

## **Social Innovation: Theoretical Perception of Social Innovation**

**By**

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### **Introduction**

Modern economic systems have experienced tremendous growth over the last five decades, with the demand for energy, housing, security, food, education, health, employment, and others experiencing rapid changes. In turn, the tremendous growth in the global economic systems has placed numerous, complex, urgent, and extraordinary challenges on nations across the globe (Melece, 2015; Mensink et al., 2018). As Melece (2015) states, these social challenges include energy security and efficiency, increasing poverty rates, delocalization, inequality rates, unstable economies, climate change, extended unemployment, environmental degradation, terrorism, and insecurity among others.

Consequently, these challenges have forced the international community, governments, policymakers, scholars, and others to develop an interest in social innovation. Specifically, extant literature shows that most governments, scholars, international communities, and other stakeholders in social and economic development consider social innovation the ultimate solution to the problems the world is facing today (Krlev, Mildenerger&Anheier, 2020). But the question of interest here is “what is social innovation and how can it solve global challenges?”

Extant literature needs to provide a single, universal definition of social innovation. Rather, several definitions of the term appear to depend on the context in which the defining body is applying it (Mensink et al., 2018). In the study “Social Innovation and its Types in Rural Areas”, Melece (2015) examined literature from multiple studies in an attempt to find how scholars and other parties define social innovation (Angelini et al., 2016; Santoro, Ferraris, &Vrontis, 2018). Specifically, the study aimed to clarify the definition and meanings as well as to find the various types of social innovations in rural areas. In this study, it was found that the definition of social innovation is vague. Still, the important thing is that the various definitions all point to the view that it applies to provide social benefits for the local community and society in general.

In their study that used a systematic review approach, Phillips and colleagues (2015) came up with a much more acceptable definition of social innovation as innovative activities, programs, and services motivated by the need to meet a social need. This definition has also been adopted by several other authors. The European Commission’s Guide to Social Innovation defines social innovation as the development and implementation of new ideas such as services, products, and models with an aim of meeting social needs and creating new social collaborations and relationships. The EU Commission (2013) further states that social innovation seeks to respond to pressing social demands and needs that affect the process of social interactions (Spitzer &Twikirize, 2021). The ultimate aim of social innovation, as many scholars, agencies, and governments agree, is to improve the overall human well-being as all social innovations are social in both their means and ends and also enhance people’s capacity to act and improve their lives.

## Literature Review

Even though the field of social innovation has grown rapidly in the last few decades, there has been little attention to its theoretical and conceptual foundations behind the term. Only a few researchers have attempted to establish the theories behind social innovation, despite its importance both as a field in research and social development (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014). In turn, it is clear that theoretical perspectives of social innovation need to be elaborated (Ramadani et al., 2020). Nevertheless, the few research studies that have examined the theories of social innovation are based in multiple fields that contribute to the overall human well-being, including education, entrepreneurship and business, health, energy, and others. From these studies, it can be deduced that theoretical frameworks seek to highlight and open up distinct ways of thinking about social innovation. First, social innovation is seen as a form of creating, capturing, and distributing social value. Secondly, social innovation is seen as a polysemantic concept whose function is to create networks of meaning required in cross-sector interrelationships and collaborations. Third, social innovation is an institutional change. Based on these broad theoretical frameworks, it is possible to examine the specific attempts to create or examine different theories of social innovation by researchers.

In their article “Another look at social innovation: From community - For community”, Daniel and Jenner (2022) argue that social innovation is a potential remedy for both civic dysfunction and social disenfranchisement. However, the authors state that the diverse perspectives of social innovation tend to create inconsistencies in the methodological approaches, which limits the capacity to develop applicable theoretical perspectives of the term. Consequently, the aim of their research was to clarify the discussion on theoretical and conceptual perspectives of the term. According to their definition, social innovations are the activities, approaches, and activities that help communities to meet unmet or unrealized social goals. Citing Mulgan (2012), Daniel and Jenner (2022) adopt the definition that social innovation is the innovations that are social in both their means and ends. However, the authors also consider elaborations by other researchers, which include a view of the historical concepts and development of social innovation, categorization, application, effectiveness, and others.

