

## The Determination of Social Needs as Drivers of Social Innovation

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### ABSTRACT:

Social innovation has been contextualized as a new way of resolving deeply entrenched development issues. The identification and resolution of social needs is said to be the driving force of social innovation. With features such as sustainability and scalability, social innovation has the potential to change the way we perceive and engage with development in the future. This research takes a critical look at how the social needs as a means to an end of social innovation, is identified. Previous research did not investigate the methodology of how these needs were identified and the question then arose as to how responsive the corresponding resolutions could be in resolving the need.

**Keywords:** *Social innovation, Social entrepreneurship, Social needs, People-centered development, Development theory, Need identification, Social value, Social conditions*

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### INTRODUCTION

After more than two decades since the end of apartheid, many South Africans are still subject to extreme living conditions and inequality. In 2009, it was reported that more than half of the South African population were living in poverty nationally, with some provinces showing poverty levels as high as 75% of the population (STATSSA Living Conditions Survey, 2015). Social innovation presents itself as a novel way of resolving deeply entrenched societal challenges, and the challenges today could not be more pressing (Dawson, 2010).

In September 2000, the United Nations Millennium Declaration was adopted as a global partnership aimed at reducing extreme poverty. The declaration set out targets that made up the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Although progress is being realised in some MDGs, others such as access to basic healthcare

services, nutrition or sanitation remain subject to serious shortfalls (World Health Statistics Report, 2010).

*“At this point in South Africa's history it will be particularly important to recognise the great national need for social innovation, as our country tries to redefine itself and to create a brighter future for all of its citizens”*

White Paper, 1996: 20

A curiosity in exploring innovative ways of resolving social challenges led to the discovery of the concept of social innovation. This concept by definition is driven by social needs, but an overarching theme in the literature exposed that there was no current inquiry into how these social needs were identified.

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### **Theoretical Perspectives of Social Innovation – The Structure vs Agency Debate**

Recurring themes within the literature of social innovation for development is conveniently categorized under two theoretical perspectives. One is the structural or systemic perspective and the other is the individualistic or agentic perspective. Authors such as Cajaiba-Santana (2014) and Howaldt et al. (2014; 2016) acknowledge this exact divide. These theoretical perspectives reflect a structure and agency discourse (Van der Havea and Rubalcaba, 2016).

The structural perspective views social innovation as a process and often refers to the communities that drive innovation and inevitably result in large-scale social change. The agentic perspective views social innovation as being created by an individual *as* the product of a revolutionary thinker, generally in the form of a social entrepreneur (Van der Havea and Rubalcaba, 2016). However, even these contrasting views of social innovation place social discontent, either in the form of a social need or the violation of rights as its driving force. The section below provides more detail on the structure-agency debate within the context of social innovation.

### **The Structural Perspective – Social innovation as a Process**

The structural perspective of social innovation refers to a broad range of influence. Proponents of this perspective generally define social innovation as a process. This perspective looks at structure and context as causation factors that urge the innovation to take place (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014). Social action and social change are core to the structural consideration of social innovation and an essential part of its realization.

*“What underlies the path of social innovation is not a social problem to be solved, but the social change it brings about” (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014:44).*

Nilsson and Paddock (2013), and Hess and Adams (2010) also refer to social action and social change as core to the process of social innovation. Other authors such as Dawson and Daniel (2010) and Cajaiba-Santana (2014) argue that social change is the key determinant and feature of social innovation.

Moulaert et al. (2013) takes this argument a step further by adding that this structural perspective of social innovation should lead to imitation in a way that can be scaled. In some cases, the scalability should lead to a change in social structures, systems and governance, as well as potentially amounting to social movements (Moulaert, 2014; SINGOCOM, Bund et al., 2015; Cajaiba-Santana, 2014; Marques et al., Morgan Richardson, 2017). The aspect of scalability is a distinguishing factor of a structural perspective of social innovation. Proponents of this approach argue that social innovation is only innovative to the extent that it leads to social change, determined by its scalability. This argument states that social innovation is not innovative without scalability.

Although scalability is an important aspect of social innovation which creates the direct link to social change. This paper would like to propose that sustainability rather than scalability be a distinguisher of social innovation. The primary criteria of a social innovation as a synthesis within this review is the resolution of a social need. Having that need met in a novel and sustainable way, that is social innovation. As a secondary criterion, should be scalability (Bund, 2015; Pansera and Martinez, 2016; Kiem, 2011; Moulaert, 2013; Mulgan, 2006; Hess and Adams, 2010; Howaldt, 2016). Defining social innovation through a structural lens then asserts that it is a process with an overall objective to be scalable to the extent that it amounts to social change.

