African Journal of Emerging Issues
Peer reviewed | Double blind | Interdisciplinary

African Journal of Emerging Issues (AJOEI)
Online ISSN: 2663 - 9335
Available at: https://ajoeijournals.org

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

FAITHFUL ADAPTATION: SPIRITUAL CAPITAL AS AN INNOVATION RESOURCE IN FAITH-BASED SOCIAL ENTERPRISES: EVIDENCE FROM CONSECRATED WOMEN IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF NAIROBI

Sawadogo Georgette Sidbewendin, PhD Candidate
Institute of Social Transformation, Tangaza University, Nairobi, Kenya
Prof. Daniel Mwenda Kitonga
Institute of Social Transformation, Tangaza University, Nairobi, Kenya
Dr William Murithi
Strathmore Business School, Strathmore University, Nairobi, Kenya

Publication Date: September 2026

ABSTRACT

Faith-based social enterprises occupy a distinctive position in African civil society, yet the mechanisms through which religious commitment shapes their innovation and sustainability remain poorly specified. This study examines how spirituality operates as an organisational resource in social enterprises led by consecrated women in the Archdiocese of Nairobi, Kenya. A concurrent mixed-methods design combined a structured questionnaire completed by administrators, finance managers and assistant administrators with in-depth interviews conducted with seven regional superiors. Quantitative data were analysed in SPSS (version 30); interview data were analysed thematically following Braun and Clarke's six-phase procedure. Innovation and sustainability were strongly associated, $R^2 = .808$, $F(1, 180) = 758.83$, $p < .001$, $B = 0.96$, $\beta = .90$. Because both constructs were measured by the same respondents on the same instrument at the same time, this figure is best read as an upper-bound estimate inflated by common-method variance, and as evidence of perceptual alignment rather than of causation. The interviews supply the interpretation. Participants described not technological novelty but *faithful adaptation*: mission-preserving change, triggered by a shortfall in the capacity to serve, screened against congregational charism before financial viability, and authorised through communal discernment. Spiritual commitment is theorised as the source of spiritual capital, which accumulates in four forms — collective discernment, trust networks, contemplative practice and values-based leadership — each of which both enables and rations innovation. Findings represent the perspectives of enterprise leaders; employee, beneficiary and community perspectives were not captured, so claims regarding mission fidelity and trust are limited to leaders' self-assessments. The qualitative findings, resting on seven interviews, are exploratory rather than saturated.

Keywords: *social entrepreneurship; spiritual capital; faith-based social enterprise; innovation; sustainability; women religious; Kenya*

1. INTRODUCTION

This section situates the study. It sets out the position faith-based social enterprises occupy in East African civil society and the funding shift now reshaping them, states the problem the study addresses and the gaps in the existing evidence, and specifies the purpose, objectives, significance and boundaries of the work.

1.1 Background

Social entrepreneurship has become a significant response to social, economic and environmental problems that neither markets nor states have resolved. Unlike commercial ventures organised around profit maximisation, social enterprises pursue a social mission through entrepreneurial means, generating what Emerson (2003) termed blended value — returns that are simultaneously economic and social (Dees, 1998; Santos, 2012). Within this field, faith-based social enterprises (FBSEs) occupy a position that is both distinctive and, in sub-Saharan Africa, quantitatively substantial. Religious institutions in the region remain among the most trusted and most deeply embedded actors in civil society, delivering education, health care and welfare at a scale that frequently exceeds state provision (Bompani, 2006; Hearn, 2002; Moyer et al., 2012).

The Archdiocese of Nairobi spans a wide social range, from affluent suburbs to dense informal settlements, and functions as a major ecclesiastical and economic centre in East Africa. Within it, consecrated women — Catholic sisters belonging to a large number of religious congregations — operate enterprises in education, health care, hospitality, microfinance, vocational training and agriculture. These ventures are not incidental to the sisters' religious vocation; they are one of its principal contemporary expressions. They therefore constitute a form of social entrepreneurship in which spiritual mission and commercial operation are not merely coexistent but structurally interdependent.

This interdependence has become more consequential as the funding environment has changed. Congregations that once relied substantially on external donation and subsidy now face declining and less predictable support, while the communities they serve face rising costs and deepening precarity. The response across the region has been a deliberate shift from a charitable model to an enterprise model. The Sisters Blended Value Project (SBVP), launched in 2021 with support from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, has worked with Catholic sisters in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Zambia to develop the financial, managerial and analytical capacities required to operate ministries as self-sustaining enterprises. That shift raises the question this study addresses: when a religious congregation begins to operate commercially, what happens to the spiritual commitments that constituted it, and do those commitments help or hinder the adaptation the shift demands?

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The literature offers two broadly opposed expectations. One holds that religious commitment supports entrepreneurial performance by supplying motivation, ethical discipline, trust and durable networks (Fry, 2003; Gotsis & Kortezi, 2008; Weaver & Agle, 2002). The other holds that mission commitments constrain enterprise by restricting the range of acceptable action, slowing decision-making and generating the persistent hybridity tension that Smith and Lewis (2022) describe as characteristic of organisations pursuing incompatible goods simultaneously. Both expectations are plausible. Neither has been examined in the setting where the stakes are highest — enterprises in which the entrepreneurs are themselves members of a religious institute, bound by vow, governed communally and accountable to an ecclesiastical authority as well as to a market.

Three specific gaps follow. First, spiritual capital is frequently invoked but rarely specified, and it is routinely conflated with the personal religious commitment that produces it. King (2010) and Berger (2014) establish that religious commitment generates resources with organisational consequences, but the literature has not distinguished the disposition from the resource stock, identified the concrete forms the stock takes in enterprise operation, or established the conditions under which it ceases to be an asset. Second, the empirical base is geographically skewed. Studies of the relationship between innovation and enterprise performance have been conducted predominantly in Asian, European and North American settings, and their applicability to African religious contexts, where the institutional and gendered determinants of leadership differ substantially, cannot be assumed. Third, the specific case of consecrated women has been almost entirely neglected. These are women who exercise substantial economic authority within an institution that reserves its formal governance to men, who decide collectively rather than individually, and whose enterprises answer to a charism rather than to shareholders. The organisational form has no close secular analogue, and its dynamics cannot be inferred from studies of conventional social enterprises.

1.3 Purpose and Objectives

The study investigated how spirituality functions as an organisational resource in faith-based social enterprises led by consecrated women in the Archdiocese of Nairobi. Five objectives guided the work:

1. To examine how spiritual commitment shapes entrepreneurial motivation and practice among consecrated women in the Archdiocese of Nairobi.
2. To assess the relationship between innovation and the sustainability of faith-based social enterprises.
3. To identify the specific forms through which spiritual capital operates in the governance and leadership of these enterprises.
4. To examine the tensions consecrated women encounter in reconciling mission obligations with market demands, and the means by which those tensions are managed.
5. To derive recommendations for strengthening the innovation capacity and sustainability of faith-based social enterprises.

1.4 Significance

The study makes three contributions. Theoretically, it separates spiritual commitment from spiritual capital, specifies the latter as an operational construct with four identifiable manifestations, and proposes the mechanism — mission-preserving authorisation — through which those manifestations bear on innovation. It also identifies the conditions under which spiritual capital constrains rather than enables, a limiting case the existing literature has not addressed. Empirically, it supplies evidence from an African setting that is substantially under-represented in social entrepreneurship research, and from an organisational form that has received almost no systematic attention. Practically, it offers religious congregations, development partners and policy actors an account of what capacity building must address if it is to strengthen these enterprises without eroding the very commitments that give them standing in the communities they serve.

1.5 Scope and Delimitation

The study examined social enterprises operated by Catholic women's religious congregations within the Archdiocese of Nairobi, across education, health care, hospitality, agriculture and religious retail. Participants held leadership or management positions: regional superiors, administrators, finance managers and assistant administrators. The study did not include lay-led faith-based enterprises, enterprises operated by male religious institutes, or congregations outside the Archdiocese. It did not gather data from employees, beneficiaries or community members, and its claims are therefore limited to the perspectives of those who govern and manage these enterprises.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This review proceeds in nine steps. It establishes the conceptual foundations of social entrepreneurship, tests how far those foundations travel to African settings, distinguishes spiritual commitment from spiritual capital, engages the critical literature on faith-based organisations, develops sustainability and mission fidelity, examines innovation and women religious as entrepreneurial actors, identifies the gaps, and closes with the conceptual framework the study proposes.

2.1 Social Entrepreneurship: Conceptual Foundations

Social entrepreneurship is defined by the primacy of social value creation over value capture. Santos (2012) locates the distinction precisely: commercial entrepreneurs address problems where the value created can be appropriated, while social entrepreneurs address problems characterised by persistent positive externalities, where value creation is systematically greater than what any actor can capture. This is why social enterprises cluster in education, health and basic services, and why their sustainability problem is structurally different from that of a commercial firm. Dees (1998) frames the social entrepreneur as an agent of change who adopts a mission to create social value, pursues new opportunities in service of that mission, engages in continuous innovation and adaptation, acts boldly without regard to resources currently in hand, and exhibits heightened accountability to constituencies served.

Mair and Martí (2006) emphasise that social entrepreneurship is best understood as a process of combining resources in novel ways to explore and exploit opportunities for social value creation. Austin et al. (2006) compare social and commercial entrepreneurship along four dimensions — market failure, mission, resource mobilisation and performance measurement — and conclude that the differences are sufficient to require distinct analytical treatment while the underlying entrepreneurial process is common to both. Ndou (2021) adds that the capabilities social entrepreneurship requires are built through the combination of knowledge exploitation and knowledge exploration — refining what an organisation already does well while searching for what it does not yet know — which locates the capacity for social entrepreneurship in organisational learning rather than in individual disposition.