The article by Daniel and Jenner (2022) dwells on the delineation of grounded social innovation, citing the importance of the micro-level social mobilization in the communities that receive the benefits of the practices and activities. Given that the aim of all practices, activities, and approaches of social innovation seeks to improve the lives of communities, then the theoretical view of grounded social innovation is relevant in this case. In their delineation of grounded social innovation from a theoretical perspective, Daniel and Jenner (2022) emphasize the need for three important levels of social innovation- locus initiative, development processes, and locus benefit. In this case, the authors argue that the locus initiative level focuses on the social needs, opportunities, and challenges that the innovation is seeking to address such as poverty, economic inequality, illiteracy, diseases, unemployment, and others.

On its part, the development process defines contextual malleability, social attitudes, and institutional engagement, which are all the processes through which social innovation approaches, activities, and programs use to achieve their ends. Locus benefit is a level that explains the ends or the social good that the community is set to achieve with the social innovation such as reduction in poverty, inequalities, disease burden, and others. Daniel and Jenner (2022) further provide examples of activities with the three levels which are commonly used as social innovations to address challenges- social enterprise, cooperatives, and social entrepreneurship.

In an attempt to develop a theory of social innovation, Pel and colleagues (2020) develop a comprehensive analysis of relational frameworks and propositions that other researchers have developed over the years. In this analysis, the authors use three steps in the development of a theory of social innovation. First, they epistemologically reflect on the challenges facing theory building, proposing an appropriate approach for new research. Secondly, they synthesize various social and innovation theories into a relational framework with an aim of articulating the institutional hybridization as well as the distributed agency involved. Finally, the authors formulate some 12 propositions on the emergence of social innovation initiatives.

In essence, the framework that the authors propose is not a stand-alone theory but a relational framework of a hybrid of theories in innovation and sociology. The proposed framework focuses on the emergence of social innovation initiatives, ecosystems, institutional processes, and historical shaping. Anderson, Curtis, and Wittig (2014) further expand the theoretical perspectives of social innovation by examining and analyzing the existing theories and concepts various researchers have used or proposed. The aim of their research was to explore different definitional approaches and intentions that legitimize and theorize social innovation. In particular, the authors examine postmodernity and critical theory, governments, social marketing, democracy, and social entrepreneurship in defining social innovation.

Of particular interest in the paper is the application of postmodernity and critical theory. In their analysis, Anderson, Curtis, and Wittig (2014) demonstrate how the critical theory applies in defining the theoretical perspectives of social innovation. The authors argue that with the critical theory, it is possible to identify the purpose and audience to whom the definition of social innovation is intended. With both the audience and purpose in mind, one is able to define social innovation as the processes, methods, and activities for improving the well-being of society.

The social innovation theory is one of the most cited theoretical approaches and frameworks in a majority of past studies. Howaldt and Michael Schwarz (2017) attempted to highlight how this theory supports the capabilities approach in the studies of social innovation. The authors examine the importance of developing a theoretical or conceptual framework for social innovation as an analytical category. They demonstrate how social innovation is largely grounded on the social theory that examines the manifestations, cultural contexts, actors, and interrelationships with social change processes.

The theory of social innovation assumes that co-produced solutions have positive effects on society either through increasing the aggregative value or by empowering the people in innovative processes (Notarnicola, Berloto & Perobelli, 2022). In addition, Howaldt & Michael Schwarz (2017) also examine Gabriel Tarde's social theory, which looks at invention, imitation, and opposition. As for invention, the theory states that it requires a gifted individual in a social context where support is provided or assured. In this case, Gabriel Tarde's social theory applies to innovation, given that it emphasizes the need for a supportive social context to motivate an individual to act for the improvement of personal and social well-being. A similar approach in another article that the two authors were involved in. In this study, Howaldt, Kopp, and Schwarz (2015) continued to examine social innovations as drivers of social change, paying special attention to Tarde's social theory.

The specific aim of this research was to explore the relationship between social change and social innovativeness. As Tarde notes in his social theory, everything social that happens occurs through imitation and invention. Through imitation, one is able to gain insight for

analyzing how practices and activities are created and institutionalized. Social innovation, to Tarde, is the starting point for social change (Gallouj et al., 2018). Based on this concept, Howaldt, Kopp, and Schwarz (2015) found that the social change theory supports social innovativeness, given that the society that supports initiatives is able to entice people to imitative and then act towards improving their social well-being such as investing, learning, applying techniques, and knowledge, and other practices.