### **The Individualistic Perspective – Social Innovation as a Resolution to Social Needs**

The individualistic perspective encompasses social innovation being created and envisioned by an individual as a resolution to social needs. This perspective is context-dependant, subjective, and self-informed, focusing on satisfiers such as well-being. This perspective is consistent with development theorists such as Max-Neef (1991) who advocates for an improvement in the quality of life of individuals. This leads to a discussion on another critical theme that emerged from the literature, a recurring theme in a number of publications, which is that social innovation emerges from a social need and is used as a driving force behind the social innovation with an objective to resolve

a social need. The interest of this research in particular is geared towards the social need that the social innovation was created to resolve.

The individual perspective also prioritizes the individual as the inventor of social innovation. In doing so social entrepreneurship can be included in this category as a form of social innovation that is manifested from the individual (Alfonso, 2016). For instance, entrepreneurship is mainly individually driven, it is based on the "action of a visionary" which is also known as action based social innovation, which is individualistic in the sense that it is initiated by individual groups motivated by individual interest, able to find innovative solutions to social problems (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014:45).

Both Giddens (1971) and Howard (2014) reiterate the structure vs agency debate and duality in social innovation. Acknowledging this dualism has an implication on social innovation research in that both complex social processes and individual needs can be addressed in the development of a socially innovative approach. On the structural side, there is a more "macro, top-down and fundamentalist market-driven set of constructs, whilst on individualistic side; there exists a more locally-embedded, nuanced, socially and culturally aware approach [that] has become more important in recent years without seriously threatening the former" (Howaldt et al., 2014:43).

The term social innovation in itself is inherently dualistic. Innovation is a mechanical term associated with hard science, physical processes and scientific results. Social on the other hand is a fluid term, distinguished by its complexity of meaning. Putting these two terms alongside each other to create a new genre in development is the same as trying to construct society and deconstruct innovation. However, there is a middle ground between the structure and agency perspective in defining social innovation. Moulart (2013) and Cajaiba-Santana (2014) describe social innovation is a "mobilization-participation" process, in which collective action is mobilized for the purposes of social change (p. 2).

One of the reasons why social innovation has become a key topic in the research agenda is that it brings the focus of resolution back to the communities themselves, encouraging people-

centered development and empowerment, but does it really operate this way in practice. How does social innovation unfold in a practical environment, what social needs does it aim to meet, how are they identified and who is involved?

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

A qualitative research approach was used to gain a rich understanding of the processes preceding the identification of the need that drives the establishment of a socially innovative organisation.

After reviewing a number of key publications on the topic of social innovation and development, it became evident that some of these texts were produced from centres of research, which dealt exclusively with social innovation. This led to a search for similar centres located in South Africa as a source to identify a number of local case studies to conduct empirical research. After an initial google search, it was clear that social innovation was not as popular in South Africa as it was in the global north. The search resulted in only two social innovation related centres in South Africa. The first one identified was the Bertha Centre of Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship, located at the University of Cape Town's Graduate School of Business, a subsidiary of the university that conducts research and offers courses and workshops on social innovation specifically. The second one identified was the Impumelelo Social Innovations Centre, which is the Bertha Centre's counterpart at Stellenbosch university, most popular for their annual awards in social innovation.

Contact was made with both centres via email where the research expectations were outlined along with a request for access to be granted to each institution's social innovation case study database. Both centres responded positively but a meeting with the director of one of the centres did not materialise, so the latter organisation was prioritised.

After a brief telephonic discussion with one of the researchers at the centre, access was requested with the intention of arranging interviews with the founders of the respective social innovations. The rationale of which was to determine the methodology that took place in identifying and responding to the social need and

that this question would be best answered by the persons that founded such organisation.

The centre provided access to 15 of its freely available case studies, of which only three were local and of that, only two could be theoretically defined as social innovations. The challenge was then to find more cases for potential interviews. The centre assisted and provided a recommendation of appropriate case studies but requested that a motivation be submitted to access to the case studies which outlined the intentions of the research. The request was tabled at a board meeting and access to the centre's case study repository of social innovators was approved, which was followed by a request for voluntary participation in the research. An additional five case studies were made available, totalling the South African research pool to eight potential respondents. Contact was made with all eight, but only one founder was available and willing to participate in the research. The next source of respondents was sought from previous and existing recipients of social innovation awards in South Africa. After going through records of recipients and finalists of the awards, 37 potential respondents were identified and contacted. Of those, only 10 were available and willing to be interviewed within the timeframe and schedules were made available for conducting this research.

