

A systematic mapping of social entrepreneurship orientation: A call for increased collaboration and future research agenda

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Abstract: This study aims to systematically map and synthesize the development of Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (SEO) research and to identify future research directions. It employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) combined with bibliometric analysis. Data were collected from the Scopus database using the keyword “Social Entrepreneurship Orientation” in the title, abstract, and keywords fields. A total of 1,174 publications (2017–2025) were identified and analyzed using VOSviewer to examine publication trends, collaboration networks, and thematic structures. SEO research remains in an emerging, fragmented stage despite a rising trend in publications. Research is focused on a few countries and institutions, with limited international collaboration. The analysis highlights that SEO is closely linked to performance outcomes, while contextual, institutional, and innovation-related aspects remain underexplored. SEO research is still developing and requires more integrated, cross-national, and longitudinal studies to enhance theoretical development and empirical validation. The findings provide valuable insights for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to develop collaborative and context-aware strategies for advancing social entrepreneurship practices. This study offers a thorough bibliometric analysis and highlights key gaps to inform future SEO research.

Keywords: *Bibliometric analysis, Social entrepreneurship orientation, Systematic literature review, VOSviewer.*

1. Introduction

Conducting a systematic literature review (SLR) on Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (SEO) is increasingly important due to the fragmented, interdisciplinary, and rapidly evolving nature of research in social entrepreneurship. Existing studies show that SEO-related research is spread across various theoretical perspectives, contextual settings, and methodological approaches, which hinders the development of cumulative, integrative, and comparable knowledge [1, 2]. This fragmentation reflects challenges seen in broader fields like entrepreneurship, market orientation, and digital orientation research, where studies are often isolated across disciplines such as management, education, technology adoption, and SME performance, limiting theoretical coherence and generalizability [3, 4].

An SLR provides a rigorous and transparent approach to synthesizing these diverse findings, enabling clearer conceptual boundaries and systematic identification of theoretical, empirical, and methodological gaps. Prior studies emphasize that structured synthesis is essential for emerging and multidimensional constructs such as SEO, digital orientation, and sustainability-oriented entrepreneurship, particularly where conceptual overlap exists with entrepreneurial orientation, market orientation, and technology acceptance perspectives [1–3]. Furthermore, empirical evidence from developing and emerging economies highlights persistent geographical and contextual gaps, especially

in SME-driven ecosystems where social value creation, innovation capability, and institutional constraints interact dynamically [4, 5].

The application of structured review frameworks such as PRISMA enhances methodological rigor, reliability, and replicability, which are critical for advancing relatively nascent research domains like SEO [6, 7]. Similar methodological rigor has proven valuable in synthesizing fragmented research streams in technology acceptance, digital orientation, and market-driven strategies, enabling clearer insights into how organizational orientations shape performance, innovation, and stakeholder engagement [8, 9]. These parallels further justify the adoption of SLR and bibliometric approaches in consolidating SEO scholarship.

Prior reviews and empirical studies also underscore the growing importance of integrating insights related to stakeholder engagement, institutional pressures, social capital, digital capabilities, and sustainability-oriented practices, all of which significantly shape the effectiveness and impact of SEO in practice [10-12]. Research on digital orientation and learning cultures demonstrates that organizational values, leadership, and technological capabilities play a decisive role in enabling innovation, performance, and social impact, reinforcing the relevance of such factors within the SEO discourse [3, 13].

Moreover, an SLR facilitates the consolidation of emerging constructs closely linked to SEO, such as digital social entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurial intention, sustainability-driven innovation, and technology-enabled value creation [14]. Evidence from market orientation and digital transformation studies in SMEs suggests that strategic orientation significantly influences organizational adaptability, innovation capability, and long-term performance insights that are highly transferable to the context of social entrepreneurship [5, 9].

Structured review protocols enable SLRs to produce actionable insights for practitioners, educators, and policymakers. Such insights support evidence-based decision-making, the design of inclusive educational and entrepreneurial frameworks, and the formulation of institutional policies that foster effective, technology-enabled, and sustainable social entrepreneurship ecosystems [15-17]. Empirical findings from digital learning, market orientation, and SME performance research further highlight how policy support, capability development, and institutional leadership contribute to inclusive growth and social value creation [5, 13].

This study focuses on exploring the current landscape of Social Entrepreneurship Orientation research and evaluating the ongoing relevance of this topic for future scholarly inquiry. It also reviews the evolution of academic discourse on SEO and examines how existing research contributes to stakeholder theory and organizational practice. Accordingly, the research questions are formulated as follows.

RQ1: Is the exploration of Social Entrepreneurship Orientation a subject that continues to hold significance for future scholarly inquiry?

RQ2: What is the current allocation and distribution of research investigations related to Social Entrepreneurship Orientation?

RQ3: What theoretical and practical implications emerge from SEO research to inform future studies?

To address these questions, this study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) combined with Bibliometric Analysis. The SLR method is particularly suitable for synthesizing fragmented bodies of knowledge, identifying trends, gaps, and future research directions, and generating evidence-based insights relevant to policy, practice, and academic development [18, 19]. Complementarily, bibliometric analysis enables the quantitative mapping of publication patterns, intellectual structures, and research impact within the SEO field. Using the Scopus database and VOSviewer software, this study analyzes SEO-related publications published up to December 24, 2025, thereby providing a comprehensive overview of the field's evolution, dominant themes, and prospective research trajectories.

Recent studies also highlight the growing importance of integrating digital transformation, sustainability orientation, and stakeholder engagement in shaping social entrepreneurship orientation and organizational performance [20-22]

2. Literature Review

SEO is consistently understood as a strategic and behavioral orientation that integrates the principles of entrepreneurial orientation into the process of social value creation. Several studies emphasize that SEO functions as a mechanism for balancing social and economic objectives through hybrid, proactive, and innovative entrepreneurial practices [23-25]. This perspective suggests that SEO is not merely an adaptation of conventional entrepreneurial orientation but rather a distinct conceptual development specifically aimed at generating sustainable social impact.

Furthermore, a number of studies highlight the behavioral dimension of SEO, particularly in relation to the ability of social organizations to identify and exploit new opportunities to address social problems [12, 26]. In contrast, research on nonprofit organizations and rural social enterprises emphasizes SEO as a strategic orientation reflected through social innovation, social proactiveness, and social risk-taking to enhance organizational performance and competitive advantage [27, 28]. This indicates that SEO serves as a key driver in transforming social organizations to become more adaptive and performance-oriented.

In more specific contexts, SEO is also viewed as an organizational capability influenced by contextual factors such as socio-economic conditions, environmental turbulence, and stakeholder engagement [29-31]. These findings underscore that the implementation and impact of SEO are not universal but rather highly dependent on institutional, cultural, and industry contexts. Accordingly, the variation in SEO definitions across the literature reflects its dynamic and context-dependent nature, highlighting the need for more integrative conceptual frameworks in future SEO research [32].

Empirical studies consistently show that Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (SEO) plays a vital role in enhancing social value creation and organizational performance. SEO is recognized as a distinct strategic orientation that integrates entrepreneurial principles into social value creation, differentiating it from conventional entrepreneurial orientation [23]. Empirical evidence indicates that SEO positively affects social and financial performance by enabling social enterprises to balance economic and social objectives through hybrid, proactive, and innovative practices [24, 25]. Moreover, SEO strengthens organizations' ability to identify and exploit innovative opportunities to address social problems, thereby improving performance and competitive advantage [12, 26]. Studies across nonprofits, rural social enterprises, cooperatives, and agricultural social enterprises further demonstrate that the impact of SEO is shaped by contextual factors such as stakeholder engagement, socio-economic conditions, and environmental turbulence [27, 29-31]. Overall, these findings suggest that while SEO generally contributes positively to performance and sustainability, its effects are highly context-dependent, highlighting the need for more integrative and context-sensitive research.

Table 1.
Elements that define Social Entrepreneurship Orientation.

