

## **Social Entrepreneurial Intention: A Systematic Literature Review and Research Agenda**

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### **Abstract**

Social entrepreneurial intention (SEI) concepts are an urgently growing study area. The rising proportion of research used the entrepreneurial intention model as a well-grounded theoretical framework. Nevertheless, most of these studies need more systematicity and categorization, and there is a tendency to initiate new research in each study. Accordingly, there is a need to review the current knowledge in the area. Subsequently, the study is qualitative research using a systematic literature review (SLR) method to identify publication trends and the specific themes under study within each category in SEI. Consequently, this paper analyzes 73 papers about SEI published from 2013–2023 in the Scopus database, focusing on Q1 and Q2 accredited international journals. Specifically, the 73 papers were divided into four primary research categories: core social entrepreneurial intention models; personal level variables; entrepreneurship education; and context and institutions. This paper seeks to fill the gap in existing research and literature on SEI, which is important for academics, professionals, and policymakers through the categorization of SEI discussed in this study.

**Keywords:** Personality Traits; Entrepreneurship Education; Institutions; Social Entrepreneurial Intention; Systematic Literature Review

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## Introduction

Based on the SDGs aim to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030, as well as the growing number of social problems related to poverty, discrimination, violence, inequality, environmental pollution, and others (Sousa-Filho et al., 2023; Yang et al., 2015). Social entrepreneurship is vital in promoting poverty alleviation and achieving the SDGs. Social entrepreneurship uses practical, innovative, and sustainable approaches to strengthen marginalized and poor communities, focusing on practical solutions to social problems and increased economic growth in sustainable development (Kruse et al., 2023). In the framework of this conceptual study, SEI is often used as the primary indicator that leads individuals to perform a behaviour, in this case, social entrepreneurial activities (Bergner et al., 2022; Hockerts, 2017; Mair & Noboa, 2003).

However, the SEI model is a relatively recent framework, and publications discussing social entrepreneurial intentions are still relatively limited, recalling the first publication by Mair & Noboa about two decades ago. So, it is necessary to confirm the application of the concept in various situations. Therefore, it is essential to understand the systematic processes involved in forming SEI, thus strengthening the reliability of the concept and driving individuals' interest in becoming social entrepreneurs (Bergner et al., 2022; Tan et al., 2020; Zaremohzzabieh et al., 2019). Although SEI research has received much attention and a growing number of publications recently, most research needs more systematicity and categorization. It tends to introduce new insights into the topic with each study. In addition, most prior SEI research tends to be an evolution of traditional entrepreneurship models (Tiwari et al., 2017b; Zaremohzzabieh et al., 2019). This condition poses the potential for stagnation and a lack of conceptual robustness in field applications (Liñán & Fayolle, 2015). In particular, an in-depth literature review is needed to systematically organize the information in this study so that it can significantly contribute to the development of knowledge of SEI by utilizing the categorization framework. In this regard, future researchers can examine these variables or themes in every categorization separately and combine the entire construct.

Therefore, this paper provides a more vivid overview of the research sub-areas in constructing a SEI framework. Previous researchers, Tan et al. (2020), provided a SLR by categorizing the main fields and related sub-fields by analyzing papers on SEI for eight years (2010-2018). Nonetheless, these results may not reflect the truthful representation of the SEI framework, as only 36 papers were analyzed. In addition, some of the 36 papers analyzed were not published in reputable international journals. Furthermore, given that the study was conducted five years ago, as well as the increasing interest in this topic and the increasing number of publications, it is necessary to conduct another study to expand the literature review when more papers are published with more recent data. In this regard, no research attempts to study and identify the most prominent sources, authors, and countries that investigate SEI. Therefore, the novelty of this paper includes 1) identifying the most prolific sources, authors, and countries investigating SEI; 2) focusing on papers published by Q1 and Q2 accredited international journals to guarantee their quality; and 3) using the latest data, namely publications related to SEI from 2013–2023. This study is expected to complement previous research gaps in the literature about SEI, which is relevant to academics,

practitioners, and policymakers. In this case, the following research questions (RQs) are used to guide the analysis in this study, including:

