) Legitimacy Theory, (6) Resource Mobilization Theory, (7)

Institutional Theory,

(8) Resource Based View, (9) Capability Theory. We hereafter, briefly define these identified theories from the final included studies for recognizing the most appropriate theory for incorporating in the process of developing theoretical framework.

#### **Review of Context:**

The review of context illustrates the in-depth analysis of final included studies that provides the most comprehensive base to draw collaborated directions of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility irrespective of any constraints such as country, scale of organization or specific area of operation. The existing literature reveals several approaches for identifying, comprehending, and estimating the collaboration between social enterprise and corporate social responsibility (Oware et al., 2024). The forms of collaboration identified in the literature and establish a framework for how the constructs interact to create shared values. The social enterprise and corporate social responsibility can collaborate by incorporating social alliances and partnership which can proliferate opportunities of shared-values such as sponsorship, subcontracts, counselling, and network & development for sustainable growth (Yeasmin & Koivurova, 2021; Oware et al., 2024) and also by establishing common strategies such as personal networks, resource acquisition, implementation of social-based practices, enhance trust development based on expansion to new markets, co-evolution, and trust competencies (Grant & Palakshappa, 2018; Yeasmin & Koivurova, 2021; Cezarino et al., 2022; Oware et al., 2024). And, hence bring fair trade on surface by supporting social enterprises financially or with resources which can bring new dimension for corporates through corporate social responsibility (Grant & Palakshappa, 2018; Oware et al., 2024). The study and scope of these areas provide us a direction to address and pursue the underdeveloped components such as scalability, sustainability, continuity, and community empowerment as principles for collaboration.

#### **Review of Characteristics:**

The significance of final included articles is briefly developing a pavement to address and fill the gap of collaboration of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility. The studies emphasized on inter-dependence and co-existence of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility for achieving common objectives and shared-values which influence the sustainability, scalability, continuity, community empowerment. The findings of included studies indicate that corporate align corporate social responsibility to facilitate social enterprise in terms of incorporating efficient and effective entrepreneurial approaches and systems to build innovations for achieving social goals in consideration to earn strong customer base in terms of values, retention, willingness to buy products and services, goodwill of

corporates (Cezarino et al., 2022; Oware et al., 2024). Social enterprise is reflected as a motivating spark, enthusiasm, and commitment for driving corporate social responsibility projects for achieving social mission (Ekopriyono & Darmanto, 2020; Oware et al., 2024).). The collaboration of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility has turned out to be a potential to address and mitigate poverty and inequalities in the society (Zeng & Wang, 2019). The corporate provides philanthropy to social enterprise as a new dimension for catering corporate social responsibility which facilitate the corporate to influence customers for making purchase of their product and service (Grant & Palakshappa, 2018; Oware et al., 2024).). Social enterprise can be a potential subsidiary for corporates to run their corporate social responsibility programs for achieving social impact along with employees volunteering for the social cause (Kim & Kim, 2016). Based on partnership and collaboration of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility can enlarge the access to trust-based relationship, co- evolution, resource-based network, implementation of social practices, expansions of market (Oware et al., 2024). Thus, it further emphasises to develop sustainability, continuity along with scalability with the intend to facilitate primary objective of social impact and social value creation (Barnabas, Ravikumar & Narasimhan, 2020; Rick, 2021). These characteristics could further provide a frame of antecedents of this area of study.

#### **Review of Methodology:**

The objective of this section is to illustrate TCCM framework in terms of collaborated state of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility for achieving shared values. The final included studies mainly employed qualitative approaches to analyse this area of study. The widely employed methodologies comprise to case-study, interview, observation, survey, and phenomenological methods. However, other approaches remain unexplored in this context. There is a wide scope for researchers to further analyze their study through more methods and tools to illustrate the interactive state of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility.

#### **DISCUSSIONS:**

In this section, researcher work with the objective to develop theoretical understanding for illuminating the synergy of collaboration between social enterprise and corporate social responsibility for achieving social-economic missions. With the help of TCCM findings, the researcher now can finalize knit all overlapping distinct potential of these organisations.