No.	Defining Factors of Social Entrepreneurship Orientation	Reference
1	Social Entrepreneurship Orientation is defined as the integration of entrepreneurial orientation into the context of social value creation, influencing organizational decision-making and practices in developing innovative solutions to social problems.	Alalwan, et al. [23]
2	Social Entrepreneurship Orientation is a behavioral construct that reflects an organization's tendency to balance social and economic objectives through hybrid entrepreneurial practices.	Liu, et al. [25]
3	Social Entrepreneurship Orientation is understood as a behavioral tendency to transfer entrepreneurial orientation into the process of social value creation to balance economic and social interests.	Dorhetso [12]
4	Social Entrepreneurship Orientation is defined as entrepreneurial behavior that shapes how social organizations identify and exploit new opportunities to provide unique solutions to social problems.	Zafar, et al. [26]
5	Social Entrepreneurship Orientation represents a strategic orientation of nonprofit organizations reflected through dimensions of social innovation, social proactiveness, and social risk-taking in achieving organizational performance.	Xiabao, et al. [27]
6	Social Entrepreneurship Orientation is viewed as a strategic orientation that encourages rural social enterprises to adopt entrepreneurial principles to enhance organizational performance and competitive advantage.	Do Adro, et al. [28]
7	Social Entrepreneurship Orientation is a social entrepreneurial orientation that influences business planning, competitive advantage, and both social and financial performance of cooperatives while considering the socio-economic context.	Law, et al. [30]
8	Social Entrepreneurship Orientation is defined as an orientation that guides social entrepreneurial processes by engaging stakeholders to create social change and preserve cultural values.	Basri, et al. [29] and Nurmayanti, et al. [31]
9	Social Entrepreneurship Orientation is an organizational capability that enables agricultural social enterprises to respond to environmental turbulence and sustainably improve social and financial performance.	Nurmayanti, et al. [31]
10	Social Entrepreneurship Orientation is understood as a social entrepreneurial orientation that contributes to business social sustainability and influences competitiveness and marketing performance.	Wahyudi, et al. [32]

Source: Authors' elaboration based on Scopus data (2025)

3. Method and Analysis

A systematic literature review employing a bibliometric approach quantitatively assesses literature to discern trends, patterns, and key research entities within a discipline. Using frameworks such as PRISMA, this approach ensures a comprehensive and replicable literature examination, providing a clear and transparent picture of the topic being studied [33, 34]. The inclusion criteria established were: (1) articles published up until December 24, 2025, (2) publications in English, and (3) focusing on the topic of Social Entrepreneurship Orientation. Bibliometric analysis was performed using VOSviewer, visualizing bibliographic data to analyze citation networks, author collaborations, and co-occurring keywords, revealing the intellectual structure and dynamics of the research field. The combination of bibliometric analysis and systematic review helps researchers synthesize empirical findings and map the landscape of research activity, including identifying key contributors and emerging trends [33]. The integration of both approaches provides a comprehensive understanding of the development, historical flow, and future direction of the research field, making it highly beneficial in interdisciplinary studies for gaining deeper insight [35]. Bibliometric analysis is also used for strategic purposes in scholarly publications, introduced to evaluate scientific journals based on their economic weight [36].

The preliminary phase in this scholarly examination involves the selection of keywords, which can be accomplished through a macro methodology (top-down), progressing from expansive search trajectories to more narrowly defined studies and topics. Consequently, after evaluating the limitations inherent in prior research and the scarcity of studies addressing Social Entrepreneurship Orientation, this investigation incorporates the keyword “Social Entrepreneurship Orientation” as a focal point within the article’s title, abstract, and keyword sections. Furthermore, the Scopus database is employed by researchers for a myriad of investigational purposes, including the execution of literature reviews, identifying subject-matter experts, and monitoring research trends.

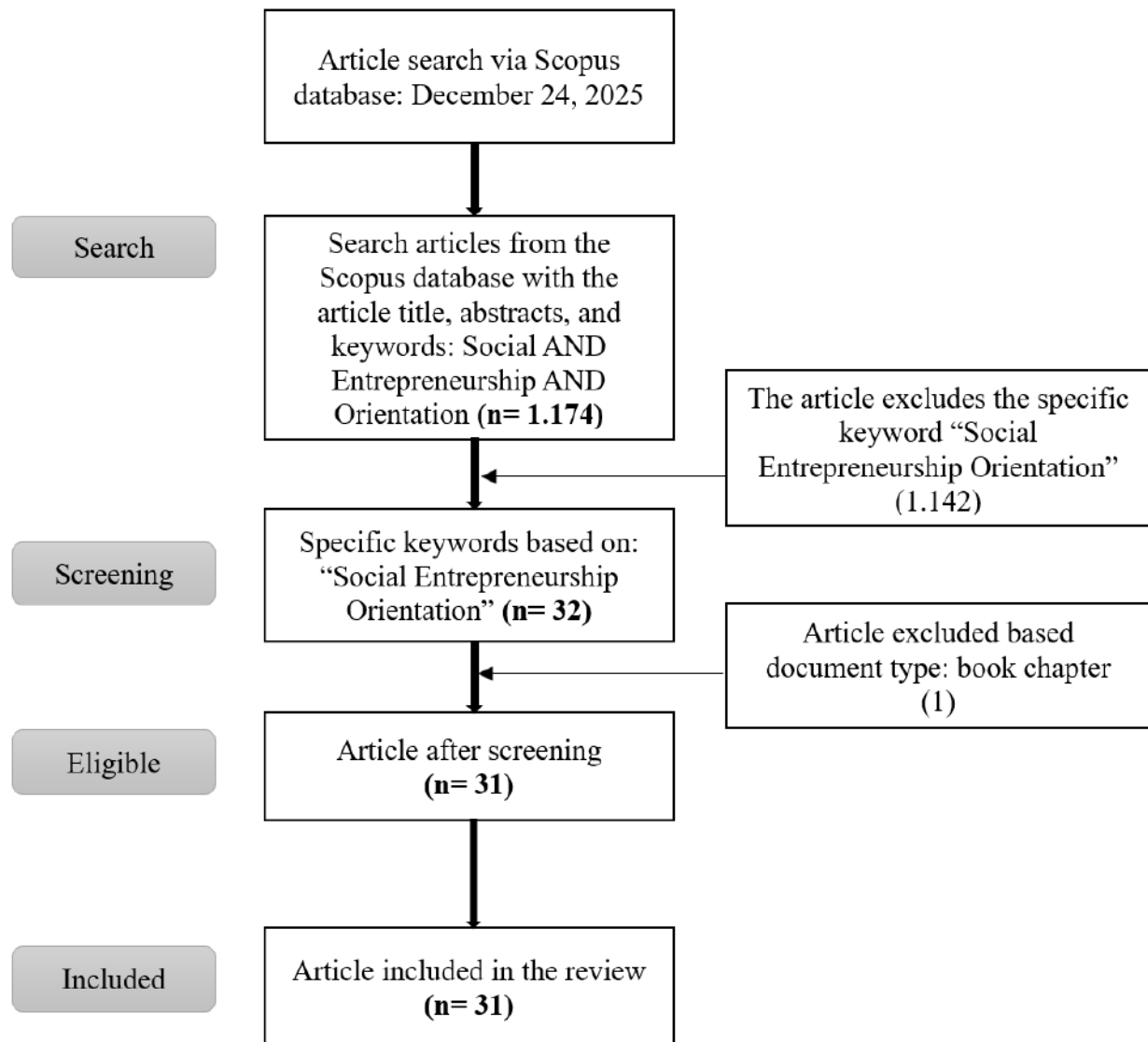


Figure 1. Systematic Literature Review information flow using PRISMA.
Source: Authors’ elaboration based on Scopus data (2025)

According to the search outcomes retrieved on December 24, 2025, from the Scopus database utilizing the article title, abstract, and keywords: “Social AND Entrepreneurship AND Orientation” across diverse academic disciplines, spanning from the earliest publication in 2017 to the most recent in

2025, the total number of articles about Social Entrepreneurship Orientation is 1,174 documents (refer to Figure 1). Following these findings, a screening process filters documents according to their classification. Articles are eliminated based on the document type: book chapter (1). The screening results, categorized by document types, yielded 31 articles. Is this document then further analyzed in this study to answer RQ1: Is the exploration of Social Entrepreneurship Orientation a subject that continues to hold significance for future scholarly inquiry? RQ2: What is the present allocation of research investigations related to Social Entrepreneurship Orientation? RQ3: What are the theoretical and practical implications from the perspective of future research?

4. Result and Discussion

The result of this study focuses on findings from 31 articles in the Scopus database on Social Entrepreneurship Orientation. This data is sourced from identifying the number of articles published, publications throughout the years, and journal sources. This study will also highlight the most influential in Social Entrepreneurship Orientation, including the authors, affiliations, and the countries involved.

RQ1: Is the exploration of Social Entrepreneurship Orientation a subject that continues to hold significance for future scholarly inquiry?

According to the data retrieved from the Scopus database, it has been ascertained that for more than five years, scholarly work about Social Entrepreneurship Orientation comprises 31 articles; this suggests that investigations into Social Entrepreneurship Orientation remain comparatively scarce, as illustrated in Figure 1. The exploration of Social Entrepreneurship Orientation commenced its progressive development in the last five years, specifically from 2017. The inaugural study was executed by Mokhnacheva and Tsvetkova [37] and was entitled “Social entrepreneurship orientation: development of a measurement scale,” which signified the advent of the term now recognized as Social Entrepreneurship Orientation. At present, the evolution of research on Social Entrepreneurship Orientation has begun to captivate a substantial number of scholars. Concentrating on the perception of social entrepreneurship orientation from external stakeholders, employee social entrepreneurship orientation, product innovation, social performance, and social entrepreneurship process [12, 24–26, 38]. Furthermore, Social Entrepreneurship Orientation contributes significantly to resilience in performance [30].