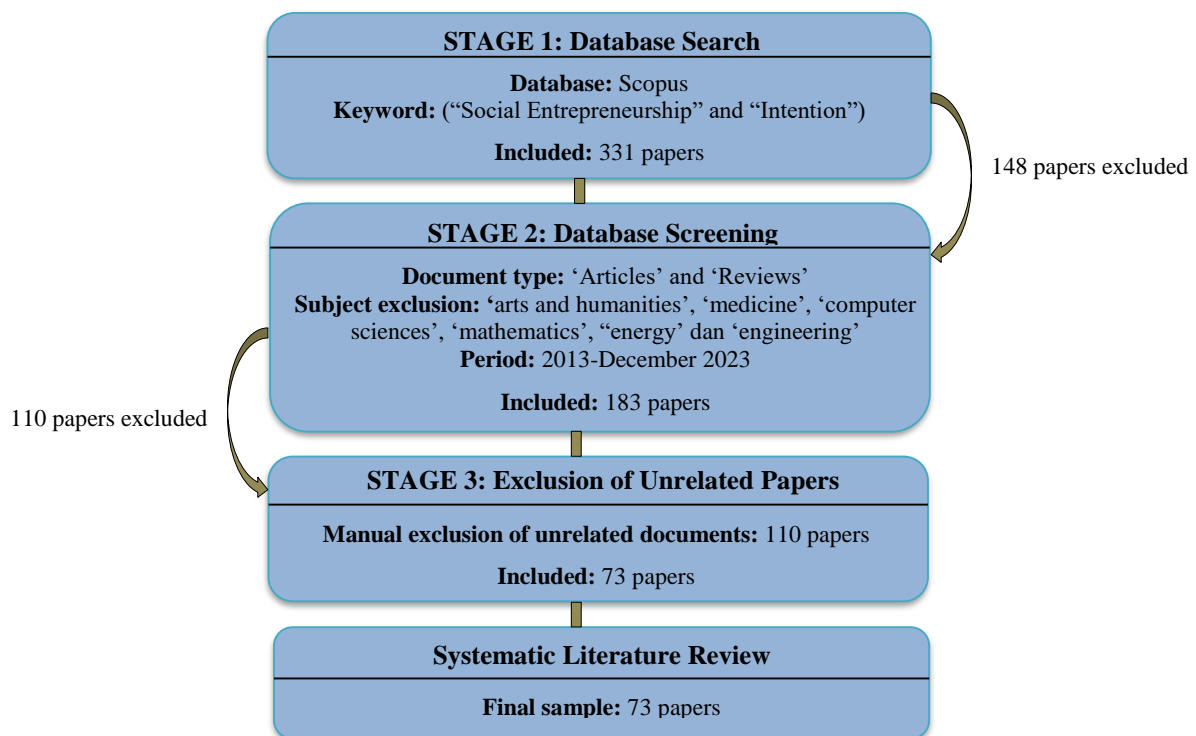
RQ1: What are the publication trends of SEI research?

RQ2: What are the most important main themes and areas of specialization in SEI research?

RQ3: What are the critical perspectives of SEI, implications, and research agenda in the future?

## Methodology

This study is qualitative research using an SLR to analyze studies about SEI and define essential categories and themes. SLR studies concerning SEI are regarded as an emerging research topic, which has emerged from studies on entrepreneurial intentions (Liñán & Fayolle, 2015) and SEI (Tan et al., 2020) This SLR consolidated knowledge and directed future research (Okoli, 2015). The first step of each SLR study is to find the papers to be reviewed. We formulated a three-stage search and screening strategy (Xiao & Watson, 2019): database search, database screening, and excluding irrelevant papers (Figure 1).



**Figure 1. Illustrates the search and filtering procedures employed in the analysis of SLR**

Stage 1 is the database search: First, the database selection was to find papers in the Scopus database. The authors chose Scopus because this database includes more journals and titles recognized as high-quality data sources (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016). Second, the appropriate keyword search strategy, including the overall SEI literature, should be determined. The included/excluded keywords may result in the omission or consideration of papers that may render the conclusions invalid.

Hence, the search focused on “social entrepreneurship” and “intention” within the title, abstract, and keyword fields across chosen databases. The initial database search resulted in 331 papers.

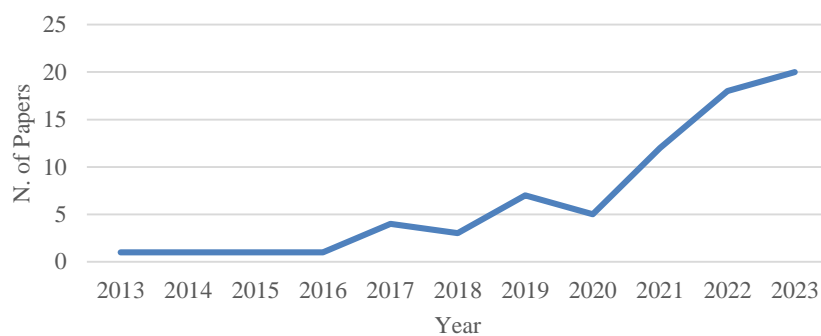
Stage 2 is database screening. In this stage, included and excluded filters were used for the initial search. First, the authors decided to include only "papers" and "reviews" in the search, as these types of literature have been submitted to a stringent peer review procedure and have received evaluations based on novelty (Gupta et al., 2020). Secondly, the authors decided to exclude the research fields of "arts and humanities", "medicine", "computer sciences", "mathematics", "energy" and "engineering" and retain the other research fields as we found a great deal of the published papers concerning SEI were out of the usual field of "business" related topics. Thirdly, we only included papers published between 2013 and December 2023 and omitted publications from 2006 to 2012, as this study only focuses on papers published within the last 10 years. The screening process of this database excluded 148 papers.

