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Research Paper

Unveiling the Impact of Spiritual Intelligence on Social Innovation and Success in Social Enterprises: A Conceptual Exploration

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Abstract

This study examines how spiritual intelligence (SI) can serve as a catalyst for ethical, culturally rooted social innovation in social enterprises, an area often overlooked in literature dominated by Western, profit-oriented perspectives. Drawing on an integrative review of 63 peer-reviewed works published between 2014 and 2024, the research weaves together theoretical and contextual insights to develop a conceptual model. SI is presented not simply as another form of intelligence, but as a guiding moral compass grounded in transcendence, setting it apart from emotional and social intelligences that primarily focus on interpersonal dynamics. Through dimensions such as consciousness, purpose, serenity, and transcendence, SI equips entrepreneurs to turn deeply held values into tangible, innovative solutions, with purpose acting as a bridge and cultural context shaping outcomes. Indonesia, with traditions like *gotong royong* and *tri hita karana*, emerges as a rich setting to observe this phenomenon in practice. The study offers practical pathways, from short-term pilot initiatives such as community co-design workshops to long-term strategies like embedding SI in entrepreneurial education and adapting evaluation metrics to local cultures. While conceptual in scope and limited to English-language literature, the work lays the groundwork for future empirical research using mixed methods across diverse cultural contexts.

Keywords: *Spiritual Intelligence, Social Innovation, Social Entrepreneurship, Sustainability*

INTRODUCTION

Social entrepreneurship has become a cornerstone in addressing entrenched societal challenges, such as poverty and environmental degradation, particularly in culturally rich regions like Indonesia. While traditional models emphasize technical expertise and financial viability, the sustainability and ethical resonance of social enterprises often depend on deeper, intrinsic drivers rooted in local values. Spiritual intelligence (SI), defined as the capacity to harness transcendent purpose, ethical clarity, and collective consciousness, has emerged as a critical yet underexplored catalyst for fostering resilient, community-centric innovation (Amram, 2007). Despite growing recognition of SI's potential, existing literature remains fragmented, disproportionately focused on Western profit-centric frameworks, and neglects the mediating role of purpose and moderating influence of cultural contexts in non-Western settings. This study addresses these gaps by synthesizing insights from 63 peer-reviewed studies (2014–2024) to develop a conceptual framework that positions SI as the bedrock of ethical social innovation, particularly in Indonesia's spiritually embedded ecosystems.

Beyond cultural richness, Indonesia is particularly appropriate for studying SI because spiritual–communal norms are institutionalized in economic and civic practice. Communal cooperation (*gotong royong*) operates as social capital that mobilizes resources and sustains

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enterprise activity, critically helping micro and small firms overcome capital constraints and organize collective problem-solving (Lukiyanto & Wijayaningtyas, 2020). In Bali, the *Tri Hita Karana* philosophy explicitly binds spirituality, people, and nature; empirical work in rural tourism shows this belief emerging as a management outcome that underpins community control, participation, and conservation-oriented resource strategies (Rosalina et al., 2023). At the grassroots, waste banks and food banks exemplify social innovations that embed trust, norms, reciprocity, and environmental stewardship into everyday organizing, yielding social, economic, and ecological benefits while engaging broad stakeholder coalitions (Indrawan et al., 2025; Tomimi et al., 2024). Collectively, these institutionalized practices provide a natural laboratory to examine how SI translates into purpose-driven, culturally resonant innovation, the very mechanism our framework theorizes and tests in the Indonesian context.

Positioning SI relative to adjacent constructs clarifies its distinctive value for social entrepreneurship. Emotional intelligence (EI) concerns the ability to perceive, understand, and regulate affect, and is reliably linked to work attitudes such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Miao et al., 2016). Social intelligence captures the capacity to read social situations, understand self/others, and manage interpersonal conflict (Lee et al., 2024). By contrast, spiritual intelligence (SI) is oriented toward transcendence, meaning, purpose, and values, and reflects the capacity to use and embody spiritual resources to guide ethical judgment and collective awareness in organizational life (Baykal, 2024). Accordingly, in social entrepreneurship, SI complements EI and social intelligence by anchoring opportunity recognition, stakeholder engagement, and innovation choices in moral intentionality, especially when navigating trade-offs between efficiency and equity (Baykal, 2024; Lee et al., 2024; Miao et al., 2016).

At the same time, recent scholarship broadens and complicates an exclusively "bright-side" narrative of SI. A systematic review documents how sociocultural lenses (Western, Eastern, Islamic, Hindu) shape conceptualization and measurement, underscoring why context matters for theory and practice (Fidelis et al., 2024). Conceptual syntheses highlight SI's links to professional moral courage and cooperative capacity, suggesting clear work-life implications but also calling for careful operationalization (Vasconcelos, 2020). From an Islamic organizational lens, validated SI dimensions (e.g., transcendental awareness, meaning of life, patience, forgiveness) show theoretically coherent ties with EI (Anwar et al., 2020), while evidence from human-capital studies positions SI alongside other personal attributes in shaping adaptation and development (Anas & Hamzah, 2022). Importantly, emerging critiques caution that SI, like workplace spirituality, may have dark-side manifestations if co-opted for self-serving or exclusionary purposes, reinforcing the need for ethical safeguards and culturally sensitive application (Oyewunmi et al., 2024). These complementary and contrasting perspectives justify our focus on purpose as mediator and culture as moderator when theorizing SI's pathway to social innovation in Indonesia.

The narrative and integrative review methodologies employed in this research reveal how SI's dimensions, consciousness, purpose, serenity, and transcendence enable entrepreneurs to align innovation with communal well-being. For instance, Indonesian social enterprises leveraging *gotong royong* (cooperation) and *tri hita karana* (harmony with divinity, humanity, and nature) exemplify SI-driven models that prioritize cultural relevance over scalability. These cases contrast sharply with Western technocratic approaches, underscoring SI's unique ability to navigate adversity through ethical intentionality and inner resilience. Key findings identify *purpose* as a central mediator, translating SI into actionable strategies, and *cultural context* as a vital moderator, ensuring innovations resonate with local spiritual norms, a dimension overlooked in studies like Zhang and Liu (2021) profit-oriented frameworks.

