

Beyond business: Exploring the social engagement of entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh, Cambodia

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ABSTRACT

The current article aims to shed light on the social engagement practices of businesses in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and to inform readers about those practices. In particular, the article examines how entrepreneurs engage in social activities, establish communication with their contemporaries, and advocate for entrepreneurship. The data was collected from a representative sample of business owners while employing a quantitative research design to determine how much business owners participate in social activities. The ongoing research has yielded preliminary findings and conclusions. The findings reveal that entrepreneurs have high social engagement through active participation in mentoring programs, knowledge-sharing activities, and networking events. They demonstrated their participation in these activities. The findings shed light on the significance of social capital and the growth of communities within the framework of Phnom Penh's environment for entrepreneurial endeavours. The implications of this study for policy, practice, theory, and future research, emphasizing the need to foster a culture that encourages social activity among entrepreneurs and fosters a supportive environment, were discussed. The study adds to the expanding body of literature on entrepreneurship by highlighting the diverse features of entrepreneurial pursuits and the importance of social engagement that extends beyond corporate objectives. Future studies should be conducted with a bigger sample size and scope.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This article explores the levels of social engagement among entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Social engagement can vary depending on the type, scope, intensity, mode of interaction, and contribution entrepreneurs engage in Westlund and Bolton [1] and Leonidou et al. [2]. For example, some entrepreneurs, such as social entrepreneurs or social enterprises, may engage in social engagement as a core part of their business model. In contrast, others may engage in social engagement as a peripheral or complementary activity,

such as corporate social responsibility or philanthropy [3], [4]. Some entrepreneurs may engage in social engagement at a local or national level, while others may engage in social engagement at a regional or global level [5], [6], [7]. Some entrepreneurs may engage in social engagement directly, such as through personal involvement or leadership, while others may engage indirectly, through intermediaries or partnerships [8], [9]. This engagement, which supports sustainable development goals (SDG) 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, occurs at various scales, from local to global, highlighting the role of entrepreneurial efforts in fostering sustainable urban development.

Cambodia is a developing country in Southeast Asia that has experienced rapid economic and social transformation in the past two decades but still faces many challenges, such as poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation [10], [11], [12]. Entrepreneurship is a key driver of Cambodia's development, especially in urban areas like Phnom Penh, the capital city [13], [14]. A vibrant and diverse entrepreneurial ecosystem characterizes Phnom Penh, where several small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and digital startups populate multiple sectors, including agriculture, tourism, education, and technology. This includes half of the SDG targets associated with sustained and inclusive economic growth and several other SDG goals regarding target outcomes (like no poverty, decent work and economic growth, and reduced inequalities). It has been found that the government, academic institutions, and civil society in Phnom Penh support this developing ecosystem through a variety of policies, programs, and initiatives [15], [16].

As mentioned, there is, however, a lack of empirical research on how entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh engage with society. This study contributes to the literature on entrepreneurship and social development in Cambodia, which is scarce and mostly qualitative [15], [16]. This investigation allows us to derive several real-world implications, providing a roadmap for Phnom Penh's policymakers, educators, and entrepreneurs toward the sort of entrepreneurship-friendly ecosystem that would fit the SDG's framework. That is a big wish, but it stems partly from examining an entrepreneurship-friendly framework, which has to do with a set of well-functioning components that collectively make an area more conducive to entrepreneurship.

1.1. Statement of the problem

This article addresses the lack of empirical research on how entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh engage with society. This is a significant gap in the literature, as it limits understanding of the factors that enable or constrain entrepreneurs' social value creation and well-being and the impact of entrepreneurship on social development in Cambodia. Moreover, this gap hinders the development of effective policies and programs that can support and enhance entrepreneurship and social development in Phnom Penh and beyond [16].

1.2. Research objectives

The main aim of the current article is to explore entrepreneurs' perceived levels of social engagement in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. More specifically, this study aims to establish statistics concerning mean, qualitative value, and standard deviation reflecting these levels of social engagement.