Klimczuk and Tomczyk (2020) present an editorial article that examines the existing perspectives and theories of social innovation with reference to the aging population. The authors cite 76 articles by different researchers from selected countries spread across the world. Additional literature was borrowed from research journals, community case studies, perspective articles, policy and practice reviews, methods, books, and hypothesis papers. Then, the authors identify the different themes emerging from these articles which relate to the concept of social innovation in regard to the aging population in different countries and societies.

In their conclusion, the authors find that gerontology has a high level of innovation potential. Secondly, the article argues that the perception of old age and the culturally diverse public interventions in individual countries determine the practical solutions and innovativeness. The search for solutions characterized by innovation and pragmatism is the measure of social maturity and solidarity (Solis-Navarrete, Bucio-Mendoza & Paneque-Gálvez, 2021). Consequently, this study provides evidence that innovativeness occurs in individual disciplines within the wide field of social context and social change as demonstrated by the view of innovativeness in relation to old age.

In the world of academia, the contribution of institutions of higher learning toward social innovation is an important area of study to most researchers. Benneworth and Cunha (2013) considered this idea in a study of how universities contributed to social innovativeness. In their study, the authors aimed at examining how these institutions contribute to knowledge-based urban development (Lee & Lu, 2020). In the process of the study, the authors examined the bridges between some theories and those of social innovation in relation to knowledge-based urban development.

The application of the theory of innovation in social innovation has gained attention in the recent past, with many scholars trying to demonstrate a bridge between the two fields. As per the theory of innovation, the reference fields are competitiveness, business, and generation of economic value (Lipták, 2019). However, recent studies such as the recent research by Solid-Navarrete, Bucio-Mendoza, and Paneque-Galvez (2021) have shown that the theory of innovativeness also applies to social innovation. Nevertheless, their specific aim was to highlight elements that should not be included in the process of bridging social innovation theories and the theory of innovation. In this article, Solid-Navarrete, Bucio-Mendoza, and Paneque-Galvez (2021) include social, grassroots, transformative, frugal, institutional, environmental, inclusive, and territorial innovations as the elements that bridge social innovation and the theory of innovation. The authors hypothesize that all these types of innovation improve the human wellbeing, which in turn means that they are related to the innovativeness of any other type, including business, economics, and competitiveness.

The article by Howaldt and colleagues (2014) provides one of the most comprehensive literatures about the theories that apply to social innovation. In this article, the authors comprehensively examine the theories of social change- social and development theories- and how they apply to social innovation. Within these theories, the authors describe social change

theory, social practice theory, Tarde's social theory, systems theory, institutionalization theories, and development theories. In all these theories, it has been shown that social change relates to the development and social change theories for some reasons. First, the article argues that the two concepts have an aim of finding answers for problems derived from failures in both market and state intervention.

In this case, it is argued that both concepts result from some alternations in political, economic, and social contexts due to such factors as shifting power, crisis, and modified governance (Wedel, 2020). Secondly, Howaldt et al. (2014) argue that both social innovation and social change focus on social processes, actors, and organizations rising, developing, and existing outside the idea of pure economy and pure state intervention. Third, both concepts serve to satisfy human needs, draw attention to tensions and conflicts, seek to redistribute and reallocate resources, goods, and services, and include both autonomy and self-determination. Based on these views, it is evident that there is a strong link or bridge between the elements of social change theories and social innovation. In turn, these findings explain that the theories of social change and development are also the foundations of social innovation.

## **Why do Cities Need Social Innovation? Cities and Social Innovation/ Urban Social Innovation**

After successfully examining and analyzing the definitions and theoretical background of social innovation, it is imperative to explore the importance of this concept for societies. Specifically, it is important to look at the need for social innovation in cities and urban centers and the role that the concept plays in the general socioeconomic development of residents and countries. The European Union constantly examines the need for social innovation in cities across the region, publishing the results and discussions in periodic reports by its selected commissions. According to the EU, social innovations relate to how society responds to pressing social demands by approaches and means that have an impact on the process of social interactions.

Over the years, the common belief has been that economic development leads to the availability of employment for everyone, especially in cities, which in turn translates to a guaranteed reduction or elimination of poverty, thus social development. Nevertheless, this narrative has faced challenges in the recent past, with many stakeholders arguing that economic development does not necessarily translate to the eventual well-being of every person and social development. Rather, there need to be other elements of social development that should have roles in achieving the ultimate aim. In this case, the EU notes that social innovation and its elements are necessary tools for social development.