Recent international studies further emphasize that social entrepreneurship orientation is increasingly influenced by digital capabilities, institutional environments, and sustainability pressures, which shape its effectiveness across different contexts [21, 39]

Documents by year

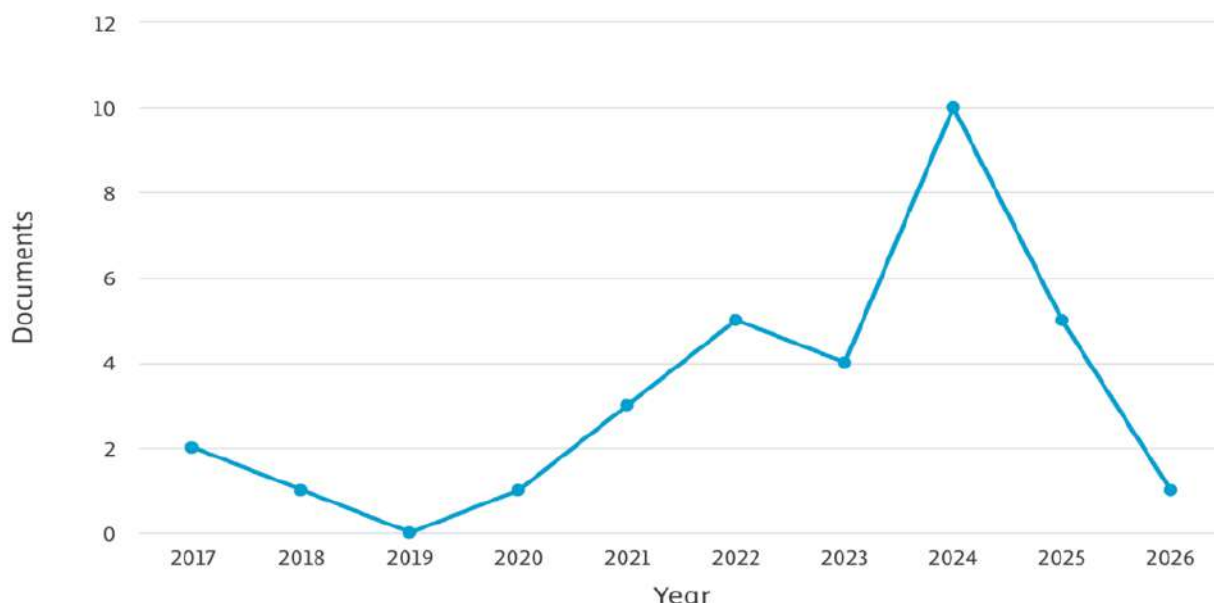


Figure 2.
Number of publications on Social Entrepreneurship Orientation.
Source: based on Scopus data (2025)

The figure illustrates the annual trend in the number of publications related to Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (SEO). Research output remained very limited during the early period (2017–2020), indicating that SEO was still in an emerging stage. Since 2021, the number of publications has increased more consistently, reaching a peak in 2024, which reflects growing scholarly interest in the topic. However, the decline in publications after 2024 suggests that the field has not yet reached maturity. Overall, this pattern highlights the urgency for further research to strengthen and sustain the development of SEO studies.

RQ2: What is the current allocation of research investigations related to Social Entrepreneurship Orientation?

The analysis of the distribution of Social Entrepreneurship Orientation research in 31 articles was conducted by categorizing the articles according to classifications such as nation, region, affiliation, source, and author, with a constraint of only the top 10 articles in each classification. Understanding the allocation of scholarship related to Social Entrepreneurship Orientation will benefit scholars and practitioners in clarifying the future research agenda, especially in the sustainable development of the Social Entrepreneurship Orientation paradigm.

First, the allocation of scholarly inquiry pertinent to Social Entrepreneurship Orientation categorized by nation or geographical area is dominated by China with 8 articles, Indonesia with 7 articles, the United Kingdom with 6 articles, Malaysia with 4 articles, Germany with 3 articles, Australia with 2 articles, Pakistan with 2 articles, Portugal with 2 articles, Spain with 2 articles, and the United States with 2 articles (see Figure 3).

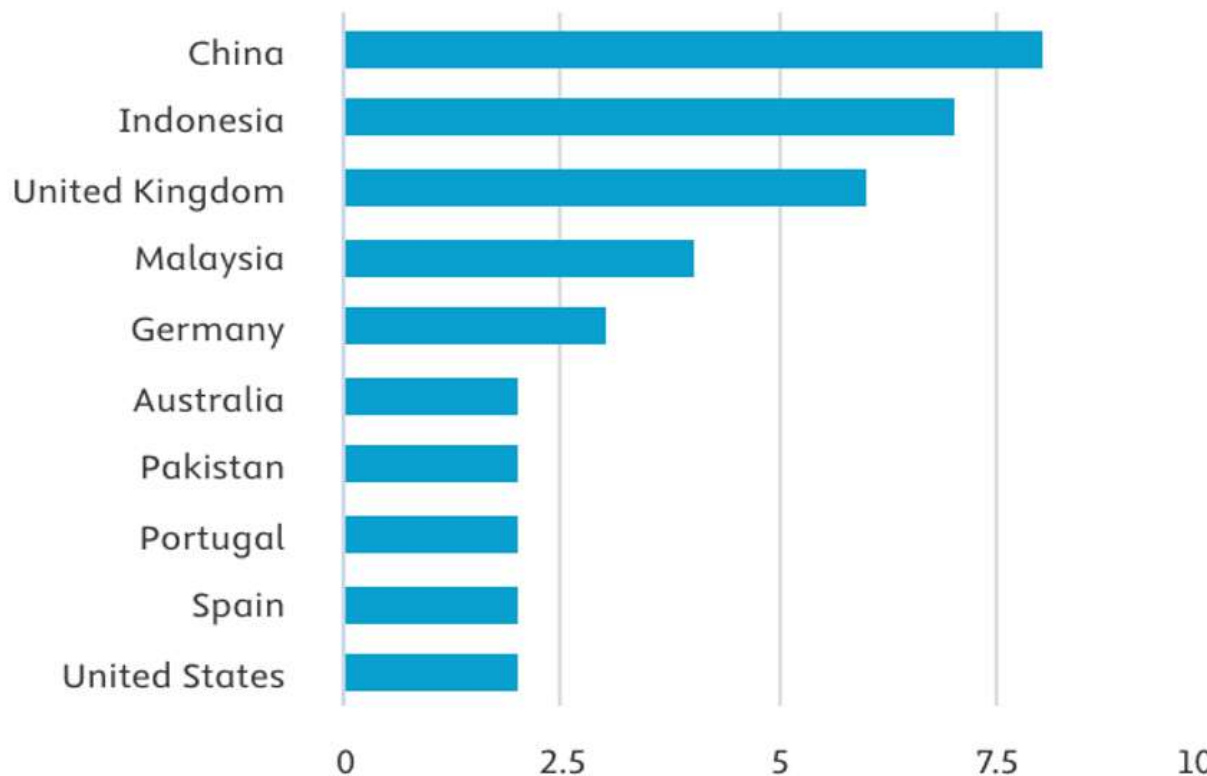


Figure 3.
Number of articles by country or territory (top 10 countries).
Source: based on Scopus data (2025)

The allocation of scholarly inquiries pertinent to Social Entrepreneurship Orientation, as categorized by nation or territory, reveals the preeminence of China with 8 manuscripts, followed by Indonesia with 7 manuscripts. Additionally, several other countries that have made significant contributions to this research include the United Kingdom with 6 articles, Malaysia with 4 articles, Germany with 3 articles, and Australia, Pakistan, Portugal, Spain, and the United States with 2 articles. These findings, based on the geographical distribution of research, can be used to conclude that studies on Social Entrepreneurship Orientation have global relevance and have attracted scholarly attention across various countries, both in developing and developed economies. Nevertheless, the concentration of research in a limited number of countries indicates substantial opportunities to expand SEO studies to underrepresented regions. Therefore, future research should be directed toward more diverse geographical contexts to enrich theoretical understanding, enhance the external validity of research findings, and support the development of more inclusive and sustainable social entrepreneurship practices on a global scale. Researchers will also analyze the relationships between the countries involved in Social Entrepreneurship Orientation research using VOSviewer software. This phase is imperative in formulating a systematic prospective research agenda. The examination's VOSviewer findings demonstrate the interrelations among nations in investigating the Social Entrepreneurship Orientation subject (see Figure 4).



Figure 4.
Network country visualization.
Source: Output VOSViewer software.