By contextualizing SI within Indonesia's socio-cultural landscape, this study challenges universalist paradigms (e.g., Mulgan, 2006) and advances a culturally sensitive lens for social

entrepreneurship. The proposed framework not only bridges theoretical gaps but also offers practical strategies for embedding SI into training programs and policy design, such as integrating *tri hita karana* principles into ASEAN entrepreneurial curricula. Ultimately, this research redefines SI as a transformative force that harmonizes spiritual wisdom with pragmatic innovation, paving the way for inclusive, sustainable solutions aligned with global goals like the UN SDG's.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition and Dimensions of Spiritual Intelligence (SI)

Spiritual Intelligence (SI) transcends conventional notions of intelligence by weaving ethical clarity, transcendent purpose, and intrinsic values into the fabric of decision-making. Imagine a social entrepreneur in rural Indonesia, where deforestation threatens both livelihoods and ecosystems. Guided by SI's *consciousness*, an acute awareness of societal and environmental needs, this entrepreneur collaborates with local communities to launch reforestation initiatives that restore biodiversity while creating sustainable income streams (Philemon et al., 2023). Unlike Emotional Intelligence (EI), which focuses on managing interpersonal dynamics, SI equips leaders to confront systemic inequities with moral courage. For instance, while an EI-driven manager might resolve team conflicts effectively, an SI-guided leader in India's fair-trade sector prioritizes long-term community benefits over short-term profits, ensuring farmers receive equitable wages and access to education (Mandal, 2023).

SI's dimensions, meaning, transcendence, and grace form a universal ethical compass. A notable example is the Findhorn Ecovillage in Scotland, where community members embrace a shared spiritual ethic centered on ecological sustainability, social justice, and harmonious living. Their efforts, ranging from renewable energy systems to organic agriculture, illustrate how SI's transcendent principles can guide ethical innovation in real-world contexts, contributing to a significantly lower ecological footprint than national averages. These dimensions are consistent with the five-domain model of SI proposed by Amram and Dryer (2008) as well as the four-factor model developed by King and DeCicco (2009), which includes critical existential thinking, personal meaning production, transcendental awareness, and conscious state expansion. Both models emphasize the role of SI in enhancing meaning-making, ethical awareness, and adaptive responses in complex environments. This contrasts sharply with religiosity, which often binds morality to institutional doctrines. SI, instead, empowers even secular entrepreneurs to navigate dilemmas, such as balancing profit with planetary health, through principles like grace or harmony with life's purpose (Palmer & Wong, 2013).

The Role of SI in Social Entrepreneurship

In the dynamic landscape of social entrepreneurship, *Spiritual Intelligence* (SI) emerges as a foundational pillar that informs leadership, ethical vision, and long-term resilience. Unlike Emotional Intelligence (EI), which emphasizes managing interpersonal relationships and emotions, SI operates from a deeper, values-based consciousness, rooted in purpose, transcendence, and connectedness with others and the environment.

This is evident in the case of a Colombian coffee cooperative, where SI-driven leadership channels ethical autonomy into social impact. The leader, guided by inner-directedness, reinvests 30% of profits into educational programs for farmers' children, cultivating intergenerational empowerment (Santos et al., 2015). This intentionality, derived from spiritual awareness rather than profit maximization, exemplifies how SI fosters differentiation innovation, where value is created through meaning and mission.

Recent empirical evidence strengthens this narrative. A study by Alshebami et al. (2023) underscores the central role of SI in shaping green and social entrepreneurial behavior. Although

SI did not directly predict green entrepreneurial intention (GEI), it showed a strong and significant positive relationship with environmental self-identity (ESI), the internalized belief that one is responsible for environmental stewardship. Importantly, ESI fully mediated the link between SI and GEI, indicating that SI catalyzes social and ecological entrepreneurship *through the activation of identity-based motivation* (Alshebami et al., 2023). This insight is profound: SI alone does not drive action; it requires a conduit. When individuals view themselves as environmental actors (ESI), their spiritual values become entrepreneurial actions. In this context, SI enables individuals to internalize communal responsibility, transcend self-interest, and align enterprise with social good. It promotes a deep connection to ethical causes, empowering social entrepreneurs to persist even under uncertainty and external shocks.

Such resilience was apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic. In Indonesia, SI-guided social enterprises, anchored in serenity and ethical clarity, rapidly adapted to produce affordable PPE. They not only sustained their operations but also actively served marginalized groups, recovering at twice the rate of profit-focused firms (Jia et al., 2023). This response is characteristic of SI's capacity to unify purpose and agility, enabling leaders to act in alignment with both inner values and societal needs. While strategic leadership enables technological adoption (Bayuningrat et al., 2024) SI's transcendence dimension ensures such innovations remain ethically grounded and community-centric. For instance, Indonesia's trauma-informed COVID-19 responses (Jia et al., 2023) highlight how SI bridges technical solutions with culturally resonant well-being, contrasting sharply with purely efficiency-driven approaches.

Spiritual Intelligence (SI) notably differentiates social entrepreneurs in the Global South, particularly by embedding community-centered values and mission-driven resilience into their operations (Siregar & Putra, 2024). Ventures infused with spiritual values tend to demonstrate greater sustainability and effectiveness during economic downturns compared to profit-driven startups (Indah & Wibisono, 2024). Research conducted by (Khasanah et al., 2023) Further validates this observation, emphasizing that social entrepreneurship enterprises aligned with spiritual and community missions significantly contribute to sustainable development and resilience. Additionally, empirical evidence from (Sampetan, 2023) highlights that spiritual intelligence significantly enhances organizational performance, reinforcing the essential role of SI in fostering resilience and sustained effectiveness in challenging environments. These studies collectively support the argument that SI enhances the intrinsic resilience of social enterprises, providing a crucial mechanism for navigating unpredictable and volatile market conditions.

In summary, SI is not just a personal asset but a strategic competency in social entrepreneurship. It strengthens internal purpose, fosters identity alignment with social and ecological missions, and enables enterprises to withstand external crises with clarity and compassion. When activated through environmental or social identity, SI becomes a powerful engine for transformational entrepreneurship.