2.2 African Scholarship and the Limits of Transferred Models

The conceptual apparatus summarised above was built almost entirely in North American and European settings, and African scholarship has questioned how far it travels. Svotwa et al. (2025), examining four social enterprises in Harare through a neo-institutional lens, find that the emergence and scaling of social enterprise in Zimbabwe is governed less by formal legal structure or business-model design than by operators' capacity to mobilise social capital, improvise and work with resources at hand under severe economic constraint. Their account displaces the planning-and-scaling logic of the Western literature in favour of an improvisational one. Moyer et al. (2012), surveying faith-based organisations engaged in development and environmental work in Kenya, identify community rootedness, social capital generation and local credibility as the distinctive assets these organisations bring, and note that secular development agencies and academics had until recently overlooked them almost entirely.

Two implications follow for the present study. The determinants of social enterprise performance identified in Western samples cannot be assumed to hold in Nairobi, which is why this study derives its central concept inductively rather than importing one. And the assets that matter in this setting — trust, embeddedness, credibility — are precisely those the spiritual capital literature describes, which suggests that African FBSEs are not a marginal case of social enterprise but a setting in which its central resource questions appear in unusually clear form.

2.3 Spirituality, Spiritual Commitment and Spiritual Capital

Spirituality, understood as the search for meaning, purpose and connection beyond the self, has been argued to shape organisational life through three channels: motivation, ethical constraint and identity. Fry's (2003) theory of spiritual leadership proposes that leaders who integrate vision, altruistic love and hope or faith generate intrinsic motivation and organisational commitment that transactional approaches cannot reach. Gotsis and Kortezi (2008), reviewing the philosophical foundations of workplace spirituality, argue that spiritual values supply an ethical framework for entrepreneurial decision-making, while cautioning against instrumentalising spirituality as a productivity technique — a caution directly relevant to enterprises whose spiritual commitments precede and outrank their commercial ones.

Weaver and Agle (2002) offer the most precise mechanism available in this literature. Drawing on symbolic interactionism, they argue that religion influences ethical behaviour in organisations through role expectations internalised as self-identity: religious commitment shapes conduct to the extent that a person's religious role is central to how they understand themselves, and to the extent that the religious community reinforces that role. Consecrated women represent a limiting case of this mechanism. Their religious role is not one identity among several but a totalising vocation, formally professed, communally reinforced and institutionally structured.

Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2003) document a broad association between workplace spirituality and organisational outcomes including commitment, ethical conduct and performance, though the literature remains stronger on association than on mechanism, and weakest of all on what spirituality does when it collides with commercial necessity.

This study distinguishes two things the literature has tended to run together. **Spiritual commitment** denotes the disposition — the professed vows, individual piety and internalised religious role of members. **Spiritual capital** denotes the accumulated organisational resource stock that this commitment generates: trust held by the community, legitimacy in the eyes of external stakeholders, coordination capacity within the congregation, and the shared normative framework that makes collective decision-making possible. Commitment is a property of persons; capital is a property of the organisation, and it persists across the turnover of individual members. The distinction clarifies the causal chain the study proposes: commitment produces capital, and capital is what is deployed — or withheld — in innovation decisions.

King (2010) situates spiritual capital within the workplace spirituality literature as a distinct resource form, related to but not reducible to social capital. Berger (2014), analysing religion under conditions of pluralism, establishes that religious institutions retain substantial capacity to generate meaning and solidarity even where secular alternatives are available — a finding with direct implications for the standing of faith-based enterprises in competitive markets.

Read through the resource-based view of the firm, spiritual capital has the properties that generate sustained advantage. Barney (1991) specifies that a resource confers sustained competitive advantage where it is valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable and non-substitutable. Community trust grounded in a congregation's century-long presence, legitimacy conferred by religious identity, and the coordination capacity of a professed community meet each criterion: they are causally ambiguous in origin, socially complex in structure, and dependent on a historical path a competitor cannot retrace. Wernerfelt's (1984) resource-position barrier applies directly. What the literature has not established is how these resources are actually deployed, and at what cost. A resource that cannot be spent without being depleted, or that constrains the range of permissible action, behaves differently from a conventional asset. The present study examines spiritual capital in use rather than in principle.

2.4 Critical Perspectives on Faith-Based Enterprise

The literature on faith-based organisations tends toward the affirmative, and a serious treatment must engage the critical case. Hearn (2002) documents accountability gaps in evangelical missions operating in Kenya, showing how reporting to donors can substitute for accountability to the communities served, and how the invisibility of these organisations in official development accounting insulates them from scrutiny. Bornstein (2005), in an ethnography of Protestant development NGOs in Zimbabwe, shows how religious development work carries a moral programme alongside its material one, shaping beneficiaries' conduct and aspirations in ways that are neither neutral nor always welcome, and how the economy of giving it creates can produce dependency rather than autonomy.

These critiques bear directly on the present argument. If spiritual capital confers legitimacy, it confers it with particular audiences — co-religionists, donors, and communities already disposed to trust the institution — and may simultaneously reduce legitimacy with others. Trust that lowers the cost of recruiting students or patients may also insulate an enterprise from criticism that a less trusted provider would have to answer. Spiritual capital is therefore not inherently benign, and this study treats it as a resource with distributional consequences rather than as an unqualified good.

2.5 Sustainability, Mission Fidelity and the Hybridity Problem

Sustainability in social enterprise encompasses financial viability, organisational continuity and sustained social impact. Elkington's (1997) triple bottom line established the multi-dimensional framing now standard in the field. Bansal and DesJardine (2014) sharpen it by insisting that sustainability is fundamentally a temporal construct: it concerns an organisation's willingness to accept short-term cost for long-term resilience, and is therefore distinguishable from responsibility, which concerns the distribution of benefit at a point in time. On this definition, sustainability is precisely the capacity to make trade-offs across time — which is what these enterprises attempt when they forgo revenue in order to serve those who cannot pay.

For faith-based enterprises a fourth dimension is required, and the justification is not merely descriptive. Selznick (1957) distinguishes an organisation, understood as an expendable technical instrument, from an institution, understood as an organisation infused with value beyond the technical requirements of the task. On this account the leadership function is the protection of institutional integrity — the distinctive competence and character that make the organisation what it is. An enterprise that survives by abandoning the values that constituted it has not been sustained; it has undergone organisational replacement, retaining a name and a balance sheet while ceasing to be the institution whose continuation was at stake. Mission fidelity is therefore not an objective competing with financial viability but the condition under which financial viability is judged meaningful. This study accordingly extends Elkington's framework to a **quadruple bottom line** for faith-based enterprises: economic, social, environmental, and mission fidelity.

The central operational difficulty for hybrid organisations is that their goals are not merely multiple but in tension. Smith and Lewis (2022) argue that such tensions are better managed through both/and thinking — holding competing demands simultaneously and working the tension productively — than through either/or resolution, which typically produces drift toward whichever goal is more easily measured. Because financial performance is more readily quantified than mission fulfilment, the structural risk in social enterprise is mission drift under the guise of professionalisation. Emerson's (2003) blended value proposition addresses this by insisting that economic and social returns are not separable categories to be traded against one another but aspects of a single value proposition — a framework that is conceptually attractive and empirically underdeveloped.

2.6 Innovation in Faith-Based Enterprises

Innovation in the social enterprise literature is generally treated as the introduction of new products, processes, business models or organisational arrangements that improve social value creation. Within faith-based organisations, the evidence suggests that innovation more often takes organisational and social than technological forms: revised service models, new revenue configurations, altered governance arrangements and adapted delivery mechanisms.

Bocken and Short (2021) provide a useful corrective to the assumption that innovation is inherently beneficial, showing how business models can institutionalise unsustainable practice and arguing that innovation must be assessed against the problem it is claimed to address rather than treated as a good in itself. This point acquires particular force in mission-driven organisations, where an innovation that improves financial performance while displacing the mission is not an improvement but a failure disguised as one.

Comparative evidence from other faith traditions points the same way. Silaban (2024), examining a fair-trade enterprise in Indonesia, describes a venture that combines commercial activity with spiritual formation and environmental stewardship, and argues that its religious grounding extends rather than constrains its reach. What makes such enterprises distinctive is not the technology they adopt but the criteria by which they judge an adaptation worth making.

The theological literature offers a complementary framing. In *Laudato Si'*, Francis (2015) argues that technological and economic innovation is morally evaluable — that its worth depends on whether it serves integral human development or subordinates the human person to efficiency. Applied to FBSEs, this positions innovation not as a neutral capability to be maximised but as a practice requiring discernment, which is how the participants in this study described it.

2.7 Women Religious as Entrepreneurial Actors

The contemporary enterprises examined here have a long institutional lineage. Prevost (2008) documents how British missionary women in colonial Africa operated within a patriarchal ecclesiastical structure while building substantial institutional capacity in education and health care, achieving durable influence through institution-building rather than formal authority. The pattern — significant economic and organisational agency exercised through institutions rather than through office — persists in the enterprises studied here. Mwaura (2005) documents the contribution of the Catholic Church to Kenyan development, including the role of women religious in sustaining education and health provision through extended periods of political change.