The VOSviewer visualization illustrates that international collaboration in Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (SEO) research remains limited and fragmented. Two main clusters are identified: a European cluster involving the United Kingdom, Germany, and Portugal, and an Asia-Pacific cluster dominated by Indonesia and Australia. Collaboration appears stronger within regional clusters than across regions, although a linkage between the two clusters exists. These findings indicate that SEO research collaboration is not yet globally integrated, highlighting opportunities to strengthen international research networks to enrich contextual perspectives and advance the development of SEO studies.

Second, the allocation of scholarships pertinent to Social Entrepreneurship Orientation, based on institutional affiliations, is mainly characterized by the University of Science and Technology of China with 4 articles, Loughborough University with 2 articles, Multimedia University with 2 articles, Technische Universität Clausthal with 2 articles, Durham University with 2 articles, University of Strathclyde with 2 articles, IPB University with 2 articles, Universitas Riau with 2 articles, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan with 2 articles, and the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad with 1 article (see Figure 5).

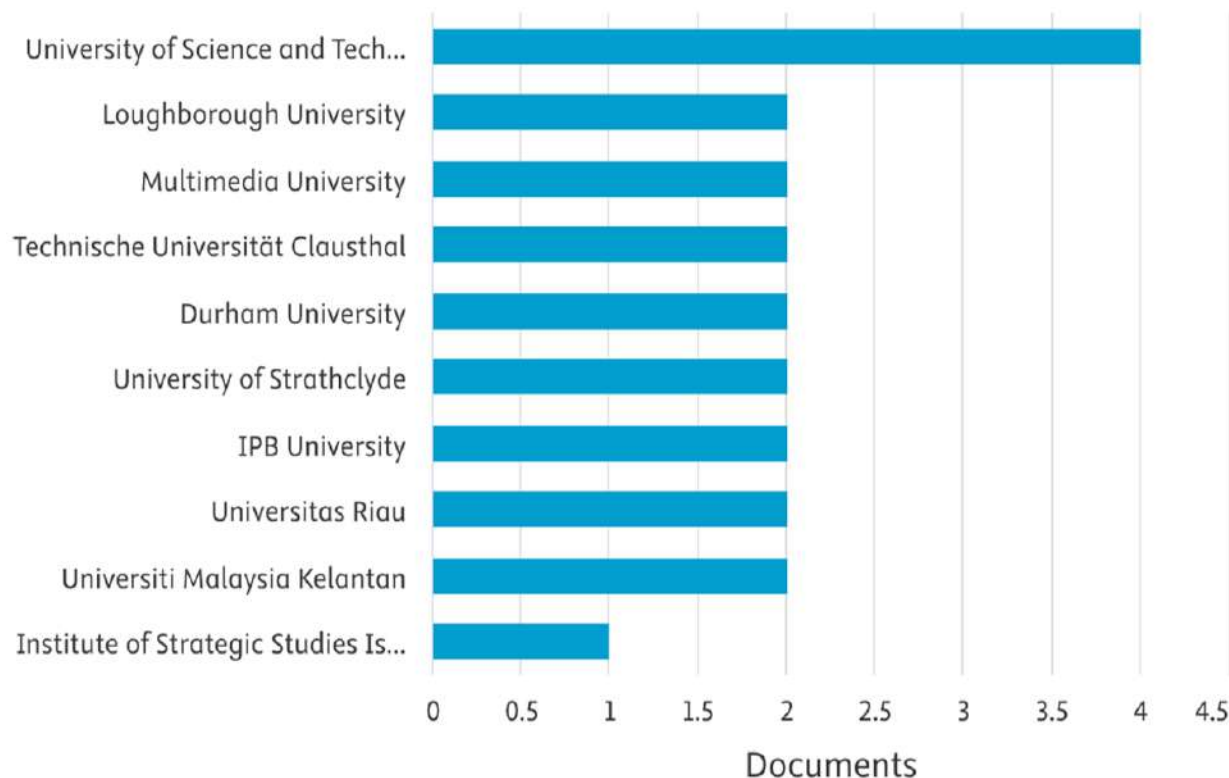


Figure 5.

Network country visualization.

Source: based on Scopus data (2025).

The distribution of Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (SEO) research based on institutional affiliations indicates that academic contributions are still concentrated within a limited number of institutions, with the University of Science and Technology of China emerging as the leading contributor. However, no single institution can be considered dominant in shaping knowledge production in this field, as most other institutions contribute only two articles or fewer. Moreover, the involvement of institutions from multiple regions, including Asia (China, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Pakistan), Europe (the United Kingdom and Germany), and other developing economies, demonstrates that SEO research spans across regions and institutions. This pattern suggests that SEO research is developing in a decentralized and collaborative manner, rather than being anchored to a single academic center.

Based on the distribution of institutional affiliations, it can be concluded that research on Social Entrepreneurship Orientation remains at an early stage of development and is dispersed across a wide range of academic institutions globally, without strong institutional dominance. This condition highlights substantial opportunities for other institutions, particularly those in developing countries, to contribute meaningfully to the advancement of SEO theory and practice. Furthermore, this distribution underscores the importance of cross-institutional and cross-national collaboration to accelerate the maturation of SEO research and to enrich contextual perspectives in future studies.

Third, the allocation of inquiries about Social Entrepreneurship Orientation based on the source is predominantly characterized by the International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior and Research with 2 articles, Technological Forecasting and Social Change with 2 articles, Acta Psychologica with 1 article, Problems and Perspectives in Management with 2 articles, and Frontiers in Psychology with 3 articles (see Figure 6).

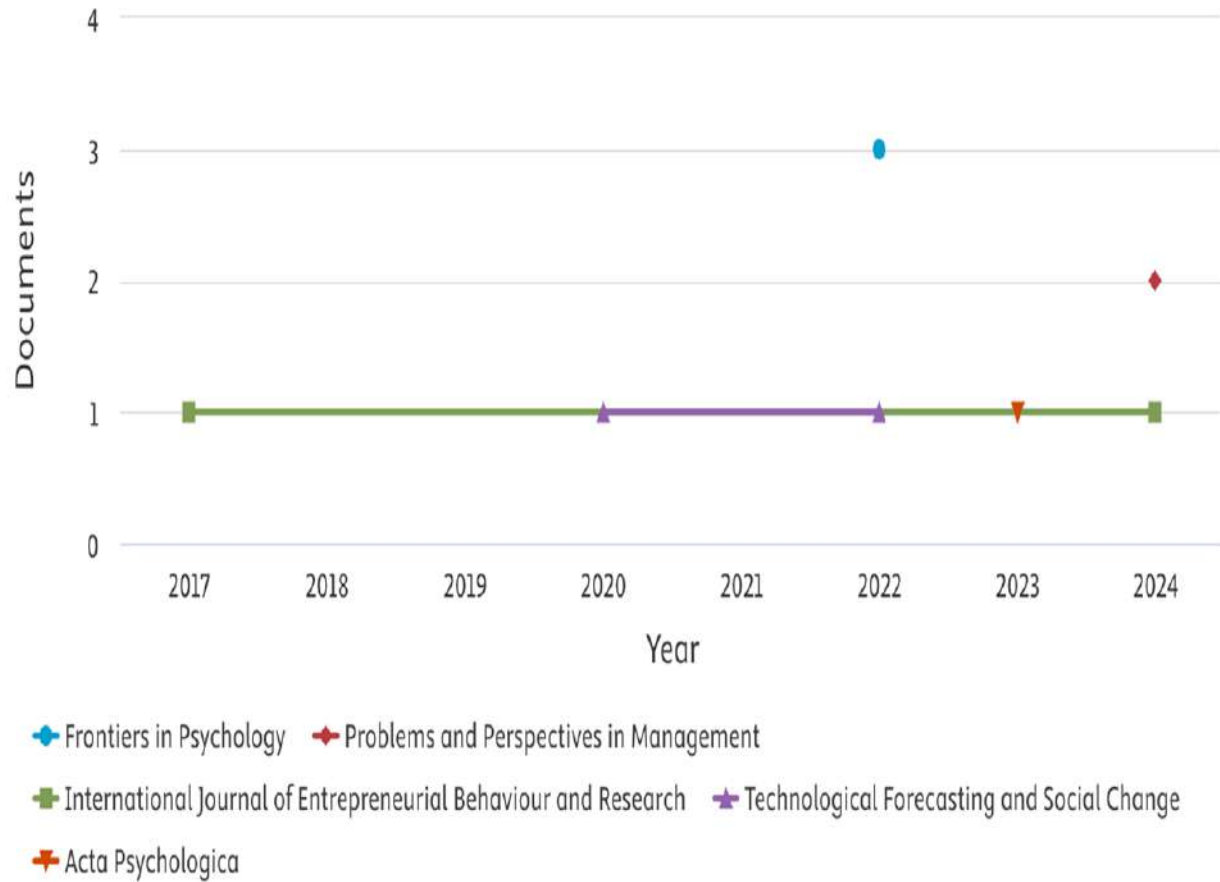


Figure 6.
Number of articles by sources (top 10 sources).
Source: based on Scopus data (2025).