Cities and urban centers are normally the most affected regions by such social challenges as inequalities in various aspects of life. In addition, due to their high populations and population densities, they are almost always prone to such challenges as diseases and epidemics, violence and uprisings, high poverty and unemployment rates, and others. Consequently, they also need social innovation for socio-economic development. The study by TorillNyseth (2019) examines the concept of social innovation as a factor for transformation in urban planning and local development. Moreover, the author argues that social innovation is an alternative to economic and technological approaches to urban development such as creative and smart cities.

The idea is that as cities achieve economic and technological development, they are also in need of social development and innovativeness as these two have an emphasis on the human agency and the development of the local people. Nyseth (2019) further argues that failure to involve and engage the human agency in the transformation of their urban environment when focusing only on technological and economic approaches will most likely not achieve the ultimate aim. Rather, urban planning is set to benefit greatly from paying more attention to social innovation when addressing the vast and diverse challenges facing cities in the modern world (Costales, 2021). For instance, economic and technology-oriented development alone cannot effectively address such problems as social exclusion, environmental protection, urban segregation, citizen integration and participation, and others without focusing on social innovation as well.

On behalf of the EU, Hubert (2010) presents a policy-oriented article on why cities and other urban centers in the region need social innovation. The article “Empowering people, driving change” reflects most of the arguments that Nyseth (2019) presents, especially in relation to the deficits that focus on technology and economic development alone and exclude social innovation. Hubert argues that the traditional approaches that only focus on economic development have failed to address social problems for a number of reasons. For example, social needs are pressing now more than before at a time when resources are limited and becoming more and more scarce (Kar et al., 2019). The author argues that as an example, it has proved difficult or impossible to address the issues related to climate change in cities and urban centers using the traditional models alone. Evidently, if social innovation is part of the solution, then it is possible to include and actively engage the human agent and communities, which will help address such problems.

The extant literature provides evidence that social innovation reduces poverty and helps attain sustainable development in both rural and urban areas. A majority of studies trying to prove this view have been conducted in the EU where the major focus is on the urban areas due to higher poverty rates than in rural areas (Marchesi & Tweed, 2021). As an example, an article by Millard and colleagues (2016) reports the progress of another study that was in progress at the time. In the article, the authors delineate the evidence derived from the continuing empirical research by SI-DRIVE (SI-DRIVE, 2014). The idea is to develop and inform some aspects of policymaking to consider when establishing plans for urban transformation. According to the authors, all efforts designed to address social problems in urban areas need to prioritize diversity, collaboration, and a range of skills, competencies, and human factors and resources as they form the basics of effective and successful development.

The report “Social innovation in cities” by URB ACT (2015) is part of the EU’s efforts to establish adequate knowledge about the importance of social innovation for cities in the region. The report provides a detailed elaboration of social innovation and its importance for communities in cities across the EU region. In a case study, the report uses the city of Amersfoort in the Netherlands to demonstrate how social innovation can be effective in solving social challenges. In 2014, the city embarked on a strategy called the Year of Change that focused on changing its administrative practices to engage the people in shared responsibility and collective leadership.

With social media and related technologies, citizens were engaged and involved in designing new projects such as a park, a hospital, greenspaces, street markets, and pavements. As a result, citizens were able to provide their views on designs during the initial phases, and later they provided labor and skills. As a result, the city improved citizens’ perception of their cities while also economically empowering the young people involved in the actual work as

well as those assigned slots in parks and markets for business. This article provides an example of how city authorities can use simple and less costly approaches to engage the citizens and improve their lifestyles with social innovation.

Looking at specific cities and how they achieve social change through social innovation is one of the methods that recent researchers use. In an informed analysis, McFarlane et al (2021) develop an article that interrogates the topic of urban social innovation, paying attention to urban change in Berlin, Germany. In the article, the authors explore how the terms ‘urban development’ and ‘social development’ are interrelated and how cities like Berlin can use this relationship to achieve overall social and economic development. The rationale behind this argument is that the historical association between cities and both creativity and innovation should be utilized to include social innovation. In a review of multiple sources, the authors establish an association between social innovativeness and urban innovativeness, given that both require the human agent to achieve their objectives. When combined, social innovation and urban innovation can have long-term and implausible impacts on the citizens in that city or town.