Kabeer's (1999) analysis of empowerment offers a useful vocabulary for what these women do and do not do. Empowerment, on her account, involves resources, agency and achievements, and agency itself divides: the capacity to pursue goals effectively within a given set of rules is not the same as the capacity to alter the rules. Consecrated women exercise considerable agency of the first kind. They command property, employ staff, set fees, open and close enterprises, and negotiate with public authorities. They exercise very little of the second kind within the ecclesiastical structure itself, whose governing offices remain closed to them. This asymmetry is not incidental to the study's subject; it explains why institution-building rather than office-holding has been the durable route to influence for women religious across more than a century.

Nussbaum's (2000) capabilities framework supplies the corresponding account of what these enterprises produce for others. Education, health care and vocational training expand beneficiaries' capabilities — for bodily health, senses and imagination, affiliation and practical reason — rather than transferring resources alone. This is a more exacting standard than service delivery, and one against which the enterprises studied here have not been assessed, since the study did not gather beneficiary data. It is noted as the appropriate criterion for the evaluative work that should follow.

2.8 Research Gaps

Four gaps emerge. Spiritual capital remains under-specified and is conflated with the commitment that generates it. The relationship between innovation and sustainability in faith-based enterprises is asserted more often than measured, and rarely in African settings. The hybridity literature has established that mission–market tension exists but has not examined how organisations with a formal, communally held mission manage it. And the specific case of consecrated women — economically consequential, institutionally distinctive and numerous across East Africa — has attracted almost no empirical attention.

2.9 Conceptual Framework

The study draws on three theoretical resources. Sustainability theory, in Bansal and DesJardine's (2014) temporal formulation and Elkington's (1997) multi-dimensional one, supplies the outcome construct, extended in Section 2.5 to include mission fidelity. The resource-based view (Barney, 1991; Wernerfelt, 1984) supplies the account of spiritual capital as a strategically consequential resource. Social entrepreneurship theory (Austin et al., 2006; Dees, 1998; Mair & Martí, 2006; Santos, 2012) supplies the account of the entrepreneurial process through which resources are converted into social value.

The study proposes that these connect through a specific mechanism. Spiritual capital does not act on sustainability directly. It acts by determining which adaptations are *authorisable* — which changes a congregation can adopt while remaining the institution it is. Innovation in this setting is consequently not the pursuit of novelty but the identification of change that is simultaneously viable and faithful. This is the process participants described, and which this article terms **faithful adaptation**: mission-preserving change, triggered by a shortfall in the capacity to serve rather than by a competitive opportunity, screened against congregational charism before financial viability, and authorised communally rather than managerially. The term is used in this sense throughout, and is not redefined subsequently.

The resulting model is:

> ***Spiritual commitment*** *(professed vows · internalised religious role · individual piety) →* ***spiritual capital*** *(collective discernment · trust networks · contemplative practice · values-based leadership) →* ***faithful adaptation*** *(mission-preserving innovation) →* ***sustainability*** *(financial viability · organisational continuity · social impact · mission fidelity)*

The discernment mechanism. Collective discernment is theorised here as a *sequential filtering process* with three stages. First, candidate options are screened against the congregational charism, which functions as a set of non-negotiables; options failing this screen are eliminated before any financial assessment is made. Second, surviving options are evaluated for financial viability and operational feasibility. Third, options passing both filters are brought to communal prayer and consensus for legitimation. The ordering is the substantive claim. Because the mission filter is applied first and independently, it operates as an **institutionalised veto**: mission-based criteria precede market-based criteria both temporally and procedurally, and no financial argument can reinstate an option the charism has excluded. This is what distinguishes the process from a weighted trade-off in which mission is one consideration among several.

Boundary conditions. Because spiritual capital both authorises and restricts, the model predicts that it will raise the quality and durability of adopted innovations while lowering their number and their speed. This proposition is advanced as testable rather than as demonstrated; the present cross-sectional, single-site data can illustrate it but cannot confirm it, and Section 6.5 specifies the comparative design that would.

Relation to adjacent concepts. Faithful adaptation overlaps with, but is distinct from, two established constructs. It resembles *bricolage* as Hota et al. (2019) describe it among social enterprises in rural India — making do with resources at hand under constraint — but the two differ in what drives the recombination: bricolage is resource-driven, responding to what is available, whereas faithful adaptation is identity-driven, responding to what is permissible. An enterprise with ample resources would still face the charism filter. It is also distinct from institutional isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983), in which organisations converge on forms legitimated by their external field; faithful adaptation involves conformity to an *internal* reference point that may set the organisation against field norms rather than toward them. The external-versus-internal reference point is the conceptual distinction this study claims.

3. METHODOLOGY

This section describes how the study was conducted and, where the analysis reported falls short of what the data would support, specifies what is required. It covers design, site, population, sampling, the analytic base, instruments and their measurement properties, data collection, analysis, and ethics.

3.1 Research Design

The study used a concurrent (convergent) mixed-methods design, in which quantitative and qualitative data were collected during the same period, analysed separately and integrated at the interpretation stage (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The design was selected for a specific analytical reason rather than for general comprehensiveness. The quantitative strand establishes how widely a disposition is held across the leadership population; it cannot establish what the people reporting it mean by it. The qualitative strand supplies that meaning. Integration therefore takes the form of specification, and the two strands carry different evidential weight: the survey provides descriptive prevalence, the interviews provide interpretive content, and neither on its own supports a causal claim.

3.2 Study Site

The research was conducted in the Archdiocese of Nairobi. The site was selected purposively on three grounds. It contains a high concentration of women's religious congregations operating social enterprises, providing an adequate sampling frame. Its enterprises span a wide sectoral range — education, health care, hospitality, microfinance, vocational training and agriculture — permitting examination of innovation across organisational contexts. And as a rapidly changing urban centre with sharp internal inequality, it presents in concentrated form the pressures that faith-based enterprises across East Africa increasingly face.

3.3 Target Population

The target population comprised 676 consecrated women associated with 280 social enterprises across 134 congregations within the Archdiocese. Participants were drawn from 84 of these congregations. Eligibility required a leadership or management position — regional superior, administrator, finance manager or assistant administrator — on the ground that these roles carry direct knowledge of governance, financial position, innovation decisions and sustainability planning. Including four levels rather than one permits examination of whether the study's constructs are understood consistently across the strategic, operational and financial layers of these organisations.

The population was deliberately restricted to those who govern and manage these enterprises. Employees, students, patients, guests and community members were not sampled. This is a substantive restriction rather than a practical one, and its consequences for the study's claims are set out in Section 6.3.

3.4 Sampling

Stratified sampling was applied so that each leadership category was represented in proportion to its presence in the population, reducing the risk that findings would reflect the perspective of a single organisational stratum. For the quantitative strand, participants were selected by stratified random sampling within congregation and leadership level.

For the qualitative strand, regional superiors were selected purposively. Superiors were chosen because they alone hold a view across the whole of a congregation's enterprise portfolio, participate in the discernment processes through which major decisions are authorised, and carry accountability to both the congregation and the diocesan authority. They are the participants positioned to describe the mechanism the study set out to identify.

Selection was by organisational role. The sample was not constructed to maximise variation on congregation size, primary sector or enterprise maturity, and the seven congregations represented cannot be assumed to span those dimensions. A qualitative design adequate to the theoretical claims advanced here would sample deliberately for such variation — at minimum three to four superiors per principal sector and across active and contemplative charisms, giving 15 to 20 interviews. The present qualitative findings are accordingly reported as exploratory and illustrative rather than theoretically saturated, and Section 6.5 treats the expanded design as the priority for further work.

3.5 Sample and Analytic Base

The intended sample comprised 280 participants — 84 administrators, 84 finance managers, 84 assistant administrators and 28 regional superiors — corresponding to the 84 congregations from which participants were drawn. The analytic base for the inferential analyses comprised 182 valid questionnaire responses, consistent with the degrees of freedom reported in Section 4.3, $F(1, 180)$, total df = 181, and representing a response rate of 65.0%.

Response rates varied by item. The leadership-role item was completed by 69 respondents (7 regional superiors, 20 administrators, 19 finance managers, 23 assistant administrators); the sector item by 63; the enterprise-size item by 182. The highest-earning-enterprise item permitted more than one response per respondent and yielded 192 responses. Percentages in Table 1 are calculated on the valid n for each item, which is stated in the table. The seven regional superiors also formed the qualitative sample.

With 182 observations, a simple linear regression has power exceeding .99 to detect a medium effect ($f^2 = .15$) at $\alpha = .05$. Statistical power is therefore not a limitation of this study; the limitations lie in measurement and design, and are addressed in Section 6.3.

3.6 Instruments and Measurement Properties

Two instruments were used. The **structured questionnaire** gathered data on enterprise characteristics, innovation practices, sustainability indicators and the place of spirituality in enterprise operation. Items were rated on a five-point Likert scale from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5). The instrument was developed from the study's conceptual framework and reviewed by specialists in social entrepreneurship and faith-based organisation for content validity.

The **in-depth interview guide** was used with regional superiors. It covered the place of spirituality in enterprise development, the process by which enterprise decisions are made and authorised, the forms innovation has taken in the congregation, the tensions encountered between mission obligations and financial requirements, and the strategies used to sustain operations. The guide was semi-structured, allowing participants to introduce matters the researcher had not anticipated — the route by which the concept of faithful adaptation entered the analysis.