Stage 3 is excluding irrelevant papers. The authors conducted a manual and independent evaluation of the papers to eliminate studies irrelevant to this systematic review analysis (Tan et al., 2020). At this stage, 110 papers were excluded because they needed to fulfill the criteria of this systematic review analysis. Therefore, 110 papers were excluded because they were unrelated to SEI and did not belong to journals with Scopus index Q1 and Q2. Meanwhile, the remaining papers (i.e., the last sample of 73 papers) were processed for the SLR analysis.

Stage 4 is the SLR analysis. The authors analyze annual paper trends and categorize papers by subject. Regarding papers that addressed topics within multiple categories, the authors classified the papers according to the category with the majority of supporters of the topic.

## Result and Discussion

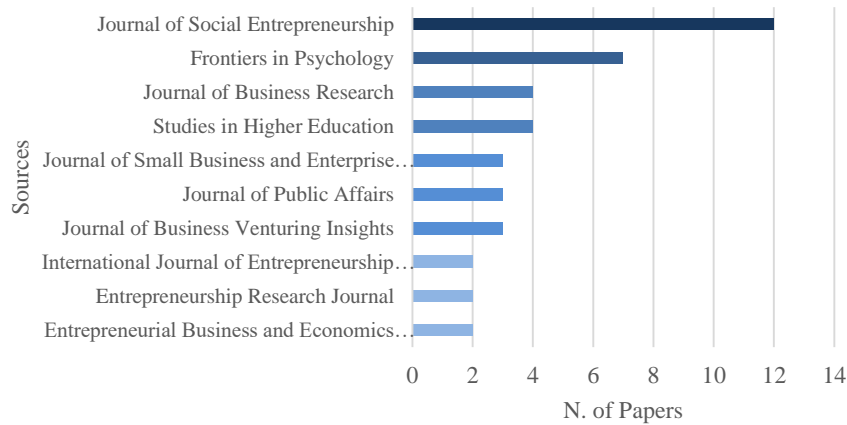
The number of articles on the topic of Social Entrepreneurial Intention published each year in a decade is presented in Figure 2 (RQ1), where the number of articles published shows a significant increase in the last five years. As for the most productive years in this study, the years were 2023 (20 papers), Some of the years that generated a large number of publications are 2023 (20 papers), 2022 (18 papers), 2021 (12 papers), 2020 (5 papers), and 2019 (7 papers).



**Figure 2. Number of papers per year (n=73)**

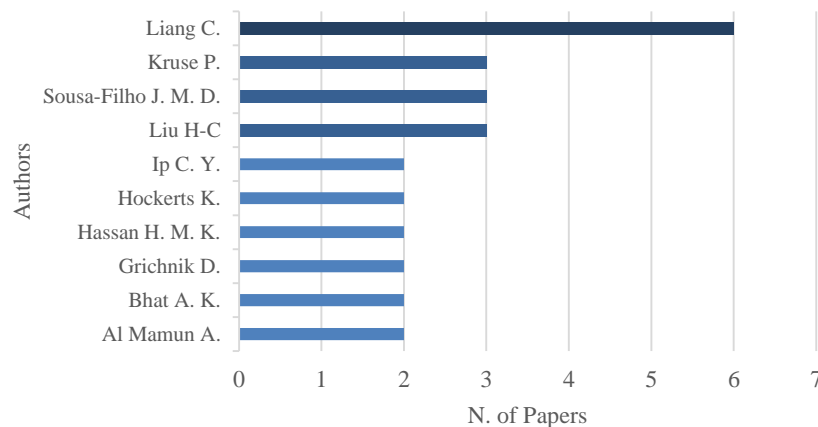
Note: The search period is until 30 December 2023 on Scopus.

This growth rate is estimated to be ongoing in 2024 and 2026, as evidence suggests that SEI research is an emergent area of research that is evolving a great interest amongst academics. Furthermore, the Co-citation analysis lists the 10 most prolific sources of SEI research in Figure 3 (RQ1).