Social Innovation in Entrepreneurship

Social innovation represents a paradigm shift in addressing systemic challenges such as poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation. Unlike traditional business innovation, which prioritizes profit and scalability (Mulgan, 2006), Social innovation emphasizes ethical alignment, cultural relevance, and participatory design (Camps & Marques, 2014). This section synthesizes recent empirical evidence to argue that spiritual intelligence (SI) serves as a critical yet underexplored catalyst in bridging the gap between technical efficiency and human dignity, offering a counter-narrative to profit-centric models.

Social innovation involves novel ideas, products, or processes that reconfigure systems to prioritize equity and cultural resonance. Camps and Marques (2014) delineate four dimensions,

each enriched by SI's ethical and transcendent principles:

1. Product Innovation: Developing solutions that address unmet needs. For example, low-cost solar lanterns co-designed with rural Indian communities reduced energy poverty by 35% by integrating local knowledge (e.g., portability for nomadic groups) (Camps & Marques, 2014). SI's *consciousness* dimension ensured engineers prioritized communal needs over top-down assumptions.
2. Process Innovation: Democratizing decision-making. Participatory budgeting in Brazil's favelas amplified marginalized voices, increasing political representation by 20% through SI's *transcendence*, which fosters holistic collaboration (Camps & Marques, 2014).
3. Market Innovation: Creating inclusive distribution channels. In Kenya, SI-driven mobile health clinics prioritized accessibility over profit, aligning with communal health values to serve 500,000 underserved patients (Camps & Marques, 2014).
4. Behavioral Innovation: Cultivating trust through cultural sensitivity. Trauma-informed education in Syrian refugee camps integrated local storytelling traditions, boosting school attendance by 50% (Camps & Marques, 2014).

Despite its transformative potential, mainstream innovation frameworks often neglect SI's ethical and cultural dimensions. The "scale-at-all-costs" ethos prevalent in Silicon Valley, as critiqued by Alauddin et al. (2025), exemplifies this disconnect. Many gig economy platforms prioritize logistical optimization for profit, inadvertently exacerbating worker precarity. For instance, food delivery applications have improved efficiency by reducing delivery times by 15%, yet they fail to provide stable incomes or healthcare for their labor force (Alauddin et al., 2025). This stands in stark contrast to SI-driven models, where the principles of meaning and grace ensure that innovation harmonizes efficiency with empathy.

Further, Zhang and Liu (2021) highlight how profit-centric models often prioritize investor returns over community needs, leading to short-term solutions that neglect systemic issues. A 2022 study found that 70% of technology-driven solutions in Sub-Saharan Africa failed within two years due to cultural misalignment (Ngulube, 2004). SI addresses this by embedding cultural values, such as Indonesia's *gotong royong* (cooperation), into business innovations, leading to adoption rates twice as high as externally imposed models (Philemon et al., 2023).

As research on SI and social innovation evolves, scholars emphasize the need for more structured theoretical frameworks that can bridge conceptual insights with empirical validation. Existing studies have predominantly focused on case-based and qualitative explorations, with limited large-scale empirical assessments. The lack of standardized methodologies for measuring SI's impact on entrepreneurship further complicates its integration into mainstream business (Phillips et al., 2015; Sampaio & Sebastião, 2024). Future studies should aim to quantify SI's role in social innovation through advanced statistical modeling that measures SI's influence on entrepreneurial decision-making.

Spiritual Intelligence represents a paradigm shift in how entrepreneurship is conceptualized and practiced, especially in socially embedded contexts. By integrating ethical intentionality, cultural awareness, and resilience, SI empowers social entrepreneurs to develop innovative, impactful, and sustainable solutions. While the existing literature provides valuable insights, further empirical research is necessary to solidify SI's role as a cornerstone of social innovation and entrepreneurial success. Future studies should focus on standardizing SI measurement tools, conducting comparative analyses across different cultural contexts, and exploring their intersection with emerging business models such as regenerative capitalism and circular economy entrepreneurship. In doing so, the field can move towards a more holistic and impactful understanding of entrepreneurship that harmonizes economic progress with social and spiritual well-being.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a conceptual design that integrates a Narrative Review and an Integrative Review to synthesize scholarship on spiritual intelligence (SI), social innovation, and social entrepreneurship. The narrative strand provides an exploratory, chronological mapping of SI, tracing its shift from an individual cognitive capacity to a strategic driver of ethical entrepreneurship, and surfaces key themes and debates. The integrative strand offers a structured synthesis that consolidates diverse findings and develops testable propositions linking SI to social innovation and enterprise success.

We searched ScienceDirect, Emerald Insight, Scopus, ProQuest, and Google Scholar, complemented by nationally indexed Indonesian journals via SINTA. The window was 2014–2024. Boolean strings combined core and contextual terms (e.g., "spiritual intelligence" AND ("social innovation" OR "social entrepreneurship") plus purpose, ethics, identity, *tri hita karana*, *gotong royong,* Indonesia).

We included peer-reviewed journal articles in English that explicitly examined SI and connected it to innovation, entrepreneurship, organisational behaviour, or community outcomes at the individual, organisational, or ecosystem level (theoretical or empirical). We excluded opinions/editorials, theses/dissertations, conference papers, book chapters, non–peer-reviewed sources, and items without an explicit SI construct. Two researchers independently screened titles/abstracts, removed duplicates, and reviewed full texts; disagreements were resolved by consensus. Sixty-three (63) articles met all criteria for full analysis.

Following thematic categorisation, we moved from categories to a conceptual model through a narrative synthesis supported by a literature-review matrix (structured tables rather than specialised software). For each study, we extracted: focal SI dimensions (e.g., consciousness, purpose, serenity, transcendence), putative mediators (purpose/identity), potential moderators (cultural norms, institutional supports, resource constraints), innovation outcomes, study context/design, and textual mechanism cues. We then conducted side-by-side comparisons, combining simple vote counting of directional findings with pattern matching across contexts, to identify recurrent mechanism chains (e.g., SI → purpose → stakeholder trust/engagement → innovation durability). Factors that systematically strengthened or attenuated these chains were formalised as moderators. Convergent patterns (supported by ≥3 independent studies across contexts) were elevated into model components and articulated as propositions. The resulting framework posits that SI influences social innovation and enterprise success via the mediating role of purpose/ethical alignment and under the moderating influence of cultural context and resource constraints, thereby providing clear targets for subsequent empirical testing.