The notion of corporate social responsibility has been illustrated with a debate that corporates are cardinal instruments of public policy and have significant responsibility towards its stakeholders for uplifting disadvantaged community by highly enthusiastic positive support of managers of corporate social

responsibility (Wirba et al., 2024; Jiang et al., 2024). This viewpoint entails that it is imperative that businesses to embrace non-financial stakeholders in corporate social responsibility to focus on them for the benefit of society. If they do not follow so, then they may face repercussions of losing the support of the community as well as non-cautious consumers. Moreover, it encourages corporates to instil triple bottom line which confines to 3p's such as profit, people, and planet (Cristobal-Cipriano et al., 2022). Here, profit in this context refers to the financial wellbeing of businesses that uphold the interests of their shareholders, while people here relate to social responsibility, which is exhibited by fostering justice, equity, accessibility, and security.

The sustainable development goals framework is a macro level agenda specifically designed and implemented for societal advancement and has been the parameters to measure corporate social responsibility effectiveness and efficacy and guide corporate's behaviour (Fallah Shayan et al., 2022; Palakshappa & Grant, 2018). Corporates are responsible for creating social impact and sustainable development goals provides corporates to lead practices and motivate for high performance based on the targeted sustainable development goal (Lee & Hess, 2022). It is observed by academicians that sustainable development goals cannot be accomplished without the active participation of corporates (Barbieri et al., 2025). Therefore, corporates are inclined to engage in cross-sector partnership and establish shared social objectives for effectiveness in achieving sustainable development goals. Corporates' core capabilities and skills can add significant value in realizing sustainable development goals when other partner use their expertise such as knowledge and active participation for goals to ensure effectiveness and impact (Oware et al., 2024; Palakshappa & Grant, 2018). Still, there is a room for robust inferences for corporates to measure their corporate social responsibility impact based on sustainable development goals (Lee & Hess, 2022; Palakshappa & Grant, 2018). Social enterprises can tailor the projects and activities of corporate social responsibility to realize its goals and can reflect as a potential actor as they are embedded with social goals (Patwardhan, 2017) and can bridge corporates to sustaining corporate social responsibility (Palakshappa & Grant, 2018).

This study envisions the theoretical conceptualize how social enterprise and corporate social responsibility can collaborate for achieving social and economic missions. The strategic management defines "as the art and science of formulating, implementation, and evaluating cross-functional decisions that enable an organisation to achieve its objectives" (David, 2011). The organisation's foremost action is to critically examine its external and internal resources,

capabilities, and competencies within the frame of organisation's vision & mission and therefore formulate its strategies for community and consumers (Hitt, Ireland, & Hoskisson, 2016; Wu et al., 2022). Moreover, it further comprises to significant tasks such as formulation of organisation's mission along with purposes and goals; conduct analysis of internal as well as external capabilities; assess to external environment; accommodating organisational resources with external environment; identification of most favourable opportunities within the frame of organisation's mission; incorporate long-term objects and marketing strategies; implementation of strategic choices through resource allocation in context to align tasks, human resource, systems, structures, technology and rewards are emphasized; finally, evaluation of success of strategic process for future decision making (Pearce, Robinson & Mital, 2010). The researchers consider this theory has the potential to conceptualize the strategic collaboration of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility for achieving sustainability development goals.

Collaboration between these organisations is rocketing and emerging more strategic in nature as political, economic and social obligation is fostering such collaboration (Austin, 2000). Strategic collaboration is the extent to which interested partners plan and coordinate organisation's operations with the shared co-objectives therefore, enhancing well-being of each other for long-term (Kim & Lee, 2010). "Strategic collaboration is an intentional, collective approach to address public problems and issues through building shared knowledge, designing innovative solutions and forging consequential change. When used strategically, collaboration produces positive impact, stakeholders committed to policy or program change and strengthened capacity of individuals and organisations to effectively work together" (Norris-Tirrell & Clay, 2016).