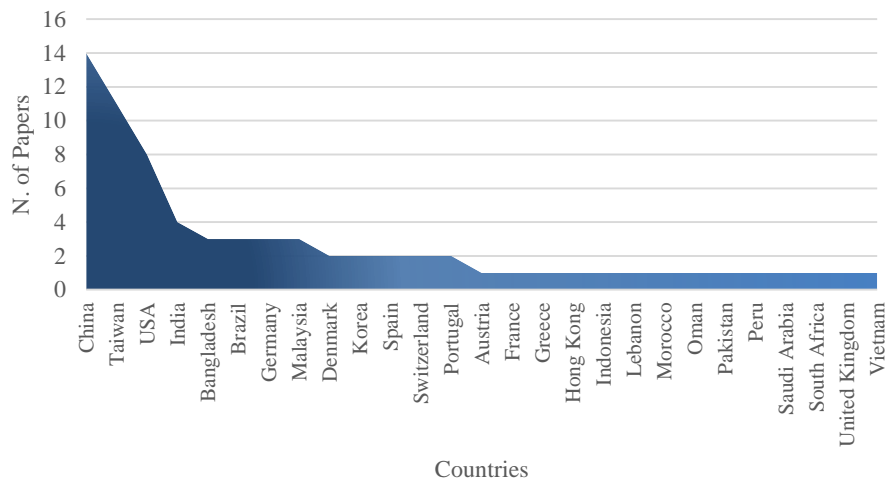
**Figure 3. The most prolific sources in SEI publications**

According to Figure 3, the Journal of Social Entrepreneurship is the most productive in publishing articles on SEI, with 12 papers. Following closely is Frontiers in Psychology, which has published 7 papers on the topic. The Journal for Business Research comes in third with 4 papers. Most of the journals are internationally renowned Q1 journals, according to the Scimago Journal & Country Rank.



**Figure 4. The most prolific authors**

Figure 4 analyzes the top 10 authors with the most publications to provide information on the research contributions of each researcher (RQ1). Based on statistical data, Liang C is the most prolific author, having contributed a total of 6 papers. In addition, Kruse P., Sousa-Filho J., and Liu H-C have each authored up to 3 papers pertinent to SEI. Consequently, their research contribution and relevance can establish them as SEI research experts.



**Figure 5. The most prolific countries**

Figure 5 illustrates the distribution of 73 publications on social entrepreneurship across 28 countries (RQ1). China and Taiwan each have 14 and 11 papers, whereas the United States has 8. It confirms the importance of SEI which has gained attention in studies in these nations. Then, based on deep analysis involving cross-citations of the 73 papers in the sample, the authors independently and carefully read the entire paper to identify the discussed main topic areas. These main topics were also based on a previous literature study by Liñán & Fayolle (2015), discussing the categorization of antecedents of general entrepreneurial intention, and Tan et al. (2020), discussing the categorization of antecedents of SEI. Subsequently, the categorizations in both papers were re-analyzed based on the sample in this study. That consequently resulted in the papers being classified into four categories, with an absence of gaps in the classifications constructed by the authors. The four categories are presented in Table 1; paper distribution by category and year is presented in Table 2; a graphical representation of them is shown in Figure 6 (RQ2).

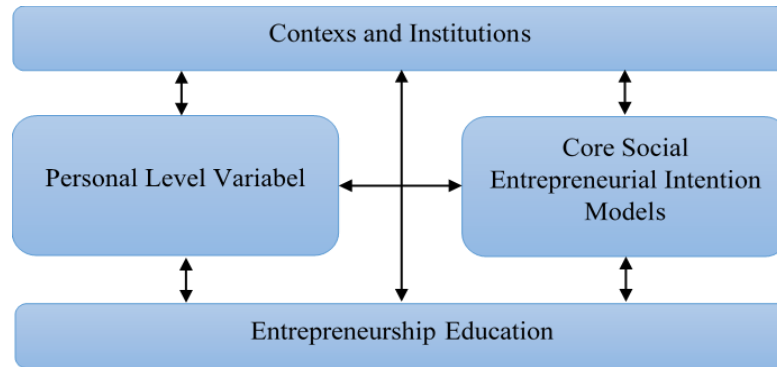
**Table 1. Social entrepreneurial intention research's categories and themes**

Category	Theme
Category 1: Core social entrepreneurial intention models (13)	a. Core and extending model tests (6) b. new model approaches (5) c. Methodologies (2)
Category 2: personal-level variables (37)	a. Personality factors (14) b. Background factors (18) c. Gender issues (5)
Category 3: entrepreneurship education (9)	a. Comparison of participant characteristics (4) b. Entrepreneurship education program (5)
Category 4: context and institutions (14)	a. Cross-cultural studies (6) b. Institutional variables (7) c. Cultural background (1)

Note: the total of published papers is shown in the following parentheses

**Table 2: Annual and Category Distribution of Papers**

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Category 1	1	1			2		3		1	1	4
Category 2						2	2	4	7	13	9
Category 3				1		1			1	2	4
Category 4			1		2		2	1	3	2	3

**Figure 6. Categories of papers from citation analysis**

The categorization results will be studied in depth to identify primary themes through critical perspectives, implications, and suggestions for future research on SEI (RQ3).