In the process of achieving social change through social innovations, various stakeholders have different roles to play. In particular, engaging and involving the community requires adequate measures, policies, and approaches that ensure a successful relationship between the community and other stakeholders such as city leaders (European Commission, 2013). The European Union, through the European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR, 2012), advocates for such interrelationships in cities across the region. In the policy paper “Social innovation: The role of social service providers”, EPR argues that social service providers have the most important role in establishing a close relationship between the city and the residents that support social innovation (EU 2013). According to the report, the EU emphasizes the need for cities to engage the residents since people are increasingly developing better ways of tackling some of the most challenging problems in the modern world.

Cities cannot realize the effectiveness of the solutions that people develop and use unless they establish close collaborations with citizens. The EPR argues that promoting the Europe 2020 Strategy requires the input of city residents, as the best way to achieve smart, sustainable, and inclusive social and economic growth. As an example, the EPR uses the case of the Lisbon Strategy which sought to invest in the creativity of people and organizations on a large scale, an approach that helped Portugal to solve the economic crisis of 2008-2010 (European Commission, 2013). Consequently, this paper clearly states the roles that city leadership should play in developing collaborations with citizens and benefiting from their innovations for tackling problems their societies face at a particular point in time.

## **Barriers and Challenges to Social Innovation**

Although the extant literature provides evidence that social innovation is necessary to achieve social change and overall socioeconomic development, various challenges and limitations to this achievement exist. Studies have shown that barriers and challenges to social innovation are detectable at different structural levels, given that the issues are formalized and interconnected. Structural barriers affecting social innovation include those corresponding to political, social, technological, and economic aspects of society (Chalmers, 2013). Moreover, agency barriers to social innovation include those that correspond to the actions and characteristics of individuals. Many studies identify multiple specific challenges to social innovation, including access to finance, systemic change limitations, poor positive experience,

poorly developed skills, resistance to changes, and conservative and short-viewed thinking are some of the most observable problems associated with social innovation.

The article by Lukesch et al., (2020) examines the institutional and social institutions and policy initiatives that foster or limit social innovation. In the study, the authors focus on the specific initiatives and conditions that act as barriers to social innovation using an extensive empirical background. Among other things, the authors found that public actors such as political and institutional leaders and the hierarchical nature of public institutions are the major hindrances to social innovation. Moreover, the lack of multifunctional and flexible support structures for the development and implementation of social innovation initiatives is a critical issue that hinders social innovation (Merlin-Brogniart et al., 2022). In their conclusion, the authors state that the best point to address these challenges and limitations is at the policymaking level. Policymakers should always ensure that they recognize the importance of triadic relationships between the various stakeholders such as the state, local authorities, and intermediary organizations in achieving social innovation. On their part, Grimm et al. (2013) document various uses of social innovation in different policy as well as academic discourses.

In addition, the researchers assume that for social innovation to be useful in the policymaking process, then it should inform something about the specific adjustments necessary to develop effective political economics ready for the innovation. In the process of elaborating these arguments, the researchers also highlight some of the challenges associated with social innovation and find such challenges as well. Among other challenges, the authors highlight the poor level of linking social innovation with technological and economic innovations and development in the digital age. Moreover, the current digital age no longer has distinct boundaries between the roles of innovators, producers, and users.

## **Methodology**

Another crucial concept that always arises in the existing literature about social innovation is corporate social responsibility (CSR). By definition, CSR is the practices and policies that corporations take with an intention of achieving positive influence on the communities and societies in which they exist and operate. Such practices and policies are almost always associated with philanthropic, activism, and charitable goals that engage and support community-oriented practices (Ko et al., 2020). Over the last few decades, corporations have focused their CSR policies, practices, and initiatives on attaining or influencing social innovation. Research has shown that the attainment of various goals within social innovation is the key aspect of CSR (Galego et al., 2022). The increasingly strong relationship between CSR and social innovation has resulted in the emergence of a relatively new concept or term—corporate social innovation (CSI). According to Ricciardelli (2020), CSI refers to the corporations or corporate initiatives that integrate social innovation into their CSR policies and activities.