By interviewing founders of these organisations in an open-ended manner, each respondent was given an opportunity to express their personal journey that led to the start of their respective organisations. By using this technique, insight was gained in each founders' understanding of the development landscape with a glimpse into their professional background to contextualise how the idea for the innovation materialised. Ten telephonic interviews were conducted with founders across South Africa, who were willing and interested in the research.

The qualitative nature of the research objective in attempting to contextualise and understand the process, methodology and journey of social innovators in establishing their organisation followed a qualitative methodology in realising that objective (Babbie and Mouton, 2001; Merriam, 2002). In addition, the use of qualitative approaches have been advocated for the study of social innovation as an approach

that brings together different elements to the nature of how innovation research is usually conducted (Haddock and Tornaghi, 2013).

### **Sampling**

Sampling in the qualitative paradigm is always purposeful. To gain insight into the area outlined by the research objective, it was evident that social innovators as founders of socially innovative organizations in South Africa needed to be interviewed. Once the unit of analysis was identified, the founders had to be sought and contacted for voluntary participation. A method of sampling that had a predetermined set of criteria was used. The criteria was informed by the literature to ensure that "information-rich" cases were selected (Patton, 1990:169). The research was limited to South African case studies, snowballed from leads, recommendations, and existing and previous recipients and finalists of reputable awards in social innovation.

The objective of the interviews was to determine what made the social innovation innovative in the founders' perspective, what their perception was of social innovation, but most importantly how they came to identify the social need that drives their current innovation and how responsive their organisation is to resolving the social need. The questions were shaped by gaps that emerged from the literature, which were then led to ultimately test whether social innovation in theory was reflective in practice within the context of development in the resolution of social needs (Marshall and Rossman, 1995).

The order of the questions and the questions themselves were tailored to specific respondents and the various social needs that each social innovation sought to meet. The idea was to allow the interview to flow in a conversational manner, so the questions that required reflection from the respondents were open-ended, which encapsulated their experience and interpretation of social needs (Neuman, 1997). As such, there was no specified time duration for the interview. Interviews ranged from 10 to 30 minutes. This type of inquiry allowed respondents to fully engage and reflect on their personal experience and journey that led to the establishment of the organisation (Babbie and Mouton, 2001).

The interview began by requesting respondents to detail their professional background and personal journey that led to the establishment of the organisation. This was followed by questions that prodded whether they perceived their organisation as having social impact. The range of questions selected was to test their understanding of the development landscape and how they came to determine the social need that their organisation sought to resolve. The last question raised was how they envisioned scaling their organisation in respect of social change.

## **RESULTS**

The following section provides a discussion of the key analytical themes that have emerged from the data collected, critically reflected and contextualized within the relevant literature.

Each of the themes categorizes the innovators personal motivation and drive that led to the establishment of their organization towards the resolution of a social need. This motivation is the means of identification of the social need from which the organization is established.

### **Personal Experience**

The analysis of the interviews revealed that four of the 10 respondents identified the social need driving their innovation from personal experience. These respondents personally experienced the deprivation of the need, as they were recipients of destitute conditions. It was clear that their experience gave them developmental insight into the complexity of the need and its interrelated power relations and struggles.

### **Desire to Make a Difference**

Although each of the respondents revealed the desire to make a difference as a large driver behind establishing their organization, there were only three respondents who mentioned that this was the sole reason behind starting their venture. Nuances in these responses revealed sincerity in living responsibly and intentionally. However, it was difficult to distinguish which of these respondents were on an unselfish endeavor to create social change or insincerely in the pursuit of recognition. This was especially true for one respondent who applied for various

innovation awards and went to the media with his idea. This respondent also seemed to jump from innovation to innovation, targeted at members of the marginalized communities. The respondent also revealed a history of exiting innovations that were no longer profitable.

### **Engaging with the Community**

Three of the 10 respondents used a community engagement approach in identifying and shaping their strategy in responding to a social need. What informed this insight was a responsiveness to the complexity of these issues and an acknowledgement of the impact that unequal power relations could have on the outcome of the product or service provided. This approach in theoretical terms is participatory development.