### Category 1: Core Social Entrepreneurial Intention Model

This category evaluates research on the fundamental principles of models relating to SEI. Besides, it also identifies new theoretical model approaches to solve the theory gaps, as well as developing methodological models to assess SEI.

The first theme is the “core and extending model tests”. Papers published and categorized to this theme were used to test the entrepreneurial intention model that extends the social entrepreneurship model with additional variables. The two main theories of entrepreneurial intention that have contributed most to SEI research are the Entrepreneur Event Model (EEM) (Shapero & Sokol, 1982), the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991), and the Model of Entrepreneurial Potential (MEP) (Krueger & Brazeal, 1994). TPB explains that individuals are likelier to engage in a behavior with a positive intention (Ajzen, 1991). Specifically, following EEM (Shapero & Sokol, 1982) and MEP (Krueger & Brazeal, 1994), Forster & Grichnik (2013) and Hockerts (2017) analyzed the first SEI model proposed by Mair & Noboa (2006). In this case, Forster & Grichnik (2013) recommended a new model by integrating other factors, including empathy and perceived social norms mediated perceived desirability, whereas self-efficacy and social entrepreneurship exposure mediated perceived feasibility. Meanwhile, Hockerts (2017) expanded the model and added prior experience with social problems. The development of the model has also been adopted and tested on journalists in Taiwan (Liu et al., 2019) and university students in China (Asma et al., 2019).

In addition, by employing the three determinants of TPB (Ajzen, 1991), Tiwari et al. (2017a) examined the relationship between cognitive style, self-efficacy, and the intention to engage in social entrepreneurship in India.

Furthermore, Zaremohzzabieh et al. (2019) used a comprehensive meta-analysis to test TPB's applicability in predicting SEI and proposed two alternative models of SEI. The first model is the original TPB model; the second adds human capital, social capital, and social entrepreneurial personality variables; and the third adds perceived desirability and feasibility variables from EEM (Shapero & Sokol, 1982). The test results of the three models show that the second and third models are more suitable and reliable than the first models in predicting SEI.

The second theme is “new approaches”. This approach is an alternative approach to predicting SEI. This alternative approach is based on Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) (Lent et al., 2002), which also lends itself to a behaviorist approach. SCCT suggests that individual cognitive factors, including self-efficacy and outcome expectation, influence the intention to establish a social enterprise, which may be regarded as career-relevant. Based on the SCCT, (Pham et al., 2022) have proposed and confirmed the variables of social entrepreneurship education, prior experience with social organization, social entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and social entrepreneurial outcome expectations as predictors of SEI. Meanwhile, Luc (2023) has also added social capital and psychological capital to predict SEI through social entrepreneurial outcome expectations.

A literature study by Tan et al. (2020) found that another approach to predicting SEI can be conducted through several alternatives, including expectancy theory, prospect theory, and effectuation theory. Recently, there have been other new approaches applied by researchers, including construal level theory emphasizes that the further the concept of social entrepreneurship is perceived psychologically, the more likely individuals will form strong intentions (Santos et al., 2021); self-determination theory emphasizes internal motivations, such religiosity can be strong drivers for individuals to build intentions (McIntyre et al., 2023); the vbn (value-belief-norm) theory stressed that individuals' values, beliefs related to social issues, and social norms can establish SEI in response to the need for positive change in society (Naznen et al., 2023).

The last theme is “methodologies”. This approach focuses on a methodology for measuring SEI. Baierl et al. (2014) used a survey-based experimental approach to ascertain the encouraging impact of general social appraisal on SEI. Meanwhile, Kruse et al. (2023) offer a new empirically validated scale specifically created to assess the extent of a person's SEI. The application of the scale has the potential to address validity issues and reduce methodological bias in the research about SEI. The scale test results provide evidence of the consistency of the scale's factorial structure, content, construction, criterion validity, and robustness under different cultural and economic conditions.