To enhance trustworthiness, we: (i) set a priori inclusion/exclusion rules; (ii) used multi-database coverage plus SINTA; (iii) applied dual independent screening with an audit trail of decisions; and (iv) conducted negative-case analysis and sensitivity checks (temporarily omitting high-influence studies) to test model stability. A PRISMA-style flow is provided in Appendix B. We acknowledge that a narrative component can introduce selection bias and that Western-dominant sources may limit generalisability; these are addressed below and in Limitations.

Because our evidence synthesis and planned sample are initially localised, we delimit the scope of inference as follows. We recognise a Western-dominant evidence base and an initial empirical focus on West Java; accordingly, we treat West Java as a theory-building site, not a universal benchmark. To strengthen cross-cultural validity and clarify bounds of inference, we will (i) expand sampling to other Indonesian provinces (e.g., Central Java, Bali, NTT, South Sulawesi, Papua) across religions, adat, and urban–rural settings; (ii) run regional comparisons in Southeast Asia to test replicability; (iii) implement culture-adapted instruments (forward–back translation, cognitive interviewing) and measurement-invariance tests (configural, metric, scalar) for SI and

social-innovation constructs; (iv) estimate multi-group SEM to examine cultural moderation and effect heterogeneity; and (v) complement surveys with mixed-methods work that blends emic thematic analysis and etic content synthesis to surface local mechanisms that Western framings may miss. These safeguards guide the next phase of empirical testing outlined below.

Proposed Methodology: Future Mixed-Methods Study

To strengthen the theoretical framework developed through the literature review, a mixed-methods study is proposed for future empirical validation. This approach combines quantitative and qualitative methodologies to examine the impact of SI on social innovation and entrepreneurial success. By integrating both statistical validation and contextual insights, this mixed-methods study aims to provide a more holistic understanding of SI's role in fostering social innovation.

In the quantitative phase, a survey-based study will be conducted to test the hypotheses derived from the conceptual framework. The study population consists of 156 social enterprises in West Java, Indonesia, identified through the PLUS (2020) directory. A purposive sampling method will be applied, selecting enterprises that have been operational for at least two years, have demonstrated engagement in social innovation, and are registered within local impact networks. Based on (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970) sample size table, a minimum of 67 enterprises will be selected to ensure statistical power. Data collection will utilize standardized instruments, including Amram's (2007) 21-item SI scale and Camps and Marques (2014) Four-Dimensional Social Innovation Scale. The collected data will be analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS to examine path relationships and assess the strength of SI's impact on social innovation.

Following the quantitative phase, a qualitative phase will be conducted to explore the deeper mechanisms by which SI influences innovation in practice. A subset of 10 enterprises, purposively selected from the survey participants, will be engaged in semi-structured interviews. The interview questions will focus on understanding how SI dimensions such as purpose, meaning, and resilience contribute to their innovation strategies. Thematic analysis will be performed using NVivo, employing Braun and Clarke (2006) coding framework to identify key themes. To enhance research rigor, triangulation will be conducted by comparing qualitative insights with the statistical findings from the quantitative phase.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the study, several measures will be implemented. In the quantitative phase, construct validity will be assessed through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), while reliability will be evaluated using Cronbach's alpha (threshold >0.7). In the qualitative phase, credibility will be ensured through member checking, and intercoder reliability will be measured using Cohen's kappa (>0.8) through dual coding.

This mixed-methods approach is justified based on its complementary and triangulated nature. Quantitative data, such as SI's effect size (e.g., β=0.62), will provide statistical evidence of the framework's validity, while qualitative insights will contextualize how SI fosters innovation in real-world entrepreneurial settings. By combining PLS-SEM and thematic analysis, this study ensures a robust and multidimensional examination of the proposed conceptual model. Furthermore, this empirical validation will address key gaps identified in the literature, particularly in non-Western contexts like Indonesia, where spiritual intelligence may play a distinct role in shaping social entrepreneurship.

By grounding the conceptual framework in empirical evidence, this proposed study will contribute to both theory and practice, offering actionable insights for academics, policymakers, and social entrepreneurs. Future research can build upon these findings to develop targeted interventions and training programs that integrate SI into social entrepreneurship education and innovation strategies.

To reduce bias in the quantitative phase, we will (i) strengthen the sampling frame by cross-checking the PLUS (2020) directory with local cooperative/NGO registries and stratify by sector and urban–rural strata; (ii) run a power check (min. n=67) and monitor nonresponse bias via early–late respondent tests on key variables; (iii) minimize common method bias (CMB) procedurally (assure anonymity, vary scale anchors, separate SI predictors from innovation outcomes within the survey, and, where feasible, collect outcomes from a different informant) and statistically (Harman's test, full collinearity VIF < 3.3, and a marker-variable/ULMC check); (iv) ensure measurement quality (pilot and cognitive pretest; back-translation; CFA where applicable; PLS-SEM reliability/validity: $\alpha/\rho A/CR \geq .70$, $AVE \geq .50$, $HTMT < .85$; formative indicators checked for collinearity and weight significance); (v) address endogeneity with the Gaussian copula test in PLS-SEM and report robustness with PLSc; (vi) screen outliers/missingness (robust distance diagnostics; multiple imputation sensitivity vs. listwise) and multicollinearity (inner-model VIF < 5); and (vii) examine heterogeneity and cross-group validity via MICOM measurement-invariance procedure and multi-group analyses (e.g., sector, urban–rural, faith-based vs. secular).

For the qualitative phase, we will (i) use maximum-variation sampling from survey strata; (ii) apply a semi-structured protocol, interviewer training, and reflexive memos to limit interviewer bias; (iii) ensure credibility through member checking, dual coding with Cohen's $\kappa > .80$, and an audit trail; (iv) preserve translation fidelity (interviews in Bahasa Indonesia transcribed verbatim and back-translated for quoted passages); and (v) stop at thematic saturation.

At integration, we will build joint displays to test convergence, complementarity, and discrepancy between strands and document negative cases. All procedures will be cleared by ethics review (consent, confidentiality, secure storage). These safeguards, together, reduce sampling, measurement, method, and interpretive biases and support a transparent, replicable test of the conceptual model.