Internal consistency was assessed for both multi-item scales. Cronbach's alpha was [α to be reported for the innovation scale] for innovation and [α to be reported for the sustainability scale] for sustainability. Because the two scales are conceptually adjacent and were administered together, discriminant validity cannot be assumed and was tested directly: an exploratory factor analysis with oblique rotation was conducted to establish whether the innovation and sustainability items load on distinct factors [factor structure, loadings and variance explained to be reported]. Common-method bias was assessed by Harman's single-factor test, in which all items are entered into an unrotated factor analysis; a single factor accounting for more than 50% of total variance indicates substantial common-method variance [proportion of variance explained by the first unrotated factor to be reported]. These procedures are reported because the strength of the association found in Section 4.3 makes construct overlap the most serious rival explanation for the result, and it should be tested rather than assumed away.

3.7 Data Collection

A research permit was obtained from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), together with the approval of the superiors of the participating congregations. Research assistants were recruited and trained to ensure consistent administration.

Questionnaires were administered on site at the enterprises, in collaboration with the administrators and designated leaders of each congregation, so that respondents could consult operational records where an item required it. Interviews with regional superiors were conducted separately and audio-recorded with consent. Data collection was distributed across the operating cycle of the enterprises, since seasonal variation in agriculture, the academic calendar in education and fluctuating demand in hospitality each affect how respondents assess their own sustainability at a given moment.

3.8 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analysed in SPSS version 30. Descriptive statistics summarised the distribution of responses. The relationship between innovation and sustainability was assessed by linear regression.

Two features of the data required departures from a simple bivariate specification. First, respondents are nested within congregations and enterprises, so observations are not independent; ordinary least squares standard errors are consequently understated. Standard errors were therefore recomputed with clustering by congregation [cluster-robust standard errors, t statistics and p values to be reported in Table 5]. Second, a single-predictor model cannot distinguish the contribution of innovation from that of enterprise characteristics correlated with it. A hierarchical model was therefore specified, entering enterprise size and sector (dummy coded) at Block 1, mean staff qualification level at Block 2, and innovation at Block 3, so that the incremental variance attributable to innovation beyond structural and capability factors can be assessed [ΔR^2 and associated F change statistics for each block to be reported in Table 4]. Whether the innovation–sustainability relationship differs by enterprise type was tested by adding Innovation × Sector interaction terms to the full model [interaction coefficients and significance to be reported].

Qualitative data were analysed thematically following the six phases specified by Braun and Clarke (2006): familiarisation, generation of initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. Coding proceeded inductively, and themes were retained where they recurred across participants rather than where they were merely vivid in a single account. Themes are reported narratively and evidenced with verbatim extracts, identified by participant code.

Coding was conducted by the lead researcher. Independent double-coding of a proportion of transcripts, with an inter-coder agreement statistic reported, and respondent validation in which thematic summaries are returned to participating superiors for confirmation, are standard safeguards for thematic work of this kind [to be reported if undertaken; if not undertaken, this constitutes a limitation to be stated in Section 6.3]. The analysis actively sought disconfirming instances as well as confirming ones; the outcome of that search is reported in Section 4.5.

Integration followed the convergent logic set out in Section 3.1. Where the two strands agreed, the qualitative material was used to specify the meaning of the quantitative result; where they diverged, the divergence is reported rather than reconciled.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The study observed standard ethical requirements for research with human participants. Approval was obtained from NACOSTI and from the superiors of the participating congregations. Participants were informed of the study's purpose, the voluntary nature of participation and their right to withdraw at any point without consequence, and informed consent was obtained before data collection. Confidentiality was maintained by identifying participants by code rather than by name or congregation. Because the population of women's congregations in the Archdiocese is comparatively small and enterprise portfolios are locally recognisable, particular care was taken to withhold identifying operational detail from the reported extracts. Data were stored securely and were accessible only to the research team.

4. RESULTS

Results are reported in six parts: the characteristics of the participants and their enterprises, the distribution of perceptions of innovation and sustainability, the regression analysis and the three qualifications governing its interpretation, the five themes arising from the interviews, the search for disconfirming evidence, and the integration of the two strands.

4.1 Enterprise and Participant Characteristics

Table 1 reports the characteristics of the participants and their enterprises. Valid n is stated for each item because response rates varied, and the highest-earning-enterprise item permitted multiple responses.

Table 1: *Participant and Enterprise Characteristics*

Characteristic	Category	f	%
Leadership role (n = 69)	Regional superior	7	10.1
	Administrator	20	29.0
	Finance manager	19	27.5
	Assistant administrator	23	33.3
Sector (n = 63)	Education	22	34.9
	Hospitality	17	27.0
	Health care	12	19.0
	Agriculture	7	11.1
	Religious retail	5	7.9
Enterprise size (n = 182)	1–10 employees	57	31.3
	11–20 employees	34	18.7
	21–30 employees	46	25.3
	31–40 employees	4	2.2
	Over 40 employees	41	22.5
Staff qualification (mean number of staff per enterprise)	Doctorate	1	—
	Master's	1	—
	Bachelor's	2	—
	Diploma	2	—
	Certificate	3	—

Note. Percentages are calculated on the valid n for each item and may not sum to 100 owing to rounding. The highest-earning-enterprise item permitted more than one response and is reported separately in the text. Staff qualification figures are means per enterprise, rounded to the nearest whole employee; standard deviations were not recorded and should be reported in any subsequent analysis, since a mean of one doctoral-level employee per enterprise is compatible with very different distributions across the sample.

Responses naming the highest-earning enterprise (192 responses) were distributed across education (76; 39.6%), hospitality (58; 30.2%), agriculture (33; 17.2%) and hospitals (25; 13.0%).

Three features of this profile bear on the study's argument.

First, the enterprises are concentrated in sectors that combine high social value with substantial fixed cost. Education (34.9%), hospitality (27.0%) and health care (19.0%) account for four-fifths of the sample, and education and hospitality together account for 69.8% of responses naming the highest-earning enterprise. This concentration is consequential: education and health care are the sectors in which the pressure to serve those who cannot pay is most acute, while hospitality is the sector in which commercial logic operates most straightforwardly. That the same congregations run both is the structural source of the mission–market tension reported in Section 4.4.

Second, the size distribution is bimodal rather than uniformly small. While 31.3% of enterprises employ ten people or fewer, 22.5% employ more than forty, and 47.5% fall in the 11–30 range. These are not uniformly micro-enterprises; a substantial minority are organisations of significant scale, with the governance, payroll and regulatory obligations that scale entails.

Third, the qualification profile is thin at the upper levels. On average an enterprise employs three staff at certificate level and two at diploma level, against two at bachelor's level and one each at master's and doctoral level. The workforce is well suited to service delivery and poorly resourced for the specialist functions — financial modelling, digital systems design, regulatory compliance, impact measurement — on which the innovation agenda discussed in Section 6.4 depends. This is the most concrete constraint the data reveal, and it is one that spiritual capital cannot supply.

4.2 Perceptions of Innovation and Sustainability

Table 2 reports responses to the five innovation–sustainability items (n = 182).

Table 2: *Perceived Contribution of Innovation to Enterprise Sustainability*

Item	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %	M	SD
Innovative approaches are crucial for long-term sustainability	68.1	16.5	10.4	1.1	3.8	4.44	0.99
Creativity in planning and execution enhances sustainability	67.6	17.6	10.4	1.1	3.3	4.45	0.96
Enterprises incorporating innovative solutions are more likely to achieve lasting success	63.7	19.2	10.4	3.3	3.3	4.37	1.02
Creative strategies help overcome challenges and contribute to sustainability	64.3	26.4	6.0	1.1	2.2	4.49	0.84
Sustained innovation is crucial for long-term effectiveness	68.1	18.7	7.7	1.7	3.8	4.46	0.98

Note. n = 182. SA = strongly agree; A = agree; U = undecided; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree.

Agreement was high and consistent across all five items, with means between 4.37 and 4.49 and combined agreement between 82.9% and 90.7%. The highest-rated item concerned the use of creative strategies to overcome challenges (M = 4.49, SD = 0.84), which also attracted the lowest dispersion — respondents were most united on the proposition closest to lived operational experience. The lowest-rated item, though still strongly endorsed, was the general claim that innovative enterprises are more likely to succeed (M = 4.37, SD = 1.02), which attracted both the highest dispersion and the highest disagreement (6.6% combined). Endorsement is strongest where the proposition describes what respondents do and weakest where it makes a general claim about enterprises at large.

A consistent 6.0% to 10.4% of respondents were undecided across the items, and a stable 3.3% to 6.6% disagreed. Given the strength of the aggregate result this minority is worth examining rather than dismissing, and Section 5.5 sets out both the competing interpretations and the analysis required to distinguish them.

4.3 Regression Analysis

Linear regression was used to assess the relationship between innovation and sustainability. Results are reported in Tables 3, 4 and 5.

Table 3

Model Summary: Innovation Predicting Sustainability

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	SE of the estimate	Durbin–Watson
1	.899	.808	.807	0.397	0.858

Note. Predictor: innovation. Dependent variable: sustainability.

Table 4

Analysis of Variance

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Regression	119.445	1	119.445	758.83	< .001
Residual	28.333	180	0.157		
Total	147.779	181			

Note. Dependent variable: sustainability. Predictor: innovation. The hierarchical specification described in Section 3.8 — Block 1 enterprise size and sector, Block 2 mean staff qualification, Block 3 innovation — is to be reported here, with ΔR^2 and F change for each block, so that the incremental contribution of innovation beyond structural and capability factors can be read directly.

Table 5

Regression Coefficients

Predictor	B	SE B	β	t	p
(Constant)	0.105	0.158		0.67	.507
Innovation	0.963	0.035	.899	27.55	< .001

Note. Dependent variable: sustainability. Standard errors shown are ordinary least squares estimates. Cluster-robust standard errors, clustered by congregation, are to be added as a further column with the corresponding t and p values; the OLS estimates reported here are understated for the reason given below.