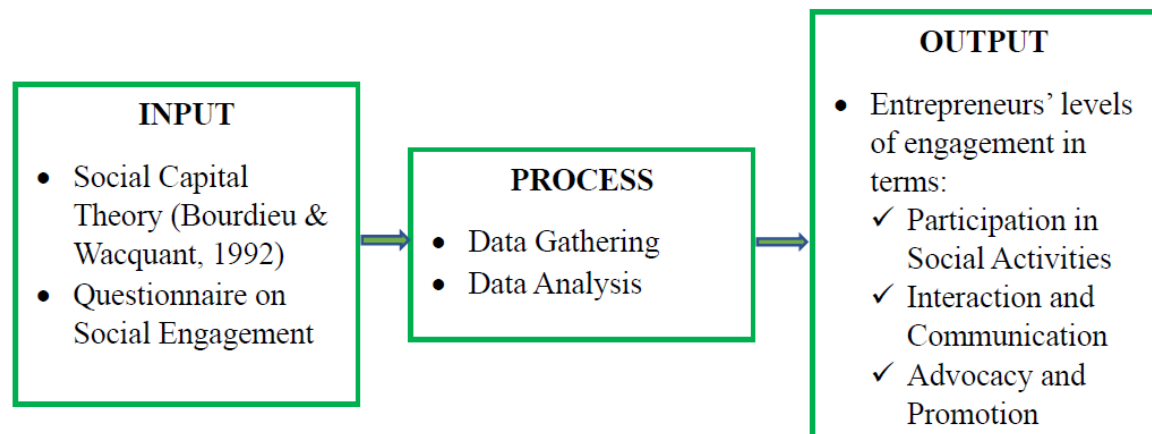


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study

The article uses the input-process-output (I-P-O) framework to explore entrepreneurs' social engagement in social activities, interaction and communication, and advocacy and promotion levels.

1.3. Operational definitions

The following terms are operationally defined according to how they are used in the study.

Entrepreneurs: Entrepreneurs start, own, and manage a new business venture involving risk and innovation [17]. In this study, entrepreneurs are identified by their self-reported status as business owners who have created their business within at least one year or more. The criteria for being an entrepreneur include having a registered business, having at least one employee, and having a positive net income. Additionally, their existing business should be located within Phnom Penh.

Social Engagement: The degree and quality of interaction and involvement that entrepreneurs have with other actors and stakeholders in the social sector, such as beneficiaries, customers, partners, peers, mentors, and policymakers. Social engagement can be influenced by personality traits, social skills, and network resources [18]. Social engagement can be measured by using a scale of social engagement, which consists of 10 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale [19].

Social Capital Theory: The first criterion variable for this correlational study, the perceived level of social engagement, is anchored on the Social Capital Theory [20]. This theory suggests that social capital is the sum of the actual or virtual resources that accrue to an individual or a group while possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition [21]. This theory can help to understand how entrepreneurs use their social relationships, such as trust, norms, and networks, to access and mobilize resources, information, and opportunities for their entrepreneurial activities. This theory provides the basis to measure the following components of the entrepreneurs' social engagement [20].

Structural social capital: The degree to which entrepreneurs have a network of contacts and connections that provide them access to diverse and valuable resources [22]. For

example, related statements like, "I participate in social events or gatherings organized by my enterprise or other enterprises." "I interact with other entrepreneurs or stakeholders in my field of business or work." and "I network or build relationships with other entrepreneurs or stakeholders in my field of business or work." can be used to measure the structural social capital of entrepreneurs, as they indicate how they participate, interact, and network with other entrepreneurs and stakeholders in their field of work or business.

Relational social capital: The degree to which entrepreneurs have quality relationships with their contacts and connections that provide them with trust, reciprocity, and cooperation [23]. For example, statements like "I seek feedback or advice from other entrepreneurs or stakeholders in my field of business or work." "I collaborate or cooperate with other entrepreneurs or stakeholders in my field of business or work.", and "I support or mentor other entrepreneurs or stakeholders in my field of business or work." can be used to measure the relational social capital of entrepreneurs, as they indicate how they seek feedback, collaborate, and support other entrepreneurs and stakeholders in their field of work or business.