In category 1, future researchers may consider the theoretical models of EEM, TPB, and MEP as the theoretical basis of SEI formation in the future. In addition, the theoretical models of SCCT, construal level theory, self-determination theory, and vbn theory can also be considered as the theoretical basis for SEI formation because these approaches are still relatively new in building the SEI theoretical framework, so there is still room to integrate and develop these theoretical models to obtain an integrative and more sophisticated framework. In addition, in this category, motivational antecedents also need to be further researched to learn more about the cognitive processes that lead to action-taking. Furthermore, the methodology on the SEI scale being comprehensively constructed



would also contribute to further empirical advancements. However, further research is needed to test the instrument's reliability using a sample of potential or budding social entrepreneurs.

### **Category 2: Personal Level Variable**

Research in this category investigates the importance of individual characteristics in triggering the development of SEI. However, this category explains the concept of personality factors by examining the correlation between personality traits and SEI. Other themes deal with various background factors (such as demographic factors, and motivation) and discuss the effect of gender on the development of SEI.

The first theme is “personality factors”. This theme discusses the essential personality traits of potential social entrepreneurs. Despite criticism in earlier times, personality traits attracted much interest. To determine the common personality of potential social entrepreneurs, Kruse et al. (2019) identified the big five personality traits (openness to experience, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism) that predict SEI. In addition, Hsu & Wang (2019) and Liang (2020) also identified the big five personality traits. They added one of the specific personality traits, creativity, to predict SEI. In the same study, specific personality traits in the formation of SEI were also studied, such as risk-taking propensity, need for achievement, pro-activeness, locus of control, and innovativeness (Tan et al., 2021), autonomy and self-realization (Barton et al., 2018), social worth (Bacq & Alt, 2018; Usman et al., 2022), dispositional optimism and entrepreneurial alertness (Urban, 2020), communal narcissism and moral elevation (Kim et al., 2023), emotional empathy, cognitive empathy, opportunity exploitation opportunity evaluation, and pro-social behavior (Le et al., 2020), morality and positivity (Choi et al., 2021), altruism and opportunity recognition (Razzak & Al Riyami, 2023; Trajano et al., 2023), mindfulness and perceived controllability (Tuan & Pham, 2022). In this case, researchers can further identify specific personality traits related to potential social entrepreneurs driving their intentions to become social entrepreneurs.

The second theme is “background factors”. This theme analyzes the role of several situational influences that affect individual SEI. Situational influences consist of demographic factors, including age, family status, educational level, university level, employment level, and experience related to social entrepreneurship, which can affect self-efficacy of social entrepreneurship, turn also affects SEI (Chang et al., 2021; Hassan, 2020), marital status and field of study (Rambe & Ndofirepi, 2021). Furthermore, aspects of personal and achievement motivation such as intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and pro-social motivation (Yamini et al., 2022), positive reciprocity (Xiang & Zhang, 2022), monetary rewards and social rewards (Lee et al., 2022). Then, the dimensions of social capital as an indication of social network characteristics include perceived social impact, perceived shared norms, perceived social interactions and ties / psychological proximity, and perceived social trust (Lan & Luc, 2020; Paramita et al., 2022).

Based on a qualitative study by Liu & Liang (2021), they found that SEI is not only influenced by social capital and social support but also influenced by knowledge capital. It has also been confirmed that knowledge capital can be

entrepreneurial knowledge (Polas & Afshar, 2021) or social entrepreneurial knowledge (Bergner et al., 2022). In addition, other situational factors can be an entrepreneurial passion, meaning in life that influence social entrepreneurial career choice (Aggarwal & Manchanda, 2023; McSweeney et al., 2022), hope (Lingappa et al., 2022), social entrepreneurial role models (Ukil, 2022), personal norms, social norms, awareness of consequences, ascription of responsibility, and normative beliefs (Yang et al., 2023), environmental complexity and karmic beliefs (Duong, 2023). Some studies also proposed some variables based on the Base of the Pyramid (BoP) group, including self-confidence (Claeyé et al., 2022), self-fulfillment and reciprocity (Boughattas & Claeyé, 2022). These variables are still relatively new and need attention for further research.

The third theme is “gender factors”. This theme explores the influence of gender on the development of SEI. Hossain et al. (2021) showed that gender acts as a moderating variable to test the effect of personality traits, social self-efficacy, and social support on SEI. In addition, Ko & Kang (2022) also pointed out the role of gender as a moderating variable for the effect of social experience on self-referent beliefs as a predictor of SEI. Furthermore, Lopes et al. (2023) have contributed to the growth of social entrepreneurship literature, finding that gender can significantly influence SEI. The study showed that the effect of perceived desirability of social entrepreneurship was significantly less in women than men. However, when analyzing the relationship between perceived feasibility and social entrepreneurship, it was verified that the perceived feasibility of social entrepreneurship was more apparent to women than men, thus highlighting the strength and resilience of women for SEI. Gender disparities also influenced SEI throughout the COVID-19 pandemic (Choi et al., 2023). Women are more likely than men to enhance their perspectives of environmental factors, encouraging them to get involved in solving social problems. In that sense, gender differences have also moderated the relationship between empathy and SEI (Cardella et al., 2023).