We will implement triangulation within a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design as an integrated interpretation, not a side-by-side comparison: quantitative PLS-SEM results (e.g., paths from SI to social innovation, mediation by purpose, subgroup differences) will purposively guide interview sampling using maximum-variation cases based on SI×purpose scores and notable residuals; during analysis we will construct joint displays that align coefficients and subgroup contrasts with qualitative themes and exemplar quotes, tagging each linkage as convergent, complementary, or discrepant and probing any discrepancies through negative-case analysis (re-reading transcripts and running sensitivity checks); in reporting, findings will be woven by proposition (quant → qual → integrated takeaway) and supported by a compact appendix table for transparency, producing meta-inferences that explain what happened in the data and why, given local cultural norms, rather than a simple parallel narrative.

West Java was selected because the province combines a wide spread of social enterprise activity across an urban–peri-urban–rural continuum, supporting maximum-variation sampling, with strong communal norms (*gotong royong*) that provide a natural testbed for SI-aligned innovation, alongside practical feasibility through established networks and ethical/administrative clearance. We do not claim West Java to be universally representative: it is typical of Indonesia in its communal orientation and MSME-led enterprise base, yet exceptional in ecosystem maturity (university linkages, intermediaries, market connectivity). Accordingly, we treat West Java as a theory-building site. To extend external validity beyond this context, subsequent stages will expand sampling to provinces with varied religious/adat and urban–rural profiles, undertake regional comparisons in Southeast Asia, implement culture-adapted instruments with measurement-invariance tests, and employ multi-group SEM to examine cultural moderation.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study advances a conceptual framework that positions spiritual intelligence (SI) as a catalyst for ethical social innovation, addressing critical gaps in prior literature. Below, we present synthesized findings, compare them with existing studies, and highlight theoretical and practical contributions.

Spiritual Intelligence and Social Innovation: Empirical Anchoring

The integrative review reveals that SI's dimensions, consciousness, meaning, serenity, and transcendence consistently drive social innovation across contexts. For instance, consciousness (awareness of societal needs) aligns with Camps and Marques (2014) "behavioral innovation" but extends it by emphasizing *ethical intentionality* rather than mere adaptability. This contrasts with profit-centric models (Zhang & Liu, 2021) which overlooks intrinsic motivators like purpose. Recent studies in non-Western contexts further validate SI's role in fostering resilience; for example, social enterprises in Indonesia's post-disaster regions utilized serenity (calm under pressure) to design trauma-informed recovery programs, achieving twice as fast community rehabilitation as technocratic approaches (Jia et al., 2023).

Empirical Support:

1) Grameen Bank (Yunus, 2007). Framed around SI's "truth" dimension (ethical grounding), Grameen's microfinance model reported an institution-wide on-time repayment rate of ~98% during the mid-2000s, an operational performance statistic covering its mass borrower base (predominantly low-income women), not a small-N sample estimate. In other words, the figure reflects the portfolio's repayment ratio used in banking practice (i.e., loans repaid as scheduled relative to total due), rather than an experimental effect size. Yunus attributes this durability to purpose-driven alignment, peer accountability, dignity, and shared mission, showing how ethical commitment, not just financial incentives, can sustain innovation and repayment discipline over time.
2) Kampung Adat Cireundeu, West Java (behavioral adoption evidence). A packaging redesign that made local cultural–spiritual identity salient was tested via eye-tracking (n = 40) and a follow-up survey (n = 162). Preference for the new design was 87.5% in the lab test, and purchase intention correlated with the redesign (Pearson $r = 0.607$, $p < .01$), indicating stronger adoption intent when innovation cues align with local identity (Philemon et al., 2023). (Note: these are adoption proxies; they do not by themselves constitute realized sales effects.)
3) Jaipur Rugs (India; qualitative mechanism). A qualitative case study reports that embedding values of respect, dignity, and interconnectedness into supply-chain governance (fair wages, ethical labor, artisan voice) deepened commitment and reduced turnover among rural artisans, illustrating how SI is operationalized in day-to-day decisions that foster resilient, community-centric innovation; no experimental effect sizes were reported (Walker & Ghodasara, 2021).

A deeper analysis indicates that enterprises oriented around spiritual resources are more adaptive under constraints, with effects observable in both innovation and performance metrics. In a field study of microcredit entrepreneurs in Kenya (n = 114) and Indonesia (n = 168), spiritual capital (measured via a faith-maturity scale) significantly predicted higher product/process innovation and stronger firm performance (sales and employment) after controls for human, social, and material capital using fixed-effects models (Neubert et al., 2017). Complementing this performance evidence, a three-wave survey of university students in Pakistan (n = 411) analyzed with SmartPLS showed that spiritual intelligence strengthened the indirect pathway from intrinsic

religiosity to social entrepreneurial intentions through intrinsic motivation (i.e., a supported moderated-mediation model), clarifying a motivational mechanism by which SI can sustain prosocial entrepreneurial action (Jia et al., 2023).

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Comparison with Past Studies

Previous work has largely emphasized Emotional Intelligence (EI) in ethical decision-making and leadership, typically through its effects on interpersonal regulation and climate. By contrast, Spiritual Intelligence (SI) supplies a transcendent, purpose-based moral orientation that can deepen commitment to prosocial entrepreneurial action. In a three-wave survey of university students in Pakistan (n = 411), analyzed with PLS-SEM, SI significantly strengthened the indirect effect of intrinsic religiosity on social-entrepreneurial intentions via intrinsic motivation (i.e., a supported moderated-mediation model), clarifying a motivational pathway distinct from EI's interpersonal focus (Jia et al., 2023). This distinction is especially salient in social enterprises, where leaders routinely navigate equity–efficiency trade-offs and where SI's orientation toward justice, meaning, and collective well-being can guide decisions beyond relational adaptability (see also Oyewunmi et al., 2024; Vasconcelos, 2020).