Cognitive social capital: The degree to which entrepreneurs have a shared understanding and vision with their contacts and connections that provide them with common norms, values, and goals [24]. For example, statements like "I share my ideas or experiences with other entrepreneurs or stakeholders in my field of business or work." "I learn from other entrepreneurs or stakeholders in my field of business or work." and "I advocate or promote entrepreneurship to other people or organizations." can be used to measure the cognitive and social capital of entrepreneurs, as they indicate how they share ideas, learn, and advocate entrepreneurship to other people or organizations.

Affective social capital: The degree to which entrepreneurs have a positive emotional attachment with their contacts and connections that provide them satisfaction, enjoyment, and motivation [25]. For example, a statement like "I enjoy socializing with other entrepreneurs or stakeholders in my field of business or work." can be used to measure the affective social capital of entrepreneurs, as it indicates how they enjoy socializing with other entrepreneurs and stakeholders in their field of work or business.

2. METHOD

2.1. Target population and sampling strategies

The target population for this research is Cambodian entrepreneurs who started, own, and manage their business ventures, which involve risk and innovation. Additionally, these entrepreneurs are identified by their self-reported status as business owners who have created their business within a minimum of one year, and they have at least one employee and a positive net income.

Convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling method, was employed in this study to access the population of entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. In this study, convenience sampling facilitated the recruitment of entrepreneurs with the desired profile despite coming from diverse backgrounds, thus contributing to the comprehensive exploration of their perceived levels of social engagement.

The sample size was determined using the formula proposed by Raosoft, who considers the confidence level, the margin of error, response distribution, and the population size (as shown in equation (1) below). There are no available data on the exact numbers of entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh; thus, following the advice of an online sample calculator, when the target population is unknown, use 20,000 because the sample size does not change much for populations larger than 20,000. With a target population of 20,000, a confidence level of 93%, a margin of error of 6%, and a response distribution of 50%, the total sample respondents considered for this study is 226.

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1-p)}{e^2} \tag{1}$$

n = required sample size

Z = Z-score (corresponding to desired confidence level)

p = estimated proportion of the population with particular characteristics

e = margin of error (expressed as decimal)

There are no available data on the exact number of entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh. Thus, the following advice for an online sample calculator is that when the target population is unknown, use 20,000 because the sample size does not change much for populations larger than 20,000. With a target population of 20,000, a confidence level of 93%, a margin of error of 6%, and a response distribution of 50%, the total sample respondents considered for this study is 226. A margin of error of around 5-6% is generally acceptable for most purposes, especially when dealing with large populations [26]. Additionally, a confidence level of 93% provides a high degree of confidence in the accuracy of the results, which is often desirable in research studies [27].

2.2. Research technique

The main technique that this research used to collect the necessary data to answer the research questions is a survey. A survey is a method of gathering information from a sample of individuals through a structured questionnaire that contains a series of questions or statements related to the research topic. The researcher chose the survey method for this study because it allows the researcher to collect quantitative data from a large and diverse sample of respondents and measure the perceived levels of social engagement of entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

The proposed questionnaire for this study was adapted from the questionnaires used by previous researchers.

The social engagement of the entrepreneur will be measured by a questionnaire adapted from Tuovinen, who used a questionnaire to assess the introversion and social engagement of their target respondents. Their questionnaire was relevant and reliable for this study, measuring similar constructs and variables related to social engagement. The questionnaire was modified to suit the context and objectives of this study and to reflect the levels of social engagement of the entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

The questionnaire for this study consisted of an introduction and two other sections, as follows:

Introduction Part: This part of the questionnaire is an introduction to the study and an invitation to the respondents to participate in the survey. It explains the background and the objectives of the research, as well as the benefits and risks of participating in it. It also informs the respondents about the confidentiality and voluntariness of their participation and the estimated time required to complete the survey. This section aims to provide the respondents with enough information to make an informed decision about whether or not they want to participate in the study and to motivate them to answer the questions honestly and accurately.