The distribution of Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (SEO) research based on publication sources indicates that SEO studies are dispersed across a variety of interdisciplinary journals, with no single journal serving as a dominant outlet. Although *Frontiers in Psychology* emerges as the journal with the highest number of publications, the overall number of articles remains relatively limited. Other journals, such as the *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior and Research*, *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, and *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, each contribute only two articles. This diversity of publication outlets reflects the multidisciplinary nature of SEO, encompassing perspectives from entrepreneurship, management, psychology, and technological innovation. However, the low concentration of publications also suggests that SEO has not yet established a clear core journal that consistently anchors theoretical and empirical development in the field.

Based on the distribution of publication sources, it can be concluded that research on Social Entrepreneurship Orientation is widely dispersed across journals and academic disciplines, without strong dominance by any particular outlet. This pattern indicates that SEO remains an emerging research field that has not yet been fully institutionalized within a single academic domain. Consequently, substantial opportunities remain for future research to strengthen the positioning of SEO within leading entrepreneurship and management journals, while also fostering interdisciplinary integration to advance the theoretical and practical development of SEO.

Fourth, the distribution of research related to Social Entrepreneurship Orientation based on authors reveals no clear dominance. Among the top 10 authors, 7 of them [29-31, 40-43] have each written 2 articles, Horsey and Niemand [44] have each written 3 articles, while only one author [24] has written four articles (see Figure 7).

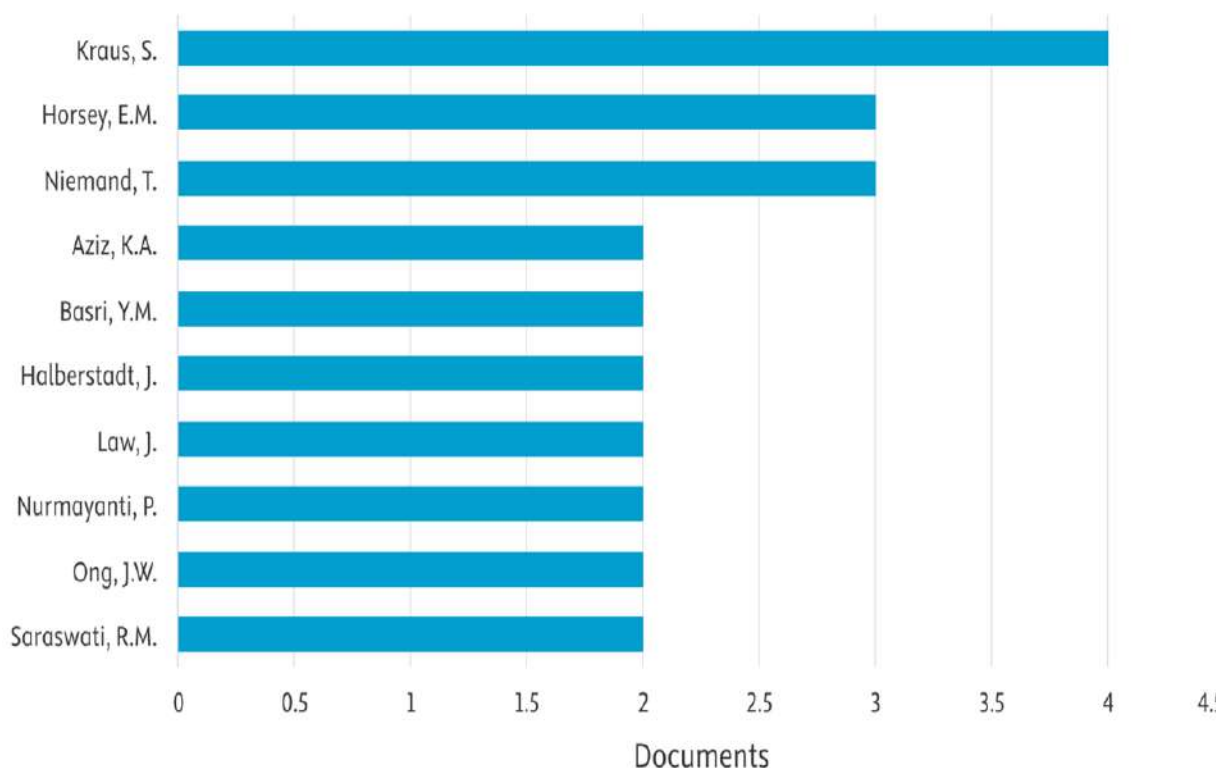


Figure 7.

Count of publications by author (top 10 authors).

Source: based on Scopus data (2025).

Source: Kraus, et al. [24]; Horsey and Niemand [44]; Aziz, et al. [40]; Basri, et al. [29]; Halberstadt [41]; Law, et al. [30]; Nurmawanti, et al. [31]; Ong, et al. [42]; Saraswati, et al. [43].

The distribution of Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (SEO) research based on authorship indicates the absence of clear authorial dominance within the field. Among the top ten contributing authors, the majority have produced a relatively similar number of publications, with seven authors each contributing two articles and two authors contributing three articles. Only one author, Kraus et al. [24], stands out with four publications, suggesting a slightly higher level of contribution but not sufficient to establish strong intellectual dominance. This pattern reflects a relatively dispersed authorship structure, indicating that SEO research is developed by a broad community of scholars rather than driven by a small group of leading researchers.

Based on the authorship distribution, it can be concluded that research on Social Entrepreneurship Orientation remains in an early and evolving stage, characterized by a decentralized and inclusive scholarly landscape. The lack of strong author dominance highlights substantial opportunities for new and emerging researchers to contribute meaningfully to the development of SEO theory and empirical research. Furthermore, this pattern underscores the potential for greater collaboration and cumulative knowledge building, which may facilitate the maturation of SEO as a well-established research domain in the future.

RQ3: What are the theoretical and practical implications from the perspective of future research?

The examination was undertaken on 31 manuscripts amassed from the Scopus repository. VOSviewer was employed to illustrate that the results may possess theoretical and pragmatic ramifications for forthcoming inquiries into Social Entrepreneurship Orientation. The metadata analysis results using VOSviewer will help researchers and practitioners better understand the assumptions and findings related to Social Entrepreneurship Orientation. The bibliometric analysis results using VOSviewer can show which variables have been extensively researched by previous researchers and which variables have not been explored much, serving as a foundation for future studies. From a practitioner's perspective, the literature analysis results using VOSviewer will assist practitioners in implementing Social Entrepreneurship Orientation sustainably in the future and promoting the Social Entrepreneurship Orientation style for organizations worldwide.

From Figure 8, the occurrences of social entrepreneurship orientation (27), social entrepreneurship (17), firm performance (13), social performance (12), industrial performance (12), financial performance (10), social enterprise (9), entrepreneurial orientation (8), social innovation (3), and performance (2). Finally, these 10 most frequent keywords are shown in Table 2.

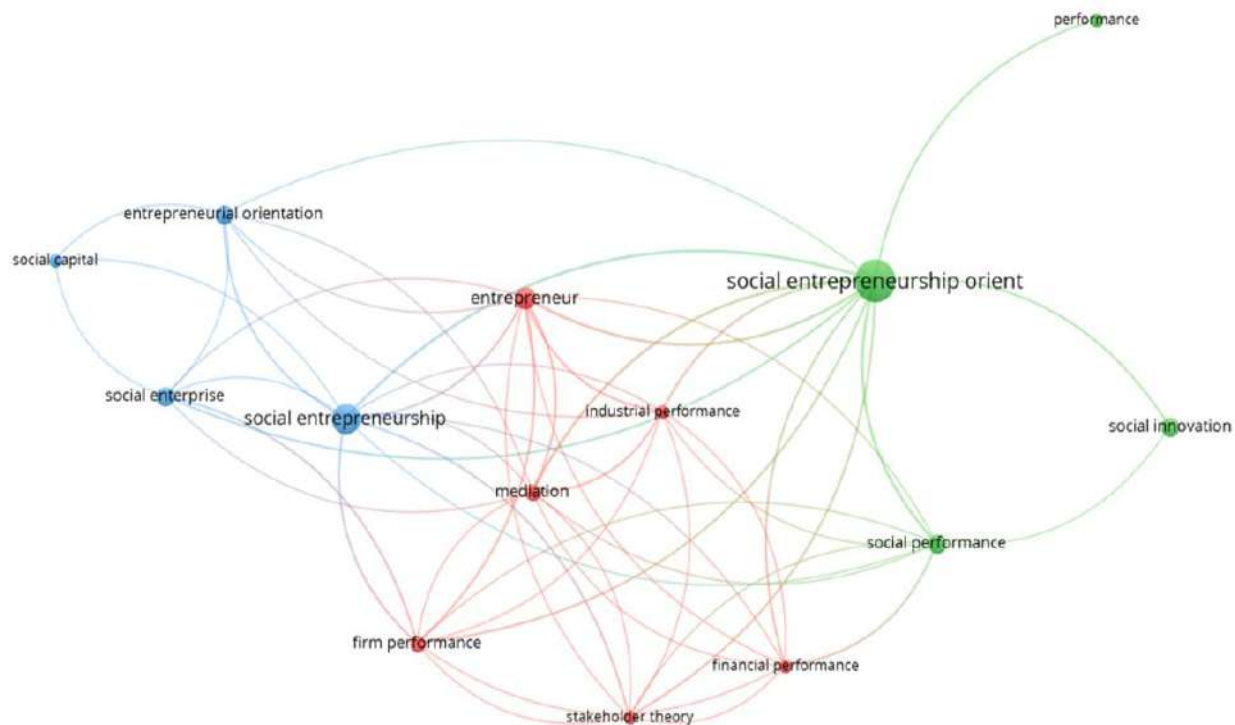


Figure 8.
Co-occurrence framework and representation of key terms.
Source: Output VOSviewer software.