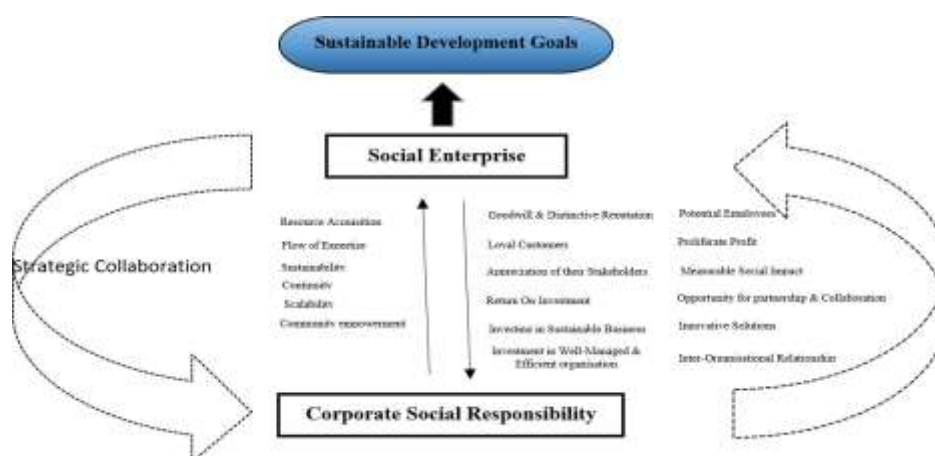
Social enterprises rely for assistance not only from public-sector but also from big corporates through their corporate social responsibility frame (Yeasmin & Koivurova 2021). The foresight of this strategic collaboration between social enterprise and corporate social responsibility is to achieve sustainable development goals on the principles of sustainability, scalability, continuity, and community empowerment. Corporate social responsibility support encourages social enterprise to attain sustainability and continuity through economic and social performance and benefits (Qing & Jin, 2022). The support of corporate through corporate social responsibility to social enterprise spur dyadic business model where social enterprise can successfully achieve co-value creation by achieving sustainability, scalability, continuity while catering to primary objective of community empowerment (Barnabas, Ravikumar & Narasimhan, 2020).

Social enterprises still require visibility among big corporates through corporate social responsibility practices and application (Yeasmin & Koivurova 2021). Corporate social responsibility strategies have a huge potential for encouragement to corporates for co-existence with social enterprise and must require third-party mediator between social enterprise and corporate social responsibility to stimulate advance practices of corporate social responsibility by discovering shared value creation-oriented objectives and negotiating with corporates on expected assistance for social enterprise (Yeasmin & Koivurova 2021). Therefore, such cross-sectional collaboration would proliferate the corporates goodwill and provides a distinctive reputation which will attract loyal customers (Berger et al., 2004; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001), potential employees (Eweje and Bentley, 2006), appreciation of their stakeholders (Sakarya, Bodur, Yildirim- Öktem & Selekler-Göksen, 2012), eventually boast returns (Parker & Selsky, 2004), also attain return on investment through analyzing measurable social impact (Alter, 2007), opportunity to invest in sustainable, well managed and efficient business model (Mitra&Borza 2010), and innovative solutions of social enterprises (Cornelius et al., 2008; Szegedi, Fülöp & Bereczk 2016) therefore, which yield inter-organisational relationship (Alter, 2007). Through strategic collaboration, both respective organisations can leverage expertise and access to resources of one another for shared-value (Berger et al., 2004) and provide multi-stakeholder ownership (Palakshappa & Grant, 2018) for achieving sustainable development goals. The collaboration for

resource acquisition are bifurcated as financial capital which comprises of grants, earned income, venture philanthropy and loans (Barendsen & Gardner, 2004), human capital represents as technical as well as productive skills of human resource (Becker, 1964), social capital refers to network and connections of human resource in respect to access resources such as information, knowledge and finances (Portes, 1998) and intangible capital refers to tacit knowledge which eventually becomes assets to organisation as it cannot be transfer or replicated, and it requires time to learn it (Meyskens, 2010).