## **Results**

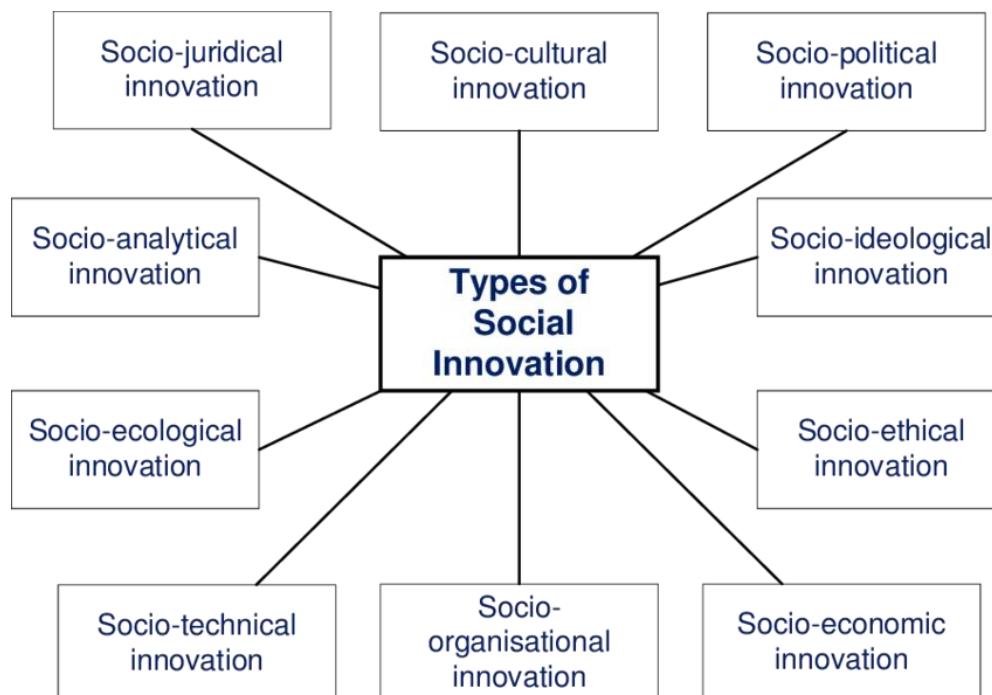
In this case, through the social responsibility of corporates and other organizations in a given community, a framework for the achievement of social innovation emerges. Harazin and Kosi (2013) develop a review of the extant literature to examine social innovation through social responsibility as a means of solving social challenges. Moreover, they examine the relationship and concepts of social innovation and CSR. The authors consider the critical position of CSI in the Europe 2020 Strategy. Although there are various challenges that affect



CSR as a means of achieving social innovation, the authors found that the extant literature generally agrees that corporations and other firms can drive social innovation through their CSR strategies. Consequently, it is evident that CSR is one of the tools that modern societies and countries should use to achieve social innovation and its benefits to all members of a community.

## **Types of Social Innovations and the Success Criteria for Social Innovation**

So far, the current discussion is yet to consider the specific types of social innovations or the elements that make up the concept. It is worth noting that the extant literature shows diverse interpretations of what social innovation is about (van der Have & Rubalca, 2016). Indeed, a single description of the specific types of innovations that should be included in the term “social innovation” does not exist. However, some researchers and policymakers have identified at least ten different aspects of innovation that define social innovation. The article by Wigboldus (2016) by far provides one of the best categorizations of the specific types of innovations under social innovation. Under the theoretical model that Wigboldus (2016) develops, ten categories of the types of innovations under social innovation are recognized as shown in figure 1.



**Figure 1:** *Ten types of social innovation. Source*

Most of the studies that examine the different types of social innovation revolve around the categories under figure 1 above. For instance, in the recent past, innovations that help communicate to achieve social equality have emerged as one of the most mentioned social innovations. As an example, health equality is now a critical topic of debate at a time the world is facing the healthcare challenges associated with the pandemic. The article by Hale, Troxel, and Buysse (2020) argues that sleep health is a major issue affecting the healthcare systems in the modern world. If public health systems can achieve sleep health, then they are able to address the problem of health equity. This argument is founded on the theoretical and practical perspective that sleep health is a key healthcare indicator but which is unevenly distributed

across populations and communities. As a result, the authors suggest that public health consider improving sleep health as a positive step towards achieving equity in healthcare.

## **Social Innovation Process**

In a working paper, Mulgan et al. (2007) the stages that social innovation passes as societies achieve their social development objectives. In this case, the author identifies seven distinct stages of social innovation. The seven stages are social organizations and enterprises, social movements, markets, politics and government, academia, philanthropy, and social software and open-source techniques. On his part, the Japanese scholar and researcher Kanji Tanimoto (2012) identifies the process of social innovation as having three major stages or steps- identification of social issues of interest, collaboration with stakeholders, and sharing the experience.