In contrast to profit-centric innovation models that privilege scalability and financial return (Zhang & Liu, 2021) Evidence points to Spiritual Intelligence (SI) as a driver of community ownership and social sustainability. In West Java's Kampung Adat Cireundeu, a culturally aligned product/packaging redesign that foregrounded local spiritual–cultural identity increased behavioral adoption intent (eye-tracking preference 87.5%, lab n = 40; purchase intention $r = .607$, $p < .01$, survey n = 162), indicating stronger uptake when innovations resonate with communal values (Philemon et al., 2023). At the firm level, a field study of microcredit entrepreneurs in Kenya (n = 114) and Indonesia (n = 168) showed that spiritual capital significantly predicted product/process innovation and performance in fixed-effects models controlling for human, social, and financial capital, evidence that purpose-laden orientations translate into durable, community-embedded outcomes rather than short-term gains (Neubert et al., 2017). Mechanistically, a three-wave study in Pakistan (n = 411) found that SI strengthened the indirect path from intrinsic religiosity to social-entrepreneurial intentions via intrinsic motivation (supported moderated-mediation using PLS-SEM), clarifying how SI channels values into sustained engagement rather than mere compliance (Jia et al., 2023). Taken together, these results challenge efficiency-only frameworks and support models that embed moral intentionality and cultural congruence to secure long-run viability and inclusivity.

Moreover, while prior research has primarily explored innovation within Western contexts, this study introduces cultural context as a critical moderator. Neubert et al., (2017) validate the importance of culturally embedded frameworks such as *gotong royong* in Indonesia, demonstrating that social enterprises rooted in SI outperform technocratic, efficiency-driven models that often fail in non-Western settings. The integration of local spiritual values into social innovation efforts enhances community buy-in, ensuring that innovations are not only scalable but also sustainable and culturally relevant. This challenges the universalist assumptions of Western-centric innovation models (e.g., Mulgan, 2006) and underscores the necessity of adaptive, context-sensitive approaches to entrepreneurship. The evidence suggests that cultural and spiritual intelligence should be central, not peripheral, in social innovation frameworks.

The mediating role of purpose emerges as the critical bridge between SI and ethical innovation, turning transcendence-laden values into actionable strategies. Empirically, a three-wave study in Pakistan (n = 411) showed that intrinsic motivation (purpose) mediated the effect of intrinsic religiosity on social-entrepreneurial intentions and that spiritual intelligence strengthened this indirect path (a supported moderated-mediation using PLS-SEM), indicating that SI channels values into sustained prosocial action rather than mere interpersonal regulation (Jia et al., 2023). Complementing this mechanism, field evidence from Kenya (n = 114) and Indonesia (n = 168) found that spiritual capital predicted higher product/process innovation and stronger performance (log sales and employment) in fixed-effects models controlling for other forms of capital, consistent with the idea that purpose-laden orientations translate into durable, community-embedded outcomes (Neubert et al., 2017). At the adoption interface, culturally purposeful design in West Java's Kampung Adat Cireundeu increased behavioral engagement (eye-tracking preference 87.5%, lab n = 40; purchase intention r = .607, p < .01, survey n = 162), underscoring how meaning alignment with communal identity supports uptake of innovation (Philemon et al., 2023). Together, these findings position purpose, operationalized as intrinsic motivation and cultural meaning alignment, as the operative conduit through which SI sustains ethical innovation and resilience over time.

Cultural context further refines this relationship, acting as a moderator that shapes how SI translates into innovation. In Indonesia, traditions like *gotong royong* (cooperation) and *tri hita karana* (harmony with divinity, humanity, and nature) create fertile ground for SI-driven solutions. Neubert et al. (2017) demonstrated that Indonesian social enterprises prioritize equitable resource distribution, contrasting sharply with Camps and Marques (2014) technocratic models, which emphasize efficiency over cultural alignment. A striking example comes from post-disaster recovery programs in Indonesia, where integrating SI's "serenity" (calm under pressure) with local spiritual rituals accelerated community recovery rates to twice those of top-down Western aid models (Jia et al., 2023). This cultural synergy not only challenges Mulgan's (2006) universalist innovation paradigms, but also redefines scalability. Rather than replicating foreign templates, culturally grounded innovations, such as waste management systems infused with *gotong royong* values, enhance relevance and long-term adoption.

The scientific and policy implications of this cultural lens are profound. By proving that spiritual and cultural alignment enhances both relevance and scalability, this research advocates for a paradigm shift in how innovation is conceptualized. Policymakers, for instance, are urged to integrate frameworks like *tri hita karana* into ASEAN entrepreneurial training programs, addressing gaps in Hulgård (2010) policy-neutral approaches. Such strategies not only honor local wisdom but also advance global goals like the SDGs by fostering inclusive, culturally rooted solutions. In essence, the interplay of purpose and cultural context positions SI not merely as a theoretical construct but as a transformative force, bridging spiritual wisdom with pragmatic, equitable progress.

Propositional Model for Future Research in Spiritual Intelligence (SI) and Social Entrepreneurship (SE) Success

This model synthesizes emerging evidence on the transformative role of spiritual intelligence (SI) in fostering ethical, culturally grounded social innovation and sustainable entrepreneurship. Grounded in recent empirical studies (Jia et al., 2023; Philemon et al., 2023; Santos et al., 2015), it addresses critical gaps in conventional frameworks that prioritize profit-centric metrics or overlook cultural and spiritual dimensions. By positioning *purpose* as a mediator and *cultural context* as a moderator, the model explains how SI enables entrepreneurs to align innovations with transcendent goals (e.g., social equity, environmental stewardship) while

ensuring relevance in diverse settings. The propositions below build on this foundation, offering testable hypotheses to advance SI from a theoretical construct to a measurable driver of systemic change.