In category 2, future researchers can examine these variables or themes separately and combine the entire construct, given the high strength of its relationship with SEI. Cross-fertilizing these themes would be interesting in explaining the construct as a whole. In addition, different moderating structures could be constructed to give greater insight into SEI (Tan et al., 2020). Future researchers may also focus on identifying barriers that hinder the gender-moderated relationship between intention and action. That is based on the reliability of gender's role in moderating the relationship between personal-level variables and SEI. Therefore, future research should also consider analyzing the base of the pyramid (BoP) perspective in forming the intention to be social entrepreneurs.

### **Category 3: Entrepreneurship Education**

This category includes analysis papers that review the characteristics of learners in entrepreneurship education programs while also conducting comparisons and evaluations of such programs concerning promoting SEI. With a focus on participant characteristics and program effectiveness, this research seeks to understand better the factors that influence the development of SEI among learners.

The first theme in this category is “comparison of participant characteristics”. This theme studies the characteristics of the sample, i.e., students

who did and did not receive entrepreneurship education, which are investigated to determine the role of entrepreneurship education and compare different origins of participants in predicting SEI. In this regard, the results of empirical research indicate a significant disparity in attitudes and intention levels between students who participated and did not participate in a social entrepreneurship education program, both in business and non-business majors (Chang et al., 2022). However, given that the research was only conducted at one university in Taiwan, the results may not be generalized to different situations. Then, several other studies have compared the diversity of participants in scope, such as countries (Politis et al., 2016), regions within a country (Hassan et al., 2022), and institutions within a region (Tran et al., 2023). However, they only focus on participants who have attended social entrepreneurship or entrepreneurship education programs. Therefore, future researchers have space to identify the role of general or social entrepreneurship education programs in participants who have received entrepreneurship education (as a treatment group) and participants who did not follow the program (as a control group) in different institutions, both within the scope of the region, national and international. That is intended to obtain a more reliable generalization of results and fill the existing research gaps.

Further, the second theme is “entrepreneurship education program”. This theme focuses on the deeper and more comprehensive evaluation of particular programs to determine their effectiveness in improving learners' overall competencies in social entrepreneurship, which includes social entrepreneurial knowledge, behaviors, and intentions. Evaluating the importance of social entrepreneurship education can be done by providing pre/post-treatment quantitative studies and using two teaching mechanisms: online learning and direct classroom teaching (Hockerts, 2018). Other models may also adopt pedagogical learning approaches involving various methods such as traditional lectures, experience-based learning, guest lectures, and collaborative projects in social entrepreneurship. This approach enriches learning experiences by integrating diverse elements and encouraging creativity and collaboration (Chui et al., 2023; Sousa-Filho et al., 2023). Entrepreneurship teaching has progressively been included in the curriculum of some college-level programs to stimulate the improvement of learners' empowerment attitudes and social entrepreneurship mentalities (Almeida & Sousa-Filho, 2023). Then, Seyoum et al. (2021) proposed supporting and expanding social networks are the most appropriate aspects of entrepreneurship education programs for increasing individuals' SEI.

In category 3, future researchers have space to identify the role of general or social entrepreneurship education programs in participants who have received entrepreneurship education (as a treatment group) and participants who did not follow the program (as a control group) in different institutions, both within the scope of the region, national and international. That is intended to obtain a more reliable generalization of results and fill the existing research gaps. In addition, future researchers can also explore the importance of entrepreneurship education programs through experimental studies using pedagogical learning models consisting of traditional lectures, social entrepreneurship co-creation projects, experiential learning activities, and guest lectures. However, the curriculum of entrepreneurship education and critical pedagogy still need to be considered as the primary factors influencing SEI. then the support and exploration of the role of the

social network of the associated institutions is also necessary because this condition is closely related to the sustainability of the implementation of entrepreneurship education programs in increasing individual SEI.

#### **Category 4: Context and Institutions**

This category analyzes papers that focus similarly on special considerations related to the environment and institutions that influence the entrepreneurial context. They explore the complex dynamics between these external factors and efforts to promote SEI. The three main themes are found by applying the model of intent in different cultures, focusing on the influence of institutional variables, and focusing on the cultural background, that is the condition of the individual when facing a new culture.