The figure presents a VOSviewer-based visualization of the conceptual relationships among key variables in Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (SEO) research. Social entrepreneurship orientation emerges as the central node, showing strong connections with performance-related variables such as social performance, financial performance, and overall performance, indicating that SEO research predominantly focuses on its impact on organizational outcomes. The linkage between SEO and social innovation further highlights the role of SEO in fostering innovation aimed at social value creation.

Another cluster connects SEO with concepts such as entrepreneur, stakeholder theory, and mediation, suggesting that many studies examine intervening mechanisms to explain how SEO influences performance. Additionally, the cluster comprising entrepreneurial orientation, social

entrepreneurship, social enterprise, and social capital reflects the conceptual integration of SEO within the broader entrepreneurship literature. Overall, this mapping indicates that existing SEO research is largely centered on performance outcomes and mediating mechanisms. At the same time, future studies may expand toward contextual, institutional, and multilevel variables to advance theoretical and empirical understanding of SEO.

Table 2.

Keywords provided by authors.

Rank	Keyword	Total link strength
1	Social entrepreneurship orientation	27
2	Social entrepreneurship	17
3	Firm performance	13
4	Social performance	12
5	Industrial performance	12
6	Financial performance	10
7	Social enterprise	9
8	Entrepreneurial orientation	8
9	Social innovation	3
10	Performance	2

Source: Output VOSviewer software

The keyword ranking indicates that Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (SEO) is the most central concept, with the highest total link strength, confirming its role as the core focus of the literature. The strong connections between SEO, social entrepreneurship, and various core performance indicators (firm, social, industrial, and financial performance) suggest that SEO research primarily concentrates on its impact on organizational performance. In contrast, the relatively weak linkage of social innovation and overall performance indicates that these areas remain underexplored, highlighting opportunities for future research to expand the theoretical and empirical development of SEO.

Based on the overall analysis of publication trends, geographical distribution, institutional affiliations, journal sources, authorship, collaboration networks, and keyword mapping, it can be concluded that research on Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (SEO) remains at a developing stage and is fragmented in nature. Although the number of publications has increased significantly since 2021, SEO research remains concentrated in a limited number of countries, institutions, and thematic areas, with a primary focus on the relationship between SEO and organizational performance. Keyword mapping further reveals that social innovation, long-term performance dynamics, and institutional and cultural contexts remain relatively underexplored. These conditions highlight conceptual, methodological, and contextual gaps in the SEO literature.

Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in its systematic and comprehensive synthesis of the SEO literature by integrating development patterns, conceptual structures, and global research distribution. Future research is encouraged to adopt longitudinal and cross-national comparative approaches and to expand the exploration of contextual variables to strengthen the sustainable development of SEO theory and practice. Empirical studies indicate that Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (SEO) has strong relevance across various countries and contexts, both in developing and developed economies. Cross-regional research conducted in Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Americas suggests that SEO plays a significant role in enhancing social and financial performance, innovation, organizational resilience, and the sustainability of social enterprises. However, the underlying mechanisms and impacts are shaped by differences in institutional, cultural, and industry contexts [23, 25, 30].

The dimensions of Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (SEO) portray SEO as a multidimensional construct that represents both the strategic orientation and behavioral patterns of organizations in integrating entrepreneurial orientation principles into the process of social value creation. Unlike conventional entrepreneurial orientation, SEO emphasizes balancing social objectives with economic sustainability through innovative, proactive, and risk-taking behaviors within a social context [23-25].

The literature indicates that SEO is not only manifested through social innovation and opportunity recognition but also through hybrid value orientation, stakeholder engagement, and the ability to adapt to dynamic institutional and environmental contexts [12, 27, 29]. Accordingly, the visualization of SEO dimensions underscores that SEO constitutes a dynamic and context-dependent organizational capability that plays a critical role in enhancing social and financial performance, competitive advantage, and the sustainability of social enterprises across diverse sectors and countries [28, 31, 45] (see Figure 9).



Figure 9.

Social Entrepreneurship Orientation Dimensions.

Source: Adapted from previous research Dorhetso [12]; Alalwan, et al. [23]; Kraus, et al. [24]; Liu, et al. [25]; Zafar, et al. [26]; Xiabao, et al. [27]; Do Adro, et al. [28]; Law, et al. [30]; Wahyudi, et al. [32] and Nurmayanti, et al. [31].

Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (SEO) fundamentally represents a strategic-behavioral orientation that embeds the principles of entrepreneurial orientation into the process of social value creation, enabling organizations to balance social missions with economic sustainability. In the literature, SEO is understood not merely as an adaptation of conventional entrepreneurial orientation but as a construct that has evolved to explain entrepreneurial behavior within a social context [23-25].

4.1. Social Innovativeness

Social innovativeness represents a core dimension of Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (SEO), reflecting the ability and propensity of social organizations to develop and implement new ideas, products, services, or processes to address social problems effectively. Within the SEO framework, innovation is not merely oriented toward technical novelty but is primarily directed toward the creation of sustainable social value aligned with the organization's mission [32]. The literature indicates that social innovativeness is closely associated with organizational proactiveness in anticipating future social needs, thereby enabling social interventions to be implemented more promptly and relevantly than conventional approaches [46]. Moreover, this dimension requires effective risk management, as social innovation is often undertaken under conditions of resource uncertainty and complex environments, making the balance between experimentation and organizational sustainability critically important [32].

Furthermore, social innovativeness is shaped by a strong social mission orientation and a long-term social vision held by social entrepreneurs. A social mission orientation ensures that innovative activities remain focused on generating social impact rather than purely economic gains [47]. Meanwhile, a social vision provides strategic direction that guides organizations in selecting and developing innovations aligned with long-term social change objectives [48]. In resource-constrained contexts, social innovativeness is also supported by an effectual orientation, which refers to the ability to creatively and flexibly leverage available resources to generate valuable social solutions [32]. Consequently, social innovativeness within SEO constitutes a multidimensional construct integrating innovation, proactiveness, risk management, social vision, and mission orientation, which collectively play a crucial role in enhancing social performance and the sustainability of social enterprises [46, 48].

4.2. Social Proactiveness

Social proactiveness constitutes a fundamental dimension of Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (SEO), reflecting the forward-looking posture and initiative of social enterprises to anticipate future social needs and act upon emerging social opportunities before they become critical [32, 49]. Within the SEO framework, social proactiveness goes beyond reactive problem-solving and emphasizes deliberate, change-oriented actions aimed at shaping social environments and creating sustainable social value [50]. This proactive stance enables social enterprises to identify unmet community needs early, design preventive or anticipatory interventions, and strategically position themselves as agents of social change, thereby enhancing both social innovation and value co-creation processes [51].

Moreover, social proactiveness is closely intertwined with innovativeness and risk management, as proactive social entrepreneurs are more inclined to support experimentation and implement novel solutions under conditions of uncertainty [32, 49]. Effective risk management plays a supportive role by allowing organizations to pursue forward-looking initiatives without compromising organizational sustainability, particularly in resource-constrained contexts [52]. In addition, a strong social mission orientation acts as a motivational anchor that aligns proactive behavior with long-term social objectives, ensuring that anticipatory actions remain mission-driven rather than opportunistic [50]. This proactive behavior is further reinforced by an effectual orientation, which enables social enterprises to flexibly leverage available resources and partnerships to adapt to changing social conditions and seize emerging opportunities. Collectively, these elements position social proactiveness as a strategic-behavioral capability that strengthens social enterprises' capacity to innovate, sustain impact, and achieve long-term social and organizational performance [32, 52].