Community buy-in was a key determinant in each of these respondents' approaches (Chambers, 2007). One respondent went so far as to host a meeting with key stakeholders in a rural community in order to determine the demand of the need and gauge community support of sustaining the provision of the service.

These respondents notably made a concerted effort to understand and engage with the communities their organizations were meant to serve.

### **Creating Social Impact**

Krlev, Bund and Mildenerger (2014) attribute social impact as the macro-level indicator for measuring social innovation. The consensus and vision of every founder was to establish an organization that had social impact. The social impact of each organization was determined in its effectiveness to respond to the identified social need, organizational sustainability and the potential of it scaling to under-resourced communities. Two clear distinctions emerged from the analysis of the kind of impact, both envisioned and actualized by each respondent.

#### **a) Direct Social Impact**

Most of the founders of the organizations were driven to create direct social impact. Some impact was dependent on additional sources of funding and others were autonomous in their ability to create impact in their provision of

goods and services. Of the six organizations mandated for a direct social impact, only one was able to realize direct impact without the assistance of additional funding. This organization, independent of any donors or funding, utilized women from the local community as the workforce to manufacture products. The founder also directly impacted the reduction of waste in the community as the raw materials used to manufacture the products were recycled plastic bottles. This social enterprise delivered sustainable social impact, but was limited in scale. The enterprise was restricted to a particular geographic location and the existing business model was dependent on the respondent's involvement in its daily operations. As a result, this organization's existing structure inhibited its potential to scale for social impact.

The remaining five organizations were dependent on funding, either in the form of sponsorships or donations to make their product or service accessible in delivering social impact. These organizations were structured in a way that supported both private sales and non-profit donations. This organizational structure was unlike the social enterprise and had a private company, established in conjunction with a non-profit trust or foundation component. One founder/respondent in particular had created a product targeted at marginalized communities in malaria-dense areas throughout Africa. The product was yet to go to the market at the time of the interview, but plans were in place for the organization to match every item sold to donate to a child in one of the malaria-dense African countries. The design and consistency of the innovation was patented and research was conducted on its effectiveness, but its scaling and projected impact based on this structure was dependent on sales.

Another organization, which had a dual structure comprising of a social enterprise and a service referral model, was so dependent on external funding that its operation ceased when donor funding ended. During its operation, it had reported a significant impact on the follow-up rate of HIV infection in communities throughout South Africa. In 12 years since the piloting of the project, they had experienced a 95% follow-up rate, meaning that only 6% of people had been lost to AIDS and overall, patients had a 92% viral suppression.

Although the social enterprise was profitable, funding enabled the service referral program to be rolled out, especially to under-resourced communities that did not have access to Anti-Retro Viral treatment. The referral model ended when funding was no longer available and government no longer structurally supported it. This appears as a great challenge within the social innovation community – how to be financially sustainable and remain accessible to under-resourced communities.

The most widespread direct social impact reported was evident in an organization that founded a tutoring program to high-school learners in predominantly marginalized communities and under-resourced schools. At the time of the interview this product had already been distributed to 12 000 learners across 70 schools throughout the country. With the support of funding, this organization has managed to have the most significant quantified social impact across the organizations interviewed. The sustainability of this organization operated on a social enterprise business model that had private sales and donations that contributed to the provision of resources to under-resourced schools. In addition, the relatively low cost of the service enabled scaling to a large population. According to the founder, the product was designed specifically with the purpose of scaling to under-resourced schools. The social need that drove the social innovation was focused around building academic capacity in under-resourced schools. As a result, the resolution to the social need was effective in its low-cost delivery and ability to scale. When the respondent was asked about scaling the model to create more social impact, he indicated that funding remained one of the greatest constraints for scaling to a wider population.

#### **b) Indirect Social Impact**

Three of the 10 organizations demonstrated social impact derived from a development arm that was established as a subsidiary to the organization. One organization in particular did not involve the local community in the manufacturing process, so there was no direct impact in respect of job creation or skill development. Nevertheless, the product, when donated had a significant impact to menstruating

girls in marginalized communities. The provision of the product resulted in the improvement of student absenteeism, which indirectly created a positive impact on academic results as students no longer needed to miss school during their menstruation cycle.

The consultancy organizations by nature were aligned to indirect social impact. These organizations were primarily focused on the provision of for-profit consultancy services, which then partially funded their social impact through outreach. One firm established a fund to invest in social enterprises, an impact investment arm, for social impact.

The founder of the other firm defined her social impact as an outcome of her consultancy services in improving management, profitability and growing staff complement.