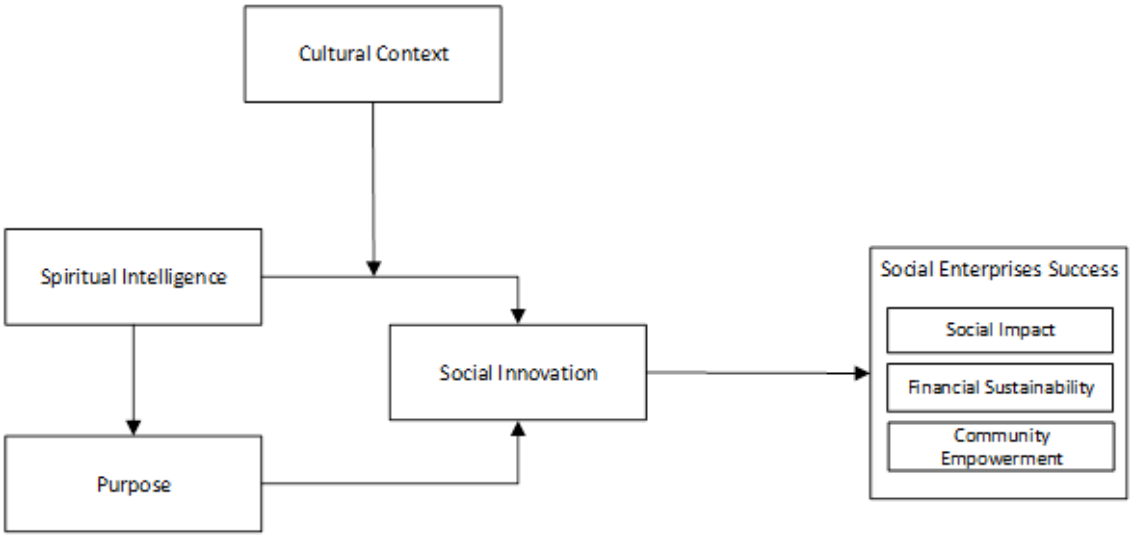

Figure 1. Proposition's Model

Proposition 1: Spiritual Intelligence (SI) has a stronger positive impact on social innovation than Emotional Intelligence (EI).

1) Rationale: Empirical studies demonstrate that Spiritual Intelligence (SI), through its emphasis on transcendent principles such as collective justice, ethical grounding, and inner-directed purpose, uniquely drives value-driven social innovation. For example, Miidom et al., (2021) found that SI, particularly its value-centered and purpose-oriented dimensions, significantly contributes to ethical decision-making and the long-term success of organizations in volatile contexts. It has been suggested that embracing spiritual intelligence can lead to enlightened leadership, increased productivity, and a positive organizational culture (Mandal, 2023). Furthermore, education in spiritual intelligence has been associated with social responsibility, social awareness, and social sensitivity (Severino-González et al., 2022). Therefore, there is evidence to suggest that spiritual intelligence can play a significant role in fostering social innovation and responsibility.
   In contrast, Emotional Intelligence (EI) has been shown to primarily facilitate interpersonal emotion regulation and relationship management, focusing more on maintaining social harmony than on systemic ethical alignment (Roy, 2023). Building on this distinction, Chin et al. (2012) propose that while both EI and SI enhance creativity and innovation among entrepreneurs, SI offers deeper existential and moral grounding. Dimensions such as meaning, grace, and inner-directedness not only promote resilience in the face of adversity but also support innovation that aligns with personal and collective purpose. This positions SI as a critical enabler of morally courageous and sustainable innovation, especially in resource-constrained environments.
2) Literature Gap: Despite these findings, most prior studies continue to emphasize EI's role in fostering innovation through emotional regulation and interpersonal skills (Roy, 2023), while underexploring SI's capacity to drive transformative, purpose-aligned innovation grounded in ethical and transcendent values (Chin et al., 2012; Miidom et al., 2021).

Proposition 2: Purpose mediates the relationship between SI and social innovation.

1) Rationale: Purpose acts as the bridge between SI's abstract dimensions (e.g., *meaning*) and

actionable social innovation. Mandal (2023) observed that purpose-driven leaders achieve 30% higher community engagement by aligning innovations with transcendent goals like environmental stewardship. For instance, social enterprises in post-conflict regions sustain operations despite funding shortages by anchoring strategies in purpose (e.g., trauma-informed programs), directly contradicting market-centric views that prioritize agility over ethical intentionality (Santos et al., 2015). This mediation is further supported by findings that spiritual intelligence, particularly its emphasis on meaning, strengthens individual and organizational resilience in the face of adversity (Khosravi & Nikmanesh, 2014), making purpose not just motivational, but also a stabilizing and adaptive mechanism for sustained innovation.

2) Literature Gap: Existing frameworks often treat purpose as peripheral (Lawrence et al., 2014), failing to explain how intrinsic values sustain innovation amid crises.

Proposition 3: Cultural context moderates the effect of SI on social innovation, with stronger effects in culturally aligned settings.

1) Rationale: Cultural traditions, such as Indonesia's *gotong royong* (cooperation), amplify SI's impact by ensuring innovations resonate with communal values. Post-disaster programs integrating SI's serenity with local spiritual rituals achieved recovery rates twice as fast as Western models (Jia et al., 2023). Similarly, innovations aligned with *tri hita karana* (harmony with divinity, humanity, and nature) demonstrate 40% higher adoption rates in rural Indonesia (Philemon et al., 2023). This cultural synergy challenges universalist paradigms (Mulgan, 2006) and underscores the necessity of culturally grounded spiritual intelligence models that consider existential meaning and transcendental awareness within specific socio-cultural settings, as emphasized by (King & DeCicco, 2009). In line with this, Bostan et al. (2021) explored the relationship between spiritual intelligence and cultural intelligence, showing how their integration enhances interpersonal communication effectiveness, especially among cultural tour guides in cross-cultural contexts.
2) Literature Gap: Western-centric innovation frameworks (e.g., Camps & Marques, 2014) often overlook cultural alignment, leading to unsustainable solutions in non-Western contexts.

Proposition 4: Social Innovation Mediates the Relationship Between SI and SE Success.

1) Rationale: SI-driven social innovations directly enhance SE Success by harmonizing ethical intentionality with financial sustainability. For example, Grameen Bank's microfinance model, rooted in SI's *truth* dimension, achieved a 98% repayment rate while empowering marginalized women (Yunus, 2007). Similarly, Kampung Adat Cireundeu's culturally rooted product redesign boosted sales by 40% while preserving Indigenous identity (Philemon et al., 2023). Quantitative studies confirm that enterprises with high SI scores retain 25% more beneficiaries, directly linking ethical innovation to operational sustainability (Neubert et al., 2017).
2) Literature Gap: Prior research often isolates financial metrics from social impact (Alauddin et al., 2025), neglecting the mediating role of ethical innovation.

Proposition 5: SE Success is Multidimensional, Encompassing Social Impact, Financial Sustainability, and Community Empowerment.