4.3. Social Risk-Taking

Social risk-taking represents a core dimension of Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (SEO) and reflects the willingness of social enterprises to engage in initiatives characterized by uncertainty in pursuit of social impact. Unlike conventional entrepreneurial risk-taking, social risk-taking emphasizes accepting social, financial, and institutional uncertainties to address complex social problems and

achieve sustainability outcomes [32]. Prior studies indicate that risk-taking motives significantly influence individuals' intentions to engage in social entrepreneurship, particularly in emerging economies, where uncertainty related to funding, legitimacy, and policy environments is pronounced [49]. At the organizational level, social risk-taking, when combined with innovativeness and proactiveness, has been shown to positively affect sustainability performance, highlighting its strategic importance for social enterprises operating in volatile contexts [52].

Furthermore, social risk-taking is shaped by a combination of risk management capabilities, cognitive and personality antecedents, and contextual influences. Effective risk management plays a moderating role by strengthening the positive effects of sustainability-oriented and market-oriented strategies on social entrepreneurial self-efficacy, while also preventing excessive exposure that may undermine organizational stability [53]. At the individual level, cognitive factors such as opportunity perception and strategic judgment, along with personality traits including creativity, openness to change, and achievement motivation, contribute to higher propensities for social investment risk-taking [54]. Additionally, cultural and institutional environments such as national uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and access to resources significantly condition risk-taking behaviors in social enterprises [55, 56]. Social risk-taking is therefore closely intertwined with proactiveness and innovativeness, functioning as a complementary capability that enables social entrepreneurs to pursue novel solutions, anticipate future social challenges, and sustain impact despite uncertainty [32].

4.4. Hybrid Value Orientation

Hybrid Value Orientation in Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (SEO) refers to the strategic capability of social enterprises to create social and economic value simultaneously. The literature consistently emphasizes that this orientation is rooted in a strong social vision, where social mission serves as the core driver of organizational decision-making while remaining aligned with long-term financial sustainability [48, 57]. This sustainability orientation encourages social enterprises to develop viable business models that support social objectives without compromising economic performance, reflecting the concept of blended or hybrid value creation [58]. Hybrid Value Orientation is reinforced by entrepreneurial capabilities such as innovativeness, proactiveness, and risk management. These capabilities enable social enterprises to identify and exploit opportunities that align social impact with economic viability while remaining adaptive to environmental change [48, 50]. Innovation in products, services, and processes functions as a key mechanism for enhancing social impact, operational efficiency, and competitive advantage [59, 60].

Furthermore, Hybrid Value Orientation is strengthened through stakeholder collaboration and value co-creation. Engaging communities, business partners, and public institutions allows social enterprises to mobilize collective resources, enhance social legitimacy, and more effectively achieve dual objectives [60, 61]. In contemporary contexts, digital orientation has become increasingly important, as digital technologies improve the alignment between social and economic logics, expand impact reach, and enhance organizational efficiency [62, 63]. Hybrid Value Orientation represents the core of SEO by enabling social enterprises to manage tensions between social mission and market demands. By integrating social vision, financial sustainability, innovation, collaboration, and digital adaptation, this orientation serves as a critical foundation for organizational performance and long-term sustainability in complex and dynamic environments [48, 64].

4.5. Opportunity Recognition for Social Value

Opportunity Recognition for Social Value within Social Entrepreneurship Orientation refers to the organizational and individual capability to identify, interpret, and exploit opportunities that address social problems while generating sustainable social value. The literature emphasizes that this process begins with entrepreneurial alertness, namely the ability to notice signals, information, and unmet needs embedded in social contexts, which enables social entrepreneurs to recognize potential solutions where others may not [65]. This alertness is strongly shaped by prior knowledge and experience, as

accumulated professional, social, and contextual experiences help entrepreneurs interpret information more effectively and identify viable social opportunities [65, 66].

Furthermore, social networks play a central role in opportunity recognition for social value. Networks provide access to diverse information, resources, and perspectives that enhance awareness of social needs and emerging possibilities [67, 68]. Through interaction, information, and knowledge exchange, social entrepreneurs are better positioned to detect trends, validate ideas, and co-develop solutions with communities and partners [69]. Equally important is social awareness, which reflects sensitivity to societal challenges and community needs; this awareness allows social problems themselves to be reframed as entrepreneurial opportunities for positive change [70, 71]. Opportunity recognition is influenced by an entrepreneurial mindset characterized by creativity, innovation, and a willingness to act under uncertainty, enabling social entrepreneurs to transform complex social challenges into actionable ventures [70]. Finally, contextual factors, such as institutional voids, cultural norms, and the presence of role models, shape where and how opportunities are recognized by highlighting gaps in social provision and areas requiring intervention [71]. Collectively, these components demonstrate that opportunity recognition for social value is a multidimensional, context-dependent process that integrates cognitive, relational, and environmental elements to support the creation of sustainable social impact.

4.6. Stakeholder Engagement Orientation

Stakeholder engagement orientation in social entrepreneurship refers to the organizational capability and strategic tendency to systematically identify, engage, and manage relationships with diverse stakeholders to support social value creation and long-term sustainability. The literature emphasizes that this process begins with the identification and prioritization of key stakeholders, including customers, employees, partners, investors, communities, and government actors who significantly influence the social mission of the organization. Effective stakeholder mapping and prioritization enable social enterprises to align their strategic objectives with diverse stakeholder expectations [72, 73].

Furthermore, building and managing stakeholder relationships constitute the core of stakeholder engagement orientation. These relationships are developed through continuous communication, collaboration, and co-creation processes, positioning stakeholders not merely as supporters but as active partners in social value creation. Stakeholder engagement is inherently dynamic and must adapt to changing social, economic, and institutional contexts faced by social enterprises [72]. In this regard, governance and accountability mechanisms play a crucial role in maintaining organizational legitimacy, ensuring stakeholder interests are represented, and preventing deviations from social norms and mission objectives.

The literature highlights the importance of integrating stakeholder feedback into organizational decision-making processes. Feedback mechanisms allow social enterprises to adjust their strategies and operations in response to stakeholder needs, thereby strengthening trust and long-term commitment [74]. Stakeholder engagement also supports the balancing of social and financial goals, as active stakeholder involvement helps organizations manage tensions between economic sustainability and social mission fulfillment, reducing the risk of mission drift [74]. Moreover, communication and transparency are fundamental to sustaining stakeholder engagement. Clear and regular reporting on organizational goals, achievements, and challenges enhances accountability and reinforces social legitimacy [75]. Finally, emotional intelligence is increasingly recognized as a critical component of stakeholder engagement orientation, particularly in managing complex and sometimes conflicting stakeholder interests. The ability to understand, manage, and respond to stakeholders' emotions enables social enterprises to build resilient, trust-based relationships that support sustainable social impact [76]. Collectively, stakeholder engagement orientation represents a strategic capability that allows social enterprises to integrate diverse stakeholder interests into the social entrepreneurship process, thereby enhancing social impact and organizational sustainability over time.

4.7. Contextual Adaptability

Contextual adaptability in Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (SEO) refers to the ability of social organizations to adjust their strategies, structures, and entrepreneurial practices in response to dynamic social, economic, and institutional environments. The literature indicates that this adaptive capability is grounded in a clear social vision and a strong sustainability orientation, which function as strategic anchors guiding organizational actions to remain aligned with social missions while ensuring long-term financial viability [48]. A well-defined social vision enables organizations to respond to external changes without losing focus on social value creation, while sustainability orientation ensures that adaptive strategies remain economically feasible.

Furthermore, contextual adaptability is strongly influenced by entrepreneurial capabilities, including innovativeness, proactiveness, and risk management. Dwivedi and Weerawardena [46] emphasize that social enterprises must combine entrepreneurial behavior with strategic flexibility to cope with uncertainty and resource constraints. Innovativeness allows organizations to develop novel solutions to social problems, whereas proactiveness supports the anticipation of emerging social needs and market opportunities. At the same time, effective risk management is essential for navigating environmental turbulence without undermining organizational stability [77]. Contextual adaptability is also reflected in effectual orientation and strategic flexibility, particularly in resource-constrained and high-pressure environments. An effectual approach enables social enterprises to creatively leverage available resources and adapt goals as circumstances evolve [32].

Research on organizational resilience highlights that operational flexibility and the ability to pivot quickly are critical for sustaining performance during crises and periods of environmental turbulence [78]. Strategic flexibility further allows social enterprises to respond adaptively to competitive and institutional pressures [79]. Stakeholder engagement and sensitivity to institutional contexts play a crucial role in contextual adaptability. Contextual entrepreneurship theory underscores that interactions with stakeholders such as communities, governments, and strategic partners enhance social enterprises' ability to gain legitimacy, access resources, and mobilize support in changing environments [80]. External pressures from customers and competitors may also mediate the relationship between social entrepreneurship orientation and competitive agility, requiring organizations to adjust their strategies [81]. Overall, contextual adaptability in SEO represents a multidimensional capability that integrates social vision, sustainability orientation, entrepreneurial behavior, strategic flexibility, and stakeholder engagement. This capability enables social enterprises to remain relevant, resilient, and effective in fostering social innovation and achieving sustainable social and financial performance amid dynamic and uncertain environments [79, 82].