The model is statistically significant, $F(1, 180) = 758.83$, $p < .001$, with innovation accounting for 80.8% of the variance in sustainability ($R^2 = .808$, adjusted $R^2 = .807$). The unstandardised coefficient indicates that a one-unit increase on the innovation scale is associated with an increase of 0.96 units on the sustainability scale ($B = 0.963$, $SE = 0.035$, $\beta = .899$, $t = 27.55$, $p < .001$). The intercept does not differ significantly from zero ($B = 0.105$, $p = .507$).

Three qualifications govern how this output should be read.

The R^2 is an upper-bound estimate. A coefficient of determination of .808 from a single self-reported predictor is exceptionally high for organisational research and is more consistent with construct overlap than with a strong causal effect. Both scales were completed by the same respondents, on the same instrument, at the same sitting, in closely related language. Under these conditions a respondent holding a generally favourable view of their enterprise will rate both scales highly, and the shared variance so produced is attributed to the relationship between the constructs. The analysis therefore does not establish that innovation causes 80.8% of sustainability. It establishes a strong **perceptual alignment** between how leaders assess their innovativeness and how they assess their sustainability, and .808 should be treated as the ceiling of that association rather than as an estimate of an effect. The Harman's test and factor analysis specified in Section 3.6 are the appropriate diagnostics, and the interpretation offered here holds unless they indicate that common-method variance is minimal.

The standard errors are understated. The Durbin–Watson statistic of 0.858 is well below the conventional acceptable range of approximately 1.5 to 2.5 and indicates substantial positive autocorrelation in the residuals. In cross-sectional data this ordinarily signals that observations are not independent — here most plausibly because respondents cluster within congregations and enterprises, so that colleagues resemble one another more than they resemble the sample at large. Clustered data of this kind produce understated standard errors and correspondingly overstated significance. The direction and approximate strength of the relationship are unlikely to be artefacts; the precision implied by the reported t and p values is.

The specification is under-identified. With a single predictor, the model cannot distinguish the contribution of innovation from that of enterprise size, sector or staff capability, each of which is plausibly related to both variables. The hierarchical specification set out in Section 3.8 addresses this, and the incremental variance innovation explains beyond those factors — rather than the bivariate R^2 — is the quantity of interest.

Taken together, these qualifications do not overturn the finding. Agreement is high, consistent and corroborated by the interview data. They establish the appropriate reading: innovation and sustainability are strongly and positively associated in the perceptions of these leaders, and the interview data, not the regression, carry the weight of the interpretive argument.

4.4 Qualitative Findings

Thematic analysis of the seven interviews with regional superiors produced five themes. These seven accounts suggest a pattern that warrants broader investigation; they are not offered as a saturated account of the population.

Theme 1: Spiritual capital as a foundational and reciprocal resource

Participants described spiritual commitment as the ground of the enterprise rather than a value added to it. One superior explained:

> *"Our spiritual life is not separate from our work. The charism of our congregation — the particular gift that God has given us — guides everything we do. When we established our health centre, it was not simply a business decision. It was a response to the needs we saw in our community, a way of living out our calling."*

A second identified the mechanism by which this commitment becomes an economic asset, and did so with an explicit statement of its cost:

> *"The trust that people have in us comes from our spiritual identity. When a family brings their child to our school or a patient comes to our clinic, they know that we are motivated by something more than profit. This trust is a form of capital that we can draw upon, but it also carries responsibility."*

The qualification in the final clause is analytically important. Trust functions here as a resource depleted by use inconsistent with its source. A congregation that raised fees to a commercially optimal level, or turned away those unable to pay, would be spending precisely the asset that makes its enterprise viable. Spiritual capital is therefore not simply an endowment but a reciprocal obligation, and this reciprocity is what makes it both durable and constraining. It is also, as Section 2.4 anticipates, an asset held with particular audiences; whether the communities served share the leaders' assessment of it is not something these data can establish.

Theme 2: Collective discernment as an authorisation process

Decisions were described as arising through communal discernment rather than individual judgement:

> *"We do not make decisions alone. We pray together, we reflect on our charism, we consult with one another. This is not inefficient; it is how we ensure that our decisions are aligned with our mission. When we decided to expand our vocational training programme, we spent months in discernment, seeking to understand what God was calling us to do."*

The account is consistent with the sequential filtering process theorised in Section 2.9: reflection on charism is described as prior to and independent of the operational question, and the expansion decision is presented as answering a question about calling rather than about return. Participants were explicit that the process has a cost as well as a function. It generates broad ownership and guards against mission drift, but it lengthens decision cycles and can leave a congregation unable to respond when an opportunity or a threat is time-bound. The defensive note — "this is not inefficient" — suggests participants are conscious of how the practice appears to external partners who evaluate them against commercial timelines.

Theme 3: Innovation as faithful adaptation

Participants consistently described change as bounded by identity:

> *"We have had to innovate to survive. When funding became scarce, we had to find new ways to generate income. But we could not simply adopt any business model. It had to be consistent with who we are. So we developed a hospitality centre that offers retreats and conferences, combining spiritual hospitality with income generation."*

> *"Innovation for us is not about technology for its own sake. It is about finding creative ways to serve our community while sustaining our mission. When we introduced mobile health services, it was because we saw that many people could not reach our clinic. The innovation was driven by our mission, not by a desire for profit."*

Both accounts follow the structure described in Section 2.9: a pressure is identified, the range of permissible responses is narrowed by reference to identity, and a solution is selected from within that narrowed range. The retreat centre is instructive because the congregation did not select the most profitable use of its property but the most profitable use consistent with its charism.

Theme 4: Tension between mission and market

Participants described the mission–market tension as continuous and unresolved:

> *"There is always a tension between what we want to do and what is financially viable. We want to serve the poorest, but the poorest cannot always pay. We want to maintain our spiritual identity, but we also need to compete in the market. This tension is not easy to resolve."*

> *"Sometimes we feel pulled in different directions. The donors want to see efficiency and results. The community wants to see compassion and service. The congregation wants to see faithfulness to our charism. Balancing these expectations requires wisdom and patience."*

The second extract identifies three constituencies applying incompatible standards to the same organisation. No participant described the tension as solved. The language throughout is of balancing, patience and wisdom — of management rather than resolution — which corresponds to the both/and posture Smith and Lewis (2022) argue is appropriate to persistent paradox.

Theme 5: Spiritual resilience as a dimension of sustainability

Participants extended the meaning of sustainability beyond financial continuity:

> *"Sustainability is not just about money. It is about having the strength to continue when things are difficult. Our spiritual life gives us that strength. When we face setbacks, we turn to prayer and to one another. This is what sustains us."*

> *"We have faced many challenges — financial difficulties, staffing shortages, changing community needs. But our faith gives us hope and perseverance. We believe that God is with us in this work, and that gives us the courage to continue."*

Persistence through a period of loss is an economic behaviour with economic consequences: an enterprise whose leaders do not exit when returns turn negative will survive shocks that would close a comparable commercial venture. It is double-edged for the same reason. The disposition that sustains a viable enterprise through a difficult year can sustain an unviable one indefinitely, absorbing resources the congregation's mission would be better served by redeploying.

4.5 Disconfirming Evidence

The analysis searched for accounts that would contradict the dominant pattern: adaptations adopted for commercial reasons and later regretted, charism filters bypassed under financial pressure, or trust damaged by a change the community experienced as a departure. No participant volunteered such an account, and none was elicited by the interview guide.

This absence is reported as a finding about the data rather than as evidence that no such cases exist, and two readings are available. Participants are institutional leaders describing organisations for which they are accountable, interviewed by a researcher from within the same ecclesial world; the conditions are not favourable to volunteered admissions of mission drift. Alternatively, the seven congregations may genuinely not have experienced it. The design cannot distinguish these, and the absence of negative cases is therefore a limitation of the evidence rather than a strengthening of the pattern. An interview guide containing explicit prompts for unsuccessful and regretted adaptations, and participants drawn from congregations known to have closed or divested an enterprise, would be required to test the pattern properly.

4.6 Integration of the Two Strands

The two strands do different work and should not be weighted equally.

The survey establishes **descriptive prevalence**. Leaders across all four leadership levels regard innovation as central to sustainability, with agreement above 82% on every item. It does not establish that innovation produces sustainability, and for the reasons given in Section 4.3 it cannot.

The interviews establish **interpretive content**. What these leaders mean by innovation is not what the term denotes in the mainstream literature: not novelty, not technology adoption, not competitive differentiation, but mission-preserving adaptation authorised through communal discernment.

The relationship between the strands is therefore not corroboration but specification, and it runs in one direction. The quantitative result validates that the qualitative construct is not idiosyncratic to seven superiors but corresponds to a disposition widely shared across the leadership population of this Archdiocese. It does not validate the causal reading of that construct.

This divergence also carries a methodological implication. A survey instrument built on the standard innovation construct and administered in this setting will return high agreement, but the agreement will attach to a different underlying concept than the researcher intends. That is one plausible contributor to the R^2 reported in Section 4.3: respondents may be endorsing two descriptions of a single organisational disposition rather than reporting on two distinct constructs — which is precisely what the factor analysis specified in Section 3.6 is required to test.

5. DISCUSSION

The discussion moves from the study's central concept to its qualifications. It specifies what innovation means in these enterprises, sets out how spiritual capital operates, weighs three alternative explanations for the quantitative association, places the findings against the comparative and African evidence, examines the dissenting minority, considers how the mission–market tension is managed, locates consecrated women within the literature on women's leadership, and draws out the theoretical implications.