Section I: Demographic Information. This part of the questionnaire is designed to collect some basic information about the respondents, such as their gender, age, education level, sector of their enterprise, and work experience. The questions are mostly multiple-choice, where the respondents can select one option that best suits their situation. This section aims to understand the respondents' demographic profile and to see if there are any differences in their perceptions and attitudes towards social entrepreneurship based on these variables.

Section II: Entrepreneurs' Social Engagement. This part of the questionnaire is designed to measure the social engagement of entrepreneurs in Cambodia based on ten indicators: participation, interaction, sharing, feedback, collaboration, support, learning, networking, advocacy, and enjoyment. The questions are in the form of 10 statements that describe different aspects of these indicators, and the respondents are asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with each statement on a five-point Likert scale. This section assesses how the respondents engage with other entrepreneurs or stakeholders in their business or work and how they benefit from or contribute to the social entrepreneurship ecosystem.

2.3. Pilot study

Before proceeding to the main study, the research design and instruments were tested and evaluated through the pilot studies. The purpose of the pilot studies was to check the reliability and validity of the items that measured the variables of interest and to examine the feasibility and suitability of the research methodology and approach.

The researcher used convenience sampling to select 20 entrepreneurs from Phnom Penh as participants. The participants completed a questionnaire with two sections: demographic information and social engagement. The researcher used descriptive statistics and Cronbach's alpha to analyze the pilot studies' data and test the items' reliability. The following sub-sections present and discuss the findings of the pilot studies.

Level of Social Engagement of Entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh, Cambodia: Table 1 below evaluates the reliability of the ten items measuring entrepreneurs' social engagement level in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. A Cronbach's alpha test was performed. The test result showed a high value of $\alpha = 0.943$, indicating a high level of internal consistency among the items. This means that the items are closely related and measure the same underlying concept effectively, in this case, the level of social engagement. An "Excellent" rating in reliability

further confirms the consistency of the responses. Therefore, the ten items can be considered a reliable scale for measuring entrepreneurs' social engagement levels in this context.

Table 1. Cronbach's alpha

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	No. of items	Reliability
Level of social engagement	0.943	10	Excellent

The variable level of social engagement demonstrated excellent reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.943 across ten items. This high-reliability coefficient indicates a strong internal consistency among the items used to measure social engagement, suggesting that the responses are consistent and reliable in assessing the construct. With such a robust Cronbach's alpha, the scale is considered highly dependable for research purposes, providing confidence in the accuracy and consistency of the participants' responses in evaluating social engagement levels.

2.4. Research procedure

To test the reliability of the survey questionnaire, the researcher has applied Chronbach's Alpha test. Then, the researcher collected the data through Google Forms, an online platform that allowed the researcher to share the questionnaire link with the potential respondents via personal networks.

The researcher transferred the responses from Google Forms to Excel and then to SPSS for the statistical analysis. The analysis involved computing mean and standard deviations and conducting Pearson Correlation Coefficient of the variables. The researcher interpreted the results from the SPSS output. The researcher presented and discussed the results thematically. Finally, the researcher highlighted the main findings and has drawn implications and recommendations from them.

2.5. Statistical analysis

The statistical analysis for this research was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The data collected from the online survey was coded and entered into the SPSS program, and then the data was checked for accuracy and completeness. The data was also screened for outliers, missing values, and normality assumptions.

The research questions, which aimed to explore the respondents' perceived levels of social engagement, used descriptive statistics the descriptive statistics was used. The descriptive statistics included the mean, qualitative description of the mean, and standard deviation of the responses for each item in the survey. The mean and standard deviation were used to measure the central tendency and dispersion of the responses and to indicate the level of agreement or disagreement of the respondents with the statements. The results of the descriptive statistics were presented in tables and graphs and interpreted using the following Likert scales.