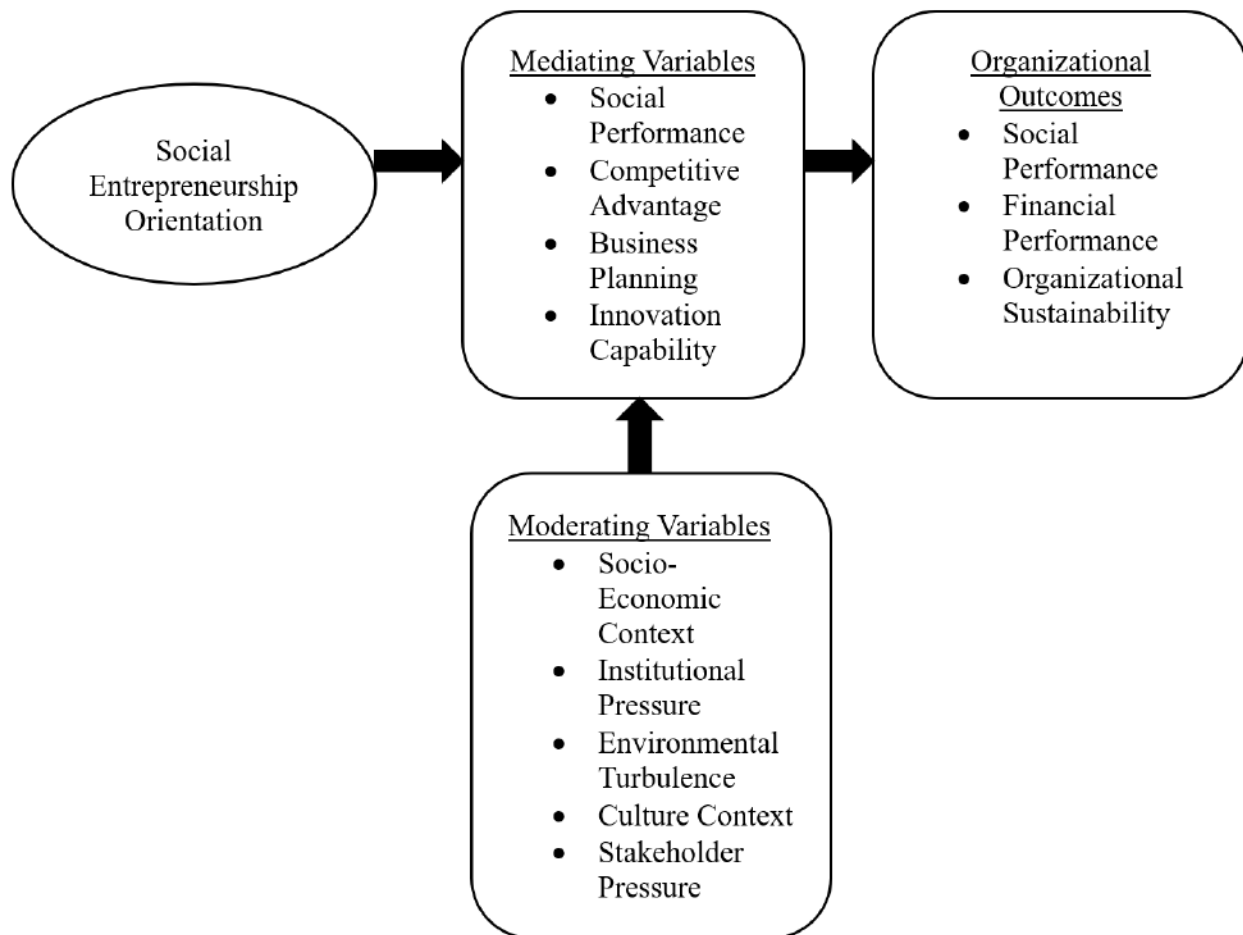


Figure 10.

Conceptual Model of Social Entrepreneurship Orientation.

Source: The author's elaboration is based on previous research.

This article also presents a conceptual model of Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (see Figure 10). The conceptual figure above positions Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (SEO) as a strategic and behavioral organizational orientation shaped by multiple dimensions of social entrepreneurship and serving as a core mechanism for generating organizational performance outcomes. At the first level, SEO is constructed from seven key dimensions: social innovativeness, social proactiveness, social risk-taking, hybrid social–economic value orientation, opportunity recognition for social value, stakeholder engagement orientation, and contextual adaptability. These dimensions represent how the principles of entrepreneurial orientation are contextually embedded in social value creation processes, enabling social enterprises to balance social missions with economic sustainability in an integrated manner [24, 25, 83].

SEO is further conceptualized as a central construct that directly and indirectly influences organizational outcomes, which in this framework include social performance, financial performance, organizational sustainability, and competitive advantage. In this model, competitive advantage is treated as a single, unified outcome variable rather than a duplicated construct, reflecting the idea that competitive advantage in social enterprises emerges from the organization's ability to integrate social innovation, hybrid value orientation, and adaptive responses to environmental conditions [24, 28]. Accordingly, SEO contributes not only to enhanced social impact but also to stronger competitive positioning and long-term organizational resilience.

The relationship between SEO and organizational outcomes is further explained through the presence of mediating variables, including business planning, innovation capability, social performance, and competitive advantage. These mediators capture the mechanisms through which SEO is translated into concrete organizational decisions, processes, and capabilities. Prior studies suggest that SEO fosters more adaptive business planning, strengthens innovation capabilities, and enhances competitive advantage, which in turn leads to improved social and financial performance [24, 30, 33].

The conceptual framework highlights the role of moderating variables, underscoring the contextual and dynamic nature of SEO. Factors such as socio-economic context, institutional pressure, environmental turbulence, cultural context, and stakeholder pressure are positioned as boundary conditions that may strengthen or weaken the effects of SEO on organizational performance. The literature emphasizes that the effectiveness of SEO is highly contingent on institutional and environmental conditions, particularly in sectors such as agriculture, cooperatives, and small and medium-sized enterprises, where environmental turbulence and stakeholder pressures significantly shape strategic outcomes [29, 30, 33].

Overall, this conceptual framework underscores SEO as a multidimensional, context-sensitive, and performance-oriented organizational capability that bridges social entrepreneurial dimensions with organizational outcomes through mediating mechanisms and is conditioned by environmental and institutional moderators. The model provides a strong theoretical foundation for explaining performance variation across social enterprises operating in different sectors and national contexts, while also offering a robust basis for future empirical testing that is more integrative and contextually grounded in the study of Social Entrepreneurship Orientation [24, 30, 83].

5. Conclusion

This investigation examines 31 academic publications from the Scopus repository and elucidates five principal conclusions. Firstly, the results of the Systematic Literature Review and bibliometric analysis indicate that research on Social Entrepreneurship Orientation (SEO) is still at a developing stage. Although the number of publications has increased in recent years, SEO studies remain limited and fragmented, confirming that this topic continues to be relevant and promising for future scholarly inquiry. Secondly, the geographical, institutional, and publication-source distribution of SEO research remains concentrated in a limited number of countries and institutions, with relatively low levels of international collaboration. This pattern highlights substantial opportunities to expand SEO research into underrepresented regions and contexts.

Third, conceptually, SEO is understood as a strategic and behavioral orientation that integrates entrepreneurial principles into social value creation. It is a multidimensional and context-dependent construct encompassing social innovativeness, proactiveness, social risk-taking, hybrid value orientation, stakeholder engagement, and organizational adaptability. Fourth, the synthesized literature demonstrates that SEO positively contributes to social performance, financial performance, and organizational sustainability. However, these effects are highly contingent on institutional, socio-economic, and environmental contexts, indicating that the relationship between SEO and performance cannot be generalized without considering contextual factors. Fifth, this study underscores the theoretical contribution of SEO as a critical organizational capability within social entrepreneurship and provides a foundation for future research. Subsequent studies are encouraged to adopt longitudinal, cross-national, and context-sensitive approaches to strengthen the theoretical and practical development of Social Entrepreneurship Orientation.

Finally, the researchers also concede that this examination possesses certain constraints. First, this inquiry solely employs publications extracted from the Scopus database, which may exhibit limitations regarding generalizability. Subsequent investigations are anticipated to amalgamate findings from Scopus and the Web of Science database to enhance the comprehensiveness of the research outcomes. Future inquiries could delve into domains within this discipline to augment the findings. Lastly, although the researchers have implemented a rigorous methodology to mitigate interpretational bias,

forthcoming studies could employ novel research techniques that complement the results of this investigation.

Transparency:

The authors confirm that the manuscript is an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study; that no vital features of the study have been omitted; and that any discrepancies from the study as planned have been explained. This study followed all ethical practices during writing.

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