5.1 What Innovation Means in a Faith-Based Enterprise

The study's principal contribution is not the demonstration that innovation and sustainability are associated — a proposition already well supported, and one these data can only weakly evidence — but the specification of what innovation consists of when the innovating organisation is constituted by a religious commitment.

Across the seven interviews, innovation was described as change bounded by identity, following the pattern set out in Section 2.9. Participants did not report selecting the option that maximised return; they reported selecting the highest-return option available within the set their charism permitted. The retreat and conference centre is the clearest instance: an under-used property was converted into a revenue-generating operation, but the use selected extended a spiritual practice into a commercial form rather than simply monetising the asset. Mobile health provision followed the same logic — an operational change adopted because it reached people the fixed clinic could not.

The term *faithful adaptation* is advanced here as a grounded concept emerging inductively from these interview data. To the authors' knowledge, no existing literature has specified innovation in precisely these identity-bound terms within the context of consecrated women's enterprises. Its relation to bricolage and to institutional isomorphism is set out in Section 2.9; the distinguishing feature in each case is the reference point against which an adaptation is judged — internal charism rather than available resources or field-level norms.

Framed this way, the concept is consistent with Dees's (1998) inclusion of continuous adaptation within the definition of social entrepreneurship, and with Santos's (2012) argument that social entrepreneurs operate where value creation exceeds value capture. What the present study adds is the identification of an internal mechanism — a formal, collectively exercised authorisation process — through which the mission constraint is applied to specific decisions. In secular social enterprises, mission fidelity depends largely on the disposition of founders and boards. In these enterprises it appears to be institutionalised, though establishing that comparative claim would require the matched design described in Section 6.5.

5.2 Spiritual Capital in Operation

The four manifestations identified in the data can be specified in terms of what each appears to do.

Collective discernment operates as an authorisation mechanism. Its output is not a better decision in the optimisation sense but a decision the congregation can own, which reduces the risk of internal fracture during implementation and forecloses adaptations that would compromise identity. Its cost is time, which participants named themselves.

Trust networks operate as a market asset with the properties Barney (1991) associates with sustained advantage. The trust described was accumulated over decades of visible presence, is grounded in a religious identity a competitor cannot assume, and reduces the cost of acquiring students, patients and guests. It is also, uniquely among the enterprise's assets, spent by conduct inconsistent with its source — which converts it from a resource into a constraint at the moment commercial logic becomes most pressing. Bornstein's (2005) analysis supplies the necessary qualification: trust of this kind is held with particular audiences and may carry a moral programme that not all beneficiaries welcome. Whether it is experienced by the communities served as the leaders describe it is a question these data cannot answer.

Contemplative practice operates as a resilience mechanism, altering the exit threshold: leaders who do not withdraw when returns turn negative sustain enterprises through shocks that would close a comparable commercial venture. The same property weakens the discipline that failure normally imposes.

Values-based leadership operates as a screening device, narrowing the option set before evaluation begins. This is efficient where the excluded options were genuinely incompatible with mission, and costly where the exclusion is habitual rather than discerned.

Taken together, these observations suggest an extension of the resource-based view in a specific direction. Spiritual capital may be valuable, rare and inimitable in Barney's (1991) sense while differing from conventional resources in one respect: its value appears contingent on its non-instrumental use. It generates advantage while it is not being deployed for advantage — a property with no clean analogue in the standard resource typology, and one Gotsis and Kortezi (2008) anticipate in their warning against treating spirituality as a productivity technique.

5.3 Alternative Explanations

The mechanism proposed above is not the only account consistent with these data, and three rival explanations warrant explicit consideration.

Sectoral composition. Education, hospitality and health care account for four-fifths of the sample, and these sectors face distinct sustainability dynamics — regulated fee structures, predictable demand cycles, capital intensity — that may drive both the adoption of new practices and the achievement of financial stability independently of any spiritual mechanism. The Innovation × Sector interaction specified in Section 3.8 is the direct test.

Selection on managerial capability. Congregations with more capable leadership may both innovate more and manage sustainability better, with spiritual commitment playing a secondary or merely correlated role. The comparative literature makes this plausible: Koape and Mamabolo (2024) find entrepreneurial competencies to be developed through experience rather than possessed at the outset, and Murithi et al. (2024) and Okonkwo et al. (2024) both identify managerial and financial capability as decisive among Kenyan faith-based organisations. The hierarchical model specified in Section 3.8, which enters staff qualification before innovation, provides a partial test.

Reverse causality. Enterprises that are already financially secure hold the discretionary resources that experimentation requires, so sustainability may produce innovation rather than the reverse. Hota et al. (2019) show that resource-constrained improvisation is productive only up to a point, beyond which it misallocates — implying that the enterprises best placed to innovate successfully are those least under pressure to do so.

These alternatives are not exhausted by the present design. Cross-sectional data collected at a single site from a single respondent type cannot adjudicate among them, and they remain open questions for the longitudinal work proposed in Section 6.5.

5.4 Innovation, Capability and the African Evidence

The finding that leaders regard innovation as central to sustainability is consistent with the wider literature. Zhu (2025) argues that religiously grounded purpose can drive social innovation, and Bocken and Short (2021) show that business-model design determines whether an organisation's practices are sustainable or merely persistent.

The comparative literature suggests, however, that the relationship is neither universal nor unconditional. Kim et al. (2018) found that problem-solving ability supported innovative behaviour and opportunity recognition among students in a structured educational setting. Botella-Carrubi et al. (2023), using fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis with Spanish start-ups, found opportunity recognition and creativity associated with stronger financial performance. Bawono et al. (2022) linked knowledge management capability and problem-solving to organisational performance among Indonesian SMEs. Koape and Mamabolo (2024), working with South African social entrepreneurs, identified financial management, human resource management, start-up expertise, marketing, leadership and technical business management as necessary competencies, with creativity and problem-solving named most frequently among them. Mahfuz Ashraf et al. (2019) reach a similar conclusion about the demands that combined social and commercial objectives place on managerial capability. Against these, Hota et al. (2019) provide the corrective already noted: innovation has a cost curve, and enterprises with thin managerial capacity reach its unfavourable segment sooner.

That caution applies directly here. The qualification profile in Section 4.1 describes organisations whose absorptive capacity for complex innovation is limited. An innovation agenda that outruns this capacity will not reproduce the association the survey reports; it will produce the misallocation Hota et al. describe. The practical implication, developed in Section 6.4, is that capacity must precede rather than follow the innovation agenda.

Muriithi and Muigai (2020) reach a comparable conclusion for Kenyan SMEs more generally, linking knowledge acquisition to firm performance and locating the constraint in what an organisation is able to learn rather than in what it is willing to attempt.

The African evidence converges on the same point from a different direction. Svotwa et al. (2025) find that social enterprise in Zimbabwe depends less on formal structure than on improvisation and the mobilisation of social capital under constraint; Moyer et al. (2012) identify community rootedness and local credibility as the distinctive assets of Kenyan faith-based organisations. Both accounts locate the operative resource in relationships rather than in systems — which is consistent with what the present participants described, and which suggests that the constraint identified in this study is capability, not commitment.

5.5 The Dissenting Minority

Between 6.0% and 10.4% of respondents were undecided on the innovation items, and 3.3% to 6.6% disagreed. The aggregate result is strong enough that this minority could be disregarded, and it should not be.

Three readings are available. The dissenters may lead enterprises in which innovation has been attempted and has failed — the Hota et al. (2019) scenario. They may lead enterprises whose sustainability has been achieved by other means: endowment, subsidy, a protected market position, or the persistence described in Theme 5. Or they may understand innovation in its technological sense and be accurately reporting that their enterprises do not do it.

These readings carry different consequences. The first is a warning the study's recommendations should heed; the third is a measurement problem that would qualify the interpretation of the whole instrument. Distinguishing them is tractable with the existing dataset: a comparison of dissenting and agreeing respondents on sector, enterprise size, leadership role and staff qualification, tested by chi-square or an equivalent, would establish whether dissent is concentrated in identifiable enterprise types. Sub-group sizes will be small and any such analysis is exploratory, but it is a more informative use of the data than aggregate agreement alone. That analysis has not been conducted here and is specified as a required addition.

5.6 Managing the Mission–Market Tension

Participants described the tension between mission obligations and market requirements as continuous and unresolved, and named three constituencies applying incompatible standards: donors seeking efficiency and measurable results, communities seeking compassion and service, and the congregation seeking fidelity to charism.

Smith and Lewis (2022) argue that tensions of this kind are better held than settled, since attempts at resolution typically produce drift toward the more measurable objective. The evidence here is consistent with that account and suggests an addition to it. In these enterprises the tension appears not merely tolerated as a management posture but institutionally anchored. The discernment process gives mission a procedural veto that donor expectations and market signals do not possess, and the vow structure removes the personal financial incentive that would otherwise bias leaders toward the commercial pole.

This has an implication the study should state rather than soften. Structural resistance to mission drift is also structural resistance to adaptation, and the two operate through the same mechanism. The features that make these enterprises resistant to becoming something other than what they are also make them slower to become what changed circumstances require. The proposition advanced in Section 2.9 — that spiritual capital raises the quality and durability of adopted innovations while lowering their number and speed — is consistent with the qualitative evidence but is not tested by it; the comparative design in Section 6.5 would test it.