Social enterprises are emerged as a potential, latest and flexible driver for engaging in corporate social responsibility for corporates (Palakshappa & Grant, 2018; Wejesiri et al., 2025). Social enterprise can be a potential means to integrate skills and abilities across respective sectors for achieving its goals (de Bell, & Bakker, 2025) through collaborations and partnerships (Palakshappa & Grant, 2018). Collaboration between social actors continues as far as inter-organisational engagements achieve their respective goals (Meyskens, 2010). Therefore, the motivation of social enterprises for collaboration illustrates an open-ended landscape to enhance their visibility and image for corporate engagement to access resources and mature co-social value creation by incorporating its knowledge, infrastructure, expertise, and existing social network (Sakarya, Bodur, Yildirim-Öktem & Selekler-Göksen, 2012) to achieve sustainable development goals.

**Figure 8: Conceptual understanding of Collaboration of Social Enterprise and Corporate Social Responsibility**



Source: Author's compilation



Visibly, it illustrates the pavement of strategic collaboration and co-objectives of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility for achieving sustainable development goals. Social enterprise and corporate social responsibility formulate and implement strategies for collaboration by evaluating both internal as well as external capabilities to achieve social-economic missions based on sustainability, scalability, continuity, and community empowerment to accomplish sustainability development goals. There is a paucity of exploratory research of collaboration or alliances between social enterprise and corporate social responsibility for shared value creation. This study addresses the under researched area of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility for co-existence by illustrating viable theoretical framework that will deepen the conceptualization of how social enterprise and corporate social responsibility can strategically collaborate for achieving sustainability goals.

### CONCLUSION:

This systematic literature review aims to theoretically conceptualize between social enterprise and corporate social responsibility for achieving their symbiotic relationship to influence their collective missions through strategic collaboration. The researcher intends to provides an overall evaluation of existing literature on these two distinct concepts and their co-existence and follows a structural way to encapsulate. The study first summarizes the descriptive as well as bibliometric analysis of these areas collectively to draw the statistics and trends of the literature. Followed by thematic analysis, based on the final included studies extracted through PRISMA framework, the study identifies prominent themes to define the ground of amalgamation of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility therefore, the findings draw gaps from existing literature where more exploratory research is needed and provide recommendations for future research areas. The thematic analysis highlights insufficient amount of clarity on areas of sustainability, scalability, continuity, and community empowerment through the collaboration of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility which draws the gap in the literature.

In addition, study illustrates the comprehensive TCCM framework to provide the theory, context, characteristics, and methodology analysis for providing the structure to map collaboration on the broader field of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility. Based on the findings of TCCM framework, the study provides a viable and comprehensive understanding of literature for addressing the strategic collaboration of social enterprise and corporate social responsibility for achieving their missions.

Henceforth, corporate could harness considerate number of benefits from collaboration with social

enterprises. To escort social enterprises for resource acquisition and expertise proliferate the immense scope of sustainability, scalability, continuity, and community empowerment. In consideration, corporate could gain goodwill, a distinctive reputation, attract loyal customers, potential employees' appreciation of their stakeholders, eventually boast returns, also achieve return on investment, measurable social impact, opportunity to invest in sustainable, well managed and efficient business model, and innovative solutions of social enterprises, therefore, which yield inter- organisational relationship.

Future studies ought to investigate the lasting effects of CSR and social enterprise initiatives on consumer loyalty and brand equity in various cultural and economic contexts. Research can analyze the influence of digital storytelling, influencer marketing, and AI-driven personalization on consumer views regarding authenticity in CSR. Moreover, it is essential to evaluate the effectiveness of CSR in emerging markets, particularly within sectors such as fintech and healthcare. Longitudinal and cross-generational research could uncover changing consumer expectations, particularly among Gen Z and Alpha. Furthermore, studies should explore how hybrid business models can maintain a balance between profit and purpose without compromising consumer trust or social impact.

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