## **The Impacts of Social Innovation**

The impact that social innovation has on various aspects of any society is one of the most studied areas of the concept. Various studies have highlighted the different actual and potential impacts of social innovation in communities, but which depend on the social issues and problems facing a specific community. Ravazzoliet al (2021) conducted a study that sought to examine the actual and possible impacts of social innovation in the European Mediterranean marginalized areas.

Among other areas, the authors explored the impacts of social innovation on such fields as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and rural development. The results indicate that social innovation has cross-sectoral and multi-level impacts with improved societal wellbeing (Shier & Handy, 2015). In addition, these impacts reduce certain forms of marginality in the territories where social innovation is used to address the challenges. Neumeier (2017) identifies the key factors of success as well as the impacts of social innovation in rural development. In the article, the author finds that there are several factors that bring social innovation and which can be influenced by social innovation itself. The factors include compatibility, relative advantage, observability, trialability, and complexity of the innovations used in the interventions for improving human wellbeing in rural areas.

With regards to the impacts of social innovation in rural areas, the author finds that certain interventions improve indicators of social and economic development in the target areas, including agricultural productivity, human health indices, educational achievement, employment, and others. Using a literature analysis method, Wittmayer et al. (2019) found that various narratives of change help in the construction of social and individual identities, which in turn help in social innovation. For example, the authors note that counter-narratives help to change the mindsets of communities and motivate them to abandon old narratives that hold back innovation.

As a result, the society members are able to develop new concepts and knowledge that improve societal transformation with social innovation. On their part, Mongelli and Rullani (2017) found that many of the current social challenges facing communities across the world such as increasing marginalization and inequality are solvable with efforts and initiatives in social innovation. Specifically, the authors find that both inequality and marginalization are effectively reduced using such initiatives as social entrepreneurship and business model innovation, which also support social innovation.

## **The Connection between Social Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship**

As previously noted, social entrepreneurship is a concept with strong links with social innovation and emerges in many studies. As the study by Grilo and Moreira(2022) found, social entrepreneurship and social innovation are somewhat intertwined. In both concepts, the role of “social” is evident, despite the fact that current literature does not provide evidence of the connection between the two terms. The study by Lubberink and colleagues (2018) argues that social entrepreneurs play an important role in developing important innovative solutions for addressing various challenges facing societies.

Nevertheless, the authors emphasize that only responsible entrepreneurship helps to achieve social innovation. They further assert that social entrepreneurs develop frameworks for reducing such problems as unemployment and inequality within the societies where they take their entrepreneurship initiatives (Lubberink et al., 2018). The specific methods through which entrepreneurship facilitates social innovation are widely discussed in the study by Pless et al. (2021). In this study, the researchers examine whether, why, and how leaders in businesses are involved in social innovation. In conclusion, the authors find that leadership perspective and motivation are critical drivers in developing social innovation that addresses challenges facing societies.

### **Discussions**

Although this literature review has examined the types of social innovation, it is also important to look at some examples of social innovation, especially in real-life situations. Recent studies have also provided examples of real-life and theoretical social innovations. In a study based in France, Lichy, Dutot, and Kachuor (2021) use triangulation to collect data and analyze data from food consumers and food-truck business leaders and owners. As COVID-19 was spreading in France, restaurants were forced to close down due to restrictions, but food-truck businesses used the internet and social media technologies to deliver food to consumers’ homes. In this way, they were able to lower their overheads.

The study shows that technological innovation helped achieve social innovation, which in turn made life possible and easy for consumers while also improving the businesses of the traders. Similarly, the study by Pericu (2017) examines the impact of innovative strategies that helps in reducing the costs associated with providing services for an aging population. In this way, it is possible to design and innovate inclusive services and products that improve daily activities, which enable the aging population to lead independent and healthy lives.

### **Conclusion**

This review of literature has examined the concept of social innovation in-depth. In summary, the review finds that social innovation is a necessary tool for improving the overall well-being of people and communities. Given that economic development and technologies alone cannot achieve full social development, it has been found that when they are linked with social innovation, then the aims become achievable. Both rural areas and urban centers are in need of social innovation, albeit in different designs since they experience different social challenges. Moreover, achieving social innovation is almost always a problem due to the various challenges involved, but it has been shown that such factors as CSR, technological

innovativeness, social entrepreneurship, and community participation almost always enhance social innovation.

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