Kedir and Kouame's (2022) work on financial technology and women's entrepreneurship in Burkina Faso and Cameroon is relevant in a qualified way. Their finding that entrepreneurs employing creative problem-solving built partnerships and improved service delivery more effectively suggests that the constraint on adaptation in such settings is often relational and infrastructural rather than dispositional. That reading fits the present data: participants did not describe unwillingness to adapt but a set of conditions under which adaptation had to be justified.

5.7 Women Religious as a Distinctive Entrepreneurial Category

The findings bear on the literature concerning women's leadership in social entrepreneurship, with an important qualification. Studies of women entrepreneurs in other settings — including Ahmed's (2024) examination of incubation and acceleration for women's energy entrepreneurship in India — describe individual entrepreneurs holding equity, exercising personal authority and bearing personal risk. None of these conditions holds here. Consecrated women hold no equity, exercise authority collectively, are appointed rather than self-selected, and bear organisational rather than personal financial risk. Findings derived from equity-holding contexts should not be transferred to this population without argument, and the present study offers no support for doing so. Kadam et al. (2019) show, in a different setting, that capability effects on SME performance are conditioned by context rather than uniform across it; that general finding is the one this study endorses.

Kabeer's (1999) distinction clarifies what is distinctive here. These leaders exercise substantial effective agency — pursuing goals successfully within a given structure — while exercising very little strategic agency over the ecclesiastical rules that structure their position. Institution-building is the route through which effective agency is converted into durable influence, which is why the pattern Prevost (2008) documents among missionary women a century ago persists in recognisable form. Assessed against Nussbaum's (2000) capabilities criterion, the enterprises studied here plausibly expand beneficiaries' capabilities for health, education and affiliation; but that is an inference from the services provided, not a finding, since beneficiaries were not consulted.

5.8 Theoretical Implications

Four implications follow, each provisional on the qualifications set out above.

First, sustainability theory as applied to faith-based organisations requires a fourth dimension. Following Selznick (1957), an enterprise that survived by abandoning its charism would not have been sustained but replaced, which makes mission fidelity a condition of meaningful sustainability rather than a competing objective.

Second, spiritual capital can be specified operationally, and distinguished from the commitment that produces it. The four manifestations identified have distinct functions — authorisation, market access, resilience and screening — and can in principle be measured separately. This moves the concept from evocation toward construct and supplies a starting point for instrument development.

Third, the resource-based view may require qualification for resources of this type, whose strategic value appears conditional on their non-strategic exercise.

Fourth, the hybridity literature gains a candidate limiting case. Smith and Lewis (2022) describe organisations holding competing demands through leadership posture; these organisations appear to hold them through constitution — vow, communal governance and charism — which suggests that the durability of a both/and posture may depend on whether it is institutionally anchored or personally maintained.

6. CONCLUSION

This section summarises what the study found, states its contributions, consolidates its limitations in one place, sets out recommendations for the parties in a position to act on them, and identifies the research required next.

6.1 Summary of Findings

This study examined how spirituality operates as an organisational resource in faith-based social enterprises led by consecrated women in the Archdiocese of Nairobi.

Innovation and sustainability were strongly associated, $R^2 = .808$, $F(1, 180) = 758.83$, $p < .001$, $B = 0.96$, $\beta = .90$, with agreement high and consistent across all five survey items. Because both constructs were measured by the same respondents on the same instrument at the same time, and because the Durbin–Watson statistic of 0.858 indicates clustered residuals, this figure is an upper-bound estimate of a perceptual alignment rather than an estimate of a causal effect.

The interview data supply the interpretation. Innovation in this setting means faithful adaptation: mission-preserving change, triggered by a shortfall in the capacity to serve, screened against charism before financial viability, and authorised through collective discernment. Spiritual commitment generates spiritual capital, which accumulates in four identifiable forms — collective discernment, trust networks, contemplative practice and values-based leadership — that respectively authorise change, secure market access, sustain persistence through loss and narrow the option set before evaluation. Each both enables and constrains.

Participants described the tension between mission and market as continuous and unresolved, managed through adaptive leadership rather than settled, and institutionally anchored in a way that impedes mission drift and, by the same mechanism, slows adaptation.

6.2 Contributions

The study distinguishes spiritual commitment from spiritual capital and specifies the latter operationally, identifying four manifestations with distinct organisational functions and proposing mission-preserving authorisation as the mechanism connecting them to innovation. It theorises collective discernment as a sequential filtering process in which a charism screen precedes and can veto financial evaluation. It identifies the conditions under which spiritual capital constrains rather than enables. It supplies evidence from an African setting and an organisational form that are both substantially under-represented in social entrepreneurship research. And it advances *faithful adaptation* as a grounded concept, distinguished from bricolage by being identity-driven rather than resource-driven, and from institutional isomorphism by taking an internal rather than an external reference point.

6.3 Limitations

The limitations are consolidated here rather than distributed through the article, and they are substantial enough to govern how every finding above should be read.

Measurement. Innovation and sustainability were measured by self-report on a single instrument, from the same respondents, at a single sitting, in closely related language. Common-method variance is therefore the leading rival explanation for the R^2 of .808, and the diagnostics specified in Section 3.6 — Cronbach's alpha for each scale, an exploratory factor analysis testing discriminant validity, and Harman's single-factor test — are required before the association can be interpreted further. Future work should measure sustainability with indicators independent of respondent perception: audited financial data, enrolment or patient volumes, staff retention, enterprise survival.

Estimation. The Durbin–Watson statistic of 0.858 indicates positive autocorrelation consistent with clustering of respondents within congregations. The ordinary least squares standard errors reported are consequently understated and the significance levels overstated. Cluster-robust or multilevel estimation is required for defensible inference.

Specification. The single-predictor model cannot separate the contribution of innovation from enterprise size, sector or staff capability. The hierarchical specification described in Section 3.8 is required to establish whether innovation explains variance beyond these factors.

Design. The study is cross-sectional, which precludes causal inference and leaves the three alternative explanations set out in Section 5.3 — sectoral composition, selection on managerial capability, and reverse causality — unadjudicated.

Qualitative base. Seven interviews, selected by organisational role rather than sampled for variation in congregation size, sector or enterprise maturity, constitute an exploratory rather than a saturated base. The conceptual claims advanced are correspondingly provisional. Coding was conducted by a single researcher; independent double-coding with a reported agreement statistic, and respondent validation of the thematic summaries, are the standard safeguards and should accompany any expanded analysis. No disconfirming cases emerged, and Section 4.5 explains why that absence should not be read as corroboration.

Perspective. The data represent enterprise leaders only. Employees, students, patients, guests and community members were not consulted, and they are the parties best positioned to judge whether mission fidelity is in fact maintained and whether the trust leaders describe is actually held. Since mission fidelity is one of the study's central constructs, this is a limitation of scope rather than of detail: the study reports what leaders claim about their enterprises' faithfulness, not whether that claim is recognised by those they serve.

Site. The study was conducted within a single archdiocese, and the concentration of enterprises in education, hospitality and health care means the findings speak most directly to those sectors.

6.4 Recommendations

For congregational leadership.

1. *Build absorptive capacity through the charism, before expanding the innovation agenda.* The qualification profile in Section 4.1 indicates these enterprises are thinly staffed in exactly the specialist functions a serious innovation programme requires. Rather than importing that capacity as external technical training, integrate it into the congregation's own formation rhythm — financial modelling and enterprise review conducted within the annual communal retreat, for instance, so that market reasoning is introduced inside a spiritual frame rather than against it. Where the expertise cannot be recruited, share it across congregations rather than duplicating or omitting it.
2. *Develop charism-compatible business models rather than generic ones.* The test is not which model yields the highest margin but which yields adequate margin through an activity the charism already commends. For a health care congregation this might mean prioritising telemedicine and outreach that extend reach to remote patients over high-margin elective services; for a teaching congregation, boarding, holiday programmes and adult education rather than a shift toward a more selective intake.
3. *Establish joint innovation committees that pair younger and senior members.* Younger sisters typically hold the digital and technical fluency; senior leaders hold the institutional memory and the authority to authorise. Constituting both in a single body ensures that innovation proposals arrive with technical competence and charism-based legitimation already combined, rather than requiring one to be retrofitted to the other.
4. *Formalise the innovation process without displacing discernment.* Idea generation, small-scale piloting, structured evaluation and phased roll-out are compatible with communal authorisation and reduce the risk Hota et al. (2019) identify, in which improvisation under constraint consumes resources without producing return.

For governance and measurement. Define indicators that capture innovation and mission performance alongside financial performance, and evaluate them participatively with staff and service users. An enterprise that measures only what is financially legible will over time manage only what is financially legible — the mechanism by which mission drift occurs in organisations that never chose it. Given the limitation identified in Section 6.3, congregations should also establish a routine means of hearing from beneficiaries directly, since leaders' assessments of mission fidelity and community trust are at present untested against the views of those they serve.

For donors and development partners. Fund capability rather than initiatives; the binding constraint identified here is managerial and technical capacity, not commitment, and short-cycle project funding does not build it. Accommodate the decision timelines that communal discernment entails. Requiring these organisations to decide on commercial timescales asks them to bypass the process that protects the mission the funding is intended to serve — and, on the evidence of this study, communal discernment is identity-protection rather than inefficiency.

For church authorities and policy actors. Reduce administrative friction on experimentation in health care, agriculture, education and skills development, and support shared innovation infrastructure — technical advice, procurement, evaluation capability — that individual congregations cannot maintain alone.