The first theme is “cross-cultural studies”. This theme examines the diversity of SEI formation across countries. In this regard, papers relating to this theme focused on the comparison of social business start-up intentions between two countries, such as China and the USA (Yang et al., 2015); Hong Kong and Taiwan (Peng & Liang, 2019), Portugal and Spain (Margaça et al., 2021), 3 countries, including Bahrain, the Maldives, and Morocco (Simmou et al., 2023). In addition, some papers examine comparisons between 12 countries, including Denmark, Norway, Sweden, France, Germany, Finland, Switzerland, Italy, USA, Mexico, Brazil, and India (Sousa-Filho et al., 2020), and even 36 countries, including the Netherlands, China, Germany, Austria, Italy, Russia, France, Thailand, Sweden, etc (Rieger et al., 2021). The results of these studies indicate that the SEI of individuals in various countries is not uniform, which is influenced by cultural differences when forming SEI.

The second theme is “institutional variables”. This theme addresses specific institutional factors that may shape SEI and social entrepreneurial decision-making. Several types of institutional variables are considered, such as cultural specificities and social environment (Notais & Tixier, 2017), regulatory environment, normative environment, and cognitive environment (Abou Chakra & Al Jardali, 2022; Bui et al., 2023; Urban & Kujinga, 2017), network embeddedness (Wang et al., 2019), the environment & support system of university and social, cultural & environmental responsibility (Chao & Yu, 2022), business ties and political ties (Latif & Ali, 2021).

The last theme is “cultural background”. This theme includes understanding the conditions of individuals facing changes in the environment, such as new values, norms, and cultural aspects that are thought to influence SEI and actions. A common case is that of international immigrants, such as Caucasians, Africans, Asians, etc., working in the United States (Fox et al., 2023). The results showed that differences in individuals' cultural backgrounds influenced their intentions to become social entrepreneurs.

In category 4, cross-country analysis has shown the applicability of the SEI model in a broad scope. However, more must be done to deeply understand the impact of cultural differences on individuals in each country in forming SEI through institutional variables. Therefore, future researchers can consider several institutional variables in deepening this theme include network embeddedness, the environment & support system of universities, and social, cultural & environmental responsibility, business ties, and political ties. In addition, it is also necessary to

understand the conditions of individuals facing changes in the environment, such as new values, norms, and cultural aspects that influence SEI and actions.

## Conclusion

This study presents an in-depth analysis of SEI through a literature review, highlighting the increasing trend of SEI publications. The data indicates that the number of articles published has significantly increased in the last five years. The year 2023 has the largest quantity of publications, with 20 papers out of a total of 73 papers; the most productive journal in publishing articles on SEI is the Journal of Social Entrepreneurship, with 12 papers; the most productive author is Liang C, with six papers contributed; and the most productive country is China, with 14 papers. In addition, this study also identified key factors that influence SEI by classifying them into four main research categories, including 1) the core model of social entrepreneurial intention, 2) personal level variables, 3) entrepreneurship education, and 4) context and institutions. Critical studies in these four categories have shown an increased understanding of SEI development. Category 1 develops new theoretical and methodological models to measure SEI by extending predictive approaches through SCCT, expectancy theory, etc. Category 2, covering personality, background, and gender factors, provides critical insights into individual complexity in social entrepreneurship. In contrast, Category 3 highlights the evaluation of entrepreneurship education programs—meanwhile, the analysis in Category 4 highlights environmental and institutional complexities.

Although some difficulties were seen in classifying the papers, this research emphasizes the importance of the categorization framework to advance the understanding of SEI. Therefore, future researchers may examine these variables or themes separately and combine the constructs, given the strength of their relationship with SEI. Exploring a combination of these themes may provide a comprehensive understanding of the SEI framework. The implications of these findings are highly relevant for practitioners, educators, and policymakers in understanding and encouraging the development of SEI. Policymakers can strengthen various incentive policies to encourage SEI. Educators have practical insights into studying SEI and its application to entrepreneurship education. Aspiring entrepreneurs can use this information to gain ideas and action steps to turn intentions into behaviors.

Finally, the results of this study help people gain new insights into SEI. This study also has some limitations. First, although the authors have collected papers from reliable sources, the literature search covered only some SEI papers that have been published. The authors only used the Scopus database, which has papers published by Scopus Q1 and Q2 reputable international journals. Secondly, although every precaution has been taken for thematic analysis, the authors realize that an in-depth review of paper classification, such as SLR, may depend on the authors' interpretation or subjectivity.

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