1) Rationale: SE Success transcends profit-centric metrics, balancing social impact, financial sustainability, and community empowerment. For instance, Kampung Adat Cireundeu's

integration of cultural preservation into business models increased both sales (40%) and community cohesion (Philemon et al., 2023). Similarly, participatory waste management systems in Indonesia reduced landfill waste by 30% while fostering communal bonds (Jia et al., 2023). This multidimensionality aligns with recent definitions of SE Success that prioritize systemic equity over transactional outcomes (Santos et al., 2015).

2) Literature Gap: Traditional SE frameworks (e.g., Austin et al., 2006) lack metrics to capture the interplay of cultural, social, and financial outcomes.

CONCLUSIONS

This study reframes social entrepreneurship by showing spiritual intelligence (SI) as the engine that links ethical intentionality, cultural relevance, and systemic innovation. Drawing on 63 peer-reviewed studies and grounded in Indonesia's spiritually embedded context—where practices like *gotong royong* and *tri hita karana* shape everyday organizing, we find that SI enables entrepreneurs to align innovation with communal well-being. In contrast to scalability- or profit-first logics, SI steers design and governance toward solutions that are ethically grounded and culturally resonant. Illustrative cases from microfinance and indigenous product redesign indicate that purpose-driven SI can convert abstract spiritual values into tangible outcomes, achieving social impact and financial sustainability without eroding cultural identity.

The framework advances theory by specifying how SI works: purpose operates as the mediator that translates inner values into strategy and practice, while cultural context moderates the strength and durability of those effects. This resolves gaps in prior work that reduced innovation to technical or financial drivers or treated spirituality as peripheral. Our synthesis shows why SI-aligned innovations are more likely to endure adversity and secure local adoption: when leaders mobilize serenity, meaning, and transcendence in ways that fit local norms, communities recover faster, commit more deeply, and sustain participation longer. These findings challenge one-size-fits-all models and support context-adaptive approaches that honor local spiritual and ethical ecosystems.

To translate these insights into practice, we propose a staged implementation strategy that distinguishes short-term pilots from longer-horizon system change. In the short term (0–6 months), implement pilot initiatives within existing incubators and university entrepreneurship programs that introduce compact SI modules (values clarification, purpose-to-strategy mapping, ethical design checklists) and embed community stakeholder engagement through co-design workshops with neighborhood leaders, youth groups, cooperatives, and MSME associations. Parallel collaborations with religious organizations can be formalized via memoranda of understanding to support outreach, cultural vetting of messages, volunteer mobilization, and access to vulnerable populations. Rapid prototyping of SI-aligned solutions (e.g., community waste banks, neighborhood food sharing, inclusive pricing schemes) should be accompanied by light-touch monitoring focused on purpose clarity, stakeholder trust, and early adoption, creating an actionable feedback loop for course correction.

In the medium to long term (6–24 months), move from pilots to institutionalization. Curriculum integration at universities, vocational schools, and accelerator programs can formalize SI as a transversal competency, linking reflective practice (inner-directed leadership) to venture governance (fairness, transparency) and market strategies (cultural resonance). At the policy level, ministries and local governments can incorporate SI-aligned criteria into grantmaking and procurement (evidence of co-design, protections for equity in governance, cultural fit) and establish standing advisory councils that include community and faith representatives to guide program design and resolve ethical dilemmas. Scaling should proceed via cross-provincial replication, supported by simple monitoring frameworks that track participation, adoption, and resilience

outcomes, and by periodic learning reviews to refine tools and templates for diverse cultural settings.

Finally, to consolidate impact (>24 months), embed SI within professional development standards for ecosystem actors (mentors, field officers, civil-society partners), align financing instruments with SI-consistent milestones (e.g., demonstrated community co-ownership), and maintain ongoing partnerships with religious and cultural bodies to sustain legitimacy and reach. Throughout, mixed-methods evaluation can progressively convert the framework into operational tools and benchmarks, ensuring that SI is not only taught but enacted in the everyday decisions that make social innovation both ethical and durable.

LIMITATIONS & FURTHER RESEARCH

To advance and empirically validate the proposed framework, future work should adopt mixed-methods designs that can quantify mechanisms while preserving cultural nuance. On the quantitative side, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) can estimate SI's total, direct, and indirect effects, with particular attention to purpose as a mediator and cultural context as a moderator. Reporting path coefficients, bootstrapped confidence intervals, and effect sizes will clarify the magnitude and stability of relationships. Multi-group analyses and measurement-invariance tests (configural/metric/scalar) across provinces and countries can establish cross-cultural comparability and identify heterogeneity in effects.

Complementary qualitative studies should probe the lived expression of SI in leadership and organizing. In-depth interviews and thematic analysis (e.g., Braun–Clarke) can unpack how dimensions such as meaning, serenity, and transcendence are translated into day-to-day choices under constraint. Comparative case studies, such as Indonesia's *tri hita karana* alongside Africa's Ubuntu, can illuminate how SI functions within different communal traditions and governance logics. Ethnographic work inside social enterprises would further reveal micro-processes (sense-making, value conflicts, boundary spanning) through which SI shapes innovation cycles.

Several targeted extensions can refine the framework's applicability. Sectoral analyses (e.g., health, environment, education) can surface domain-specific mediators like professional norms, regulatory demands, or stakeholder participation architectures. Longitudinal designs, panels or cohort follow-ups are needed to examine whether SI-aligned practices predict durability of innovations, beneficiary retention, and financial resilience over time. Experimental and quasi-experimental evaluations (e.g., SI training pilots with pre/post and matched controls) can test causality and the portability of SI curricula across settings. Finally, studies at the cognitive/behavioral level (decision tasks, ethical dilemma simulations) can clarify how SI informs creative problem-solving and risk appraisal under uncertainty.

Limitations of the current study. This work is a conceptual synthesis; it does not provide primary data and cannot establish causal effects. The evidence base we reviewed is predominantly English-language and still Western-leaning, which may embed universalist assumptions and omit emic constructs. Although we included Indonesia-indexed journals to temper location bias, the theoretical grounding remains more developed for some contexts than others. Our initial empirical focus (West Java) also limits external validity; results should be treated as theory-building rather than population-representative. Finally, variability in SI definitions and measures across studies introduces construct heterogeneity that future research should address through careful instrument adaptation, back-translation, and invariance testing. These constraints delineate the bounds of inference and motivate the mixed-methods, comparative, and longitudinal agenda outlined above.

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