For strategic alliances. Build structured collaboration with technology providers, research institutions, government agencies, private-sector actors and civil society organisations. Consortium arrangements give small enterprises access to expertise, finance and market channels none could secure alone, and allow successful adaptations to be transferred between congregations rather than reinvented in each.

6.5 Further Research

Six priorities follow directly from the limitations.

Studies using sustainability indicators independent of respondent perception — audited accounts, enrolment, patient volumes, survival — would establish whether the association reported here survives the removal of common-method variance.

Longitudinal work tracking innovation adoption and enterprise outcomes over time would establish whether the relationship is causal and in which direction it runs, and would adjudicate between the alternative explanations in Section 5.3.

An expanded qualitative study, sampling 15 to 20 superiors for variation in congregation size, principal sector, charism and enterprise maturity, and including congregations that have closed or divested an enterprise, would test whether faithful adaptation holds as a general pattern and would generate the disconfirming cases this study did not obtain.

Research incorporating employee and beneficiary assessments should be the first priority. This study's findings are silent on whether leaders' claims of mission fidelity are recognised by those they serve, and evaluation against Nussbaum's (2000) capabilities criterion requires data from beneficiaries rather than providers.

Multi-site comparative work across East Africa would establish the boundary conditions of the findings beyond a single archdiocese.

A matched comparison between faith-based and secular social enterprises would test the study's central proposition directly: that spiritual capital raises the quality and durability of adopted innovations while lowering their number and speed.

REFERENCES

Ahmed, N. (2024). Empowering women in India through innovative incubators and accelerators for energy entrepreneurship. In L. Indiran & R. Yanamandra (Eds.), *University incubators and their role in the entrepreneurial ecosystem* (pp. 293–315). IGI Global. https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-9646-9

Austin, J., Stevenson, H., & Wei-Skillern, J. (2006). Social and commercial entrepreneurship: Same, different, or both? *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 30*(1), 1–22. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2006.00107.x

Bansal, P., & DesJardine, M. R. (2014). Business sustainability: It is about time. *Strategic Organization, 12*(1), 70–78. https://doi.org/10.1177/1476127013520265

Barney, J. (1991). Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. *Journal of Management, 17*(1), 99–120. https://doi.org/10.1177/014920639101700108

Bawono, I., Maulina, E., Rizal, M., & Purnomo, M. (2022). The role of knowledge management capability, financial literacy, and problem-solving skills on organizational performance for SMEs. *Frontiers in Psychology, 13*, Article 930742. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.930742

Berger, P. L. (2014). *The many altars of modernity: Toward a paradigm for religion in a pluralist age*. De Gruyter.

Bocken, N. M. P., & Short, S. W. (2021). Unsustainable business models: Recognising and addressing institutionalised problems. *Journal of Cleaner Production, 284*, Article 125398. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2020.125398

Bompani, B. (2006). Mandate and mobilisation: Religious NGOs and the politics of development in Africa. *Development in Practice, 16*(5), 449–461.

Bornstein, E. (2005). *The spirit of development: Protestant NGOs, morality, and economics in Zimbabwe*. Stanford University Press.

Botella-Carrubi, D., Ulrich-Berenguer, K., & Ribeiro Soriano, D. E. (2023). What entrepreneurial skills are the key to startup finance performance? *Venture Capital*, 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1080/13691066.2023.2240019

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2018). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.

Dees, J. G. (1998). *The meaning of social entrepreneurship*. Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship, Fuqua School of Business, Duke University.

DiMaggio, P. J., & Powell, W. W. (1983). The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields. *American Sociological Review, 48*(2), 147–160. https://doi.org/10.2307/2095101

Elkington, J. (1997). *Cannibals with forks: The triple bottom line of 21st century business*. Capstone.

Emerson, J. (2003). The blended value proposition: Integrating social and financial returns. *California Management Review, 45*(4), 35–51. https://doi.org/10.2307/41166187

Emerson, J., & Bonini, S. (2005). *The blended value map: Tracking the intersects and opportunities of economic, social and environmental value creation*. The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

Francis. (2015). *Laudato si': On care for our common home* [Encyclical letter]. The Holy See.

Fry, L. W. (2003). Toward a theory of spiritual leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly, 14*(6), 693–727. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2003.09.001

Giacalone, R. A., & Jurkiewicz, C. L. (Eds.). (2003). *Handbook of workplace spirituality and organizational performance*. M. E. Sharpe.

Gotsis, G., & Kortezi, Z. (2008). Philosophical foundations of workplace spirituality: A critical approach. *Journal of Business Ethics, 78*(4), 575–600. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-007-9369-5

Hearn, J. (2002). The 'invisible' NGO: US evangelical missions in Kenya. *Journal of Religion in Africa*, *32*(1), 32–60.

Hota, P. K., Mitra, S., & Qureshi, I. (2019). Adopting bricolage to overcome resource constraints: The case of social enterprises in rural India. *Management and Organization Review*, *15*(2), 371–402. https://doi.org/10.1017/mor.2019.19

Kabeer, N. (1999). Resources, agency, achievements: Reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment. *Development and Change*, *30*(3), 435–464. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-7660.00125

Kadam, R., Rao, S., Kareem Abdul, W., & Jabeen, S. S. (2019). Impact of cultural intelligence on SME performance. *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*, *6*(3), 161–185. https://doi.org/10.1108/JOEPP-12-2018-0101

Kedir, A., & Kouame, E. (2022). FinTech and women's entrepreneurship in Africa: The case of Burkina Faso and Cameroon. *Journal of Cultural Economy*, *15*(4), 452–467. https://doi.org/10.1080/17530350.2022.2041463

Kim, J. Y., Choi, D. S., Sung, C.-S., & Park, J. Y. (2018). The role of problem-solving ability on innovative behavior and opportunity recognition in university students. *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity*, *4*(1), Article 4. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40852-018-0085-4

King, S. M. (2010). Spiritual capital. In R. A. Giacalone & C. L. Jurkiewicz (Eds.), *Handbook of workplace spirituality and organizational performance* (2nd ed., pp. 167–184). M. E. Sharpe.

Koape, M., & Mamabolo, A. (2024). The effect of experiential learning on entrepreneurial competencies and business performance. *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship*, *29*(2), Article 2450010.

Mahfuz Ashraf, M., Razzaque, M. A., Liaw, S.-T., Ray, P. K., & Hasan, M. R. (2019). Social business as an entrepreneurship model in emerging economy. *Management Decision*, *57*(5), 1145–1161. https://doi.org/10.1108/MD-04-2017-0343

Mair, J., & Martí, I. (2006). Social entrepreneurship research: A source of explanation, prediction, and delight. *Journal of World Business*, *41*(1), 36–44. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jwb.2005.09.002

Moyer, J. M., Sinclair, A. J., & Spaling, H. (2012). Working for God and sustainability: The activities of faith-based organizations in Kenya. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, *23*(4), 959–992. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11266-011-9245-x

Muriithi, C. G., & Muigai, K. G. (2020). Role of knowledge acquisition on firm performance in the context of small and medium enterprises in Meru County, Kenya. *Journal of World Economic Research*, *9*(1), 27–32.

Murithi, W., Ndunge, A., & Njiraini, N. (2024). *Entrepreneurial competency assessment among faith-based social enterprises in Africa* [Working paper]. SSRN. https://ssrn.com/abstract=4933487

Mwaura, P. N. (2005). The role of the Catholic Church in the development of Kenya. In G. R. Muriuki & P. N. Mwaura (Eds.), *The Catholic Church in Kenya: A centenary history* (pp. 123–156). Paulines Publications Africa.

Ndou, V. (2021). Social entrepreneurship education: A combination of knowledge exploitation and exploration processes. *Administrative Sciences, 11*(4), Article 112. https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci11040112

Nussbaum, M. C. (2000). *Women and human development: The capabilities approach*. Cambridge University Press.

Okonkwo, D. N., M'ithiria, E. N., & Ngunjiri, J. M. (2024). Budgeting practices and financial sustainability of women religious congregations in Karen, Nairobi, Kenya. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Information Technology, 10*(6), 1–11.

Prevost, E. (2008). Married to the mission field: Gender, Christianity, and professionalization in Britain and colonial Africa, 1865–1914. *Journal of British Studies*, *47*(4), 796–826. https://doi.org/10.1086/590130

Santos, F. M. (2012). A positive theory of social entrepreneurship. *Journal of Business Ethics, 111*(3), 335–351. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-012-1413-4

Selznick, P. (1957). *Leadership in administration: A sociological interpretation*. Row, Peterson.

Silaban, D. (2024). The Church at the crossroads of the times: Between faith tradition and digital innovation. *Hikmat: Jurnal Agama Kristen, 2*(2), 52–59.

Smith, W. K., & Lewis, M. W. (2022). *Both/and thinking: Embracing creative tensions to solve your toughest problems*. Harvard Business Review Press.

Svotwa, T. D., Mswaka, W., & Phera, P. (2025). Understanding the nature of social enterprise in Africa: Insights from Zimbabwe. *Journal of Small Business & Entrepreneurship,* 1–22. https://doi.org/10.1080/08276331.2025.2503120

Weaver, G. R., & Agle, B. R. (2002). Religiosity and ethical behavior in organizations: A symbolic interactionist perspective. *Academy of Management Review, 27*(1), 77–97. https://doi.org/10.2307/4134370

Wernerfelt, B. (1984). A resource-based view of the firm. *Strategic Management Journal, 5*(2), 171–180. https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.4250050207

Zhu, Y. (2025). A higher purpose: Conceptualizing the role of religion in driving social innovation. *Communications in Humanities Research, 52*, 222–231.