The anomaly in the data was an organization that had no social impact. Although nominated for various social innovation awards, the realization of the product never materialized, nor did it ever go to the market. It resulted in a number of failed attempts to provide access to renewable energy in cost-effective ways.

The concept was innovative in using a renewable energy source to power household appliances, but the equipment's running costs were too high. It was inherently unfeasible for the product to be utilized by individuals in marginalized communities. As a result, this organization failed, in terms of both social innovation, social impact, sustainability and scale. At the time of the interview, the founder was revising the innovation so that it could lead to social impact.

Although the respondent acknowledges the challenge in relation to funding and sustainability, he overlooks the flaw of having a high-cost fuel for what was intended to be a low-cost product. This anomaly demonstrates the importance of being critical, analytical and engaging in social need identification, so that the innovation can be driven to meet the need in a way that is conscious of social conditions and power relations.

Social impact is dependent on development insight, a comprehensive understanding of the target market and critical monitoring, evaluation and reflexivity.

## **DISCUSSION**

The interviews revealed that personal experience and extensive community engagement are fundamental in understanding the diversity of how solutions to social needs ought to be approached. The findings indicated that this process also affected the structure of the organization in meeting that need. It was evident that founders who had a more comprehensive understanding of the need anticipated the difficulties in scaling and therefore anticipated access to marginalized communities in their planning, which led to local empowerment and strategic collaboration for sustainability.

The findings and discussions raises various questions. What was revealed was how the public sector had the potential to inhibit or enable social innovation. Similarly, the extent of resources accessible from the private sector, but the issues that arise in the intention with which these funds are distributed. There lacks policy and support structures within the public sector to maximize both the economic and social impact that social innovators contribute to the development agenda. Another interesting finding was the need for collaboration between the sectors. If the focus is to enable and scale social innovation then both government and corporates have a role to play in facilitating that process. How can social enterprises collaborate with corporates by means of social investment in a way that is supported and enabled by the government to create sustainable social change? If these roles can be defined and institutionalized in policy, the respective bodies have the potential to contribute sustainably to the overall development agenda of South Africa.

What became evident during the analysis was how the social need was the driving force behind various stages of the social innovation process. The social need and the resolution thereof became the starting point and the envisioned destination of each founder. As mirrored in social innovation theory and echoed by Bund et al. (2015). The previous section detailed the results that emerged from respondents' reflection of the processes that took place in social need identification that inspired the innovation in developing a resolution.

It is essential to note the interdependency observed in various features of social innovation. The findings show how social impact, social

need, sustainability and scaling all interconnect repeatedly to realize social innovation. From this it can be concluded that social innovation is not a linear or progressive process, but in fact a reflective, iterative process, highly responsive to the various elements that comprise social innovation in its entirety.

If social innovation is meant to promote the resolution of social needs in a novel way and ultimately contribute to development in South Africa, it goes without saying that methodological innovation in identifying social needs should be a prerequisite for social innovation. Below are recommendations for further research.

#### **Social Innovation as a Promoter of Socio-Economic Change in South Africa**

Living in South Africa, a country haunted by the fossilized inequalities of its racially discriminate past, now is as good a time as ever to try to find novel ways of unlocking these deeply-rooted development issues. This buzzword in recent literature has been promoted as the remedy to the welfare state, by resolving social needs that are not dependent on the state for funding. In addition, this innovation has the potential to be profitable, scalable, sustainable and sufficient in meeting social needs. Social innovation appears to be the optimal solution to promote socio-economic change in South Africa.

#### **Need Identification, Resolution and Sustainability is Context Dependent**

Social innovation will fail if it approaches South Africa by applying methodologies from the global north. Trying to apply a blanket approach to identifying social needs and its resolution is bound to fail when faced with the complexity of development. The research observed that the need resolution and identification, even sustainability is dependent on context. In fact, the context-dependent nature of social innovation is one that should be woven into every stage of the social innovation process, which critically reflects how context, location and power relations affect the realisation of the social innovation process.

#### **Social Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship Need to be More Distinguishable**

The research question sought to ascertain how these social needs were determined and how effective the social innovation was in resolving the social need. An interesting finding was the overlap between social innovation and social entrepreneurship, in that, although founders identified their organizations as socially innovative, structurally their organizations represented a social enterprise. It is challenging to distinguish between the terms.

Ultimately, the research established that respondents used the terms interchangeably. The socially innovative organizations that appeared most sustainable and scalable were profit-generating models that resembled social enterprises. These organizations generated profit alongside social impact. It is proposed that future research seeks to distinguish the relationship between social innovation and social entrepreneurship. From the interviews and literature, social entrepreneurship is positioned as a subtheme of social innovation. Future research should aim to interrogate this assertion.

#### **Determine the Factors that Influence Social Need Identification Methodology**

This research prioritized determining the methodology of social need identification but it was not in the scope of this research to evaluate critically the effect of demographics, geographical location or industry specific demarcations in the findings. It would be worthwhile to explore whether the gender of founders affect their social need identification methodology. It would also be worthwhile to pursue whether social need identification methodology was affected by geographical location or whether there were industry specific methodological relationships.

#### **Social Innovation Needs to be situated within a Development Framework**

A theoretical development framework shaped a hypothesis in the initial conceptualization of this research that proposed a rich understanding of the complexities of development would be best placed in determining the relevant social resolution. This hypothesis was proven to be true as the research revealed that founders who experienced deprivation of the social need they

sought to resolve, as well as founders who conducted extensive community engagement managed to develop the most successful and sustainable social innovations. These founders demonstrated development consciousness, a desire to improve their innovation continuously and were critical of local feedback and empowerment. They also conducted regular monitoring and evaluation to benchmark the provision of their services, but most importantly, reflected on means to scale to marginalized communities.

If anything, the research shows that an in-depth approach framed within a development paradigm should be considered in both determining the social need that drives the social innovation and the resolution of the social need itself. Organizations that were most critically responsive to the social need identified were those that either 1) personally experienced deprivation of the social need in their own lives, or 2) had extensive engagement and exposure to individuals who had personally experienced the deprivation. It was evident that both the identification and corresponding resolution of social needs for social innovation require an approach that holds experiencers of the deprivation at the nucleus of the resolution.

Furthermore, if social innovation is meant to provide a solution to a pressing social need and is defined by presenting a novel solution, are the shortcomings and weaknesses of previous attempts then taken into consideration in the conceptualisation of the existing innovation?

Practitioners in this field need to be critical of the most productive way of engaging recipients of social innovation. Development theory and practice should frame social innovation approaches and implementation. We need to move away from Social Innovation as a novel process and approach it with the complexity that informs development. It is clear that in theory, social innovation is sound, but there are definite flaws related to its practice. Practitioners need to be aware of the underlying power relations that exist in engagement and participation that social innovators need to be cautious of in adopting a development approach.

## **CONCLUSION**

Overall, social innovation is an opportunity to do things differently. It is an attempt and

approach to resolve deeply entrenched development issues in ways that were not conceptualized or attempted before. With the adoption of development methodology and critical social engagement in the identification of social needs, social innovation can indeed fulfill a role within the development context of South Africa that is sustainable and scalable to the communities that need it most. If social innovation is meant to promote the resolution of social needs in a novel way and ultimately contribute to development in South Africa, it goes without saying that methodological innovation in identifying social needs should be a prerequisite for social innovation. Living in South Africa, a country haunted by the fossilized inequalities of its racially discriminate past, now is as good a time as ever to try to find novel ways of unlocking these deep-rooted development issues. Social innovation, as a buzzword in recent literature and a diversity of disciplines has been presented as the way of the future. A resolution to social needs not dependent on government intervention or funding, but as a sustainable, novel way that is profitable, scalable and sufficient in meeting social needs.

The research question sought to ascertain how these social needs were determined and how effective the social innovation was in resolving the social need.

An interesting finding was the overlap between social innovation and social entrepreneurship, in that, although founders identified their organizations as socially innovation, structurally their organization would represented a social enterprise. It is challenging to distinguish between the terms and ultimately, it was concluded that these were used and could be used interchangeable. The social innovations that appeared most sustainable and scalable were profit-generating models that generated social impact. The boundaries between the two concepts are certainly unclear. It is proposed that future research seek to distinguish the relationship between social innovation and social entrepreneurship. A conclusion of this research is that social entrepreneurship is a subtheme of social innovation.

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of the complexities of development would be best placed in determining the relevant social resolution. This hypothesis was proven to be true as the research revealed that founders who experienced deprivation of the social need they sought to resolve as well as founders who conducted extensive community engagement managed to develop the most successful and sustainable social innovations. These founders demonstrated development consciousness, a desire to improve their innovation continuously and were critical of local feedback and empowerment. They also conducted regular monitoring and evaluation to benchmark the provision of their services, but most importantly, reflected on means to scale to marginalized communities.

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