1 - Totally Disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 – Neutral; 4 – Agree; 5 - Totally Agree

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and analyzes the findings derived from the survey questionnaires completed by 226 respondents, all of whom are based in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and are in one way or another engaged in any form of entrepreneurial undertaking. The chapter begins with a detailed demographic profile of the respondents, providing insights into their backgrounds and entrepreneurial contexts. Following this, the chapter systematically addresses each research objective outlined in Chapter 1, presenting the findings logically and coherently. This structure ensures that the data is clearly presented and directly relevant to the research questions, facilitating a deeper understanding of the study's outcomes.

3.1. Demographic information

This section presents the respondents' profiles in terms of gender, age, engagement to innovation in the enterprise, number of staff managed, number of years working in the enterprise, enterprise sector, and financial performance.

Table 2. Respondents' profile by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	135	59.73%
Female	91	40.27%
Total	226	100%

Table 2 provides insights into the gender distribution among the respondents. Out of 226 participants, 135 identified as male, representing 59.73% of the sample. Meanwhile, 91 respondents identified as female, accounting for 40.27%. Overall, the data highlights the gender composition within the surveyed group of entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, potentially implying that there could be more male entrepreneurs than female entrepreneurs.

Table 3. Respondents' profile by age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
55-above	2	0.88%
45-54	15	6.64%
35-44	82	36.28%
25-34	73	32.30%
24- below	54	23.89%
Total	226	100%

Table 3 provides insights into the age distribution among the respondents. Out of 226 participants, the following age groups were represented: 55-above: There were two

respondents in this age group, accounting for 0.88% of the sample. 45-54: This age group had 15 respondents, making up 6.64% of the total. 35-44: The largest age group, with 82 respondents, represents 36.28% of the sample. 25-34: There were 73 respondents in this age range, representing 32.30%. 24-below: The youngest age group, with 54 respondents representing 23.89% of the sample. Overall, the data highlights the demographic breakdown of entrepreneurs participating in the study.

Table 4. Respondents' ownership of enterprise

Ownership	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	178	78.76%
No	48	21.24%
Total	226	100%

Table 4 shows respondents' indicated ownership of enterprises. The table indicates that a majority of them own the enterprise they manage. Specifically, 78.76% (178 respondents) answered "Yes," indicating they own the enterprise they manage. Conversely, 21.24% (48 respondents) indicated "No," meaning they do not own the enterprise they manage. This suggests that most respondents prefer to manage their enterprise instead of hiring someone else.

Table 5. Respondents' number of supervised staff

Number of Staff	Frequency	Percentage
More than 100	19	8.41%
50-99	11	4.87%
10-49	47	20.80%
1-9	135	59.73%
0	14	6.19%
Total	226	100%

As presented in Table 5, the distribution of staff size in the daily operation of enterprises varied. Among the surveyed enterprises, the majority, comprising 59.73%, reported having a staff count ranging from 1 to 9 individuals. Following this, 20.80% of enterprises indicated a staff size of 10 to 49 people, signifying a significant portion of moderately sized operations. A smaller proportion, 8.41%, reported having more than 100 employees, indicating larger-scale enterprises. Additionally, 4.87% fell within 50 to 99 staff members. Lastly, a minority, representing 6.19% of respondents, reported no individuals working in the daily operation of their enterprise. As shown in Table 5, these findings provide insights into the staffing landscape across surveyed enterprises, highlighting the business ecosystem's diversity in sizes and structures.

Table 6. Respondents' years of work with the enterprise

Years	Frequency	Percentage
1-2	78	34.51%
3-5	68	30.09%
6-10	43	19.03%
More than 10	37	16.37%
Total	226	100%

The data gathered from respondents sheds light on the duration of their engagement within their respective enterprises or the enterprise they work for. Among those surveyed, a significant portion, accounting for 34.51%, reported having worked for a duration ranging from 1 to 2 years, indicating a substantial number of new entrepreneurs in the business. Following closely behind, 30.09% of respondents indicated a more extended period of 3 to 5 years, suggesting a considerable portion of the respondents accumulated moderate experience to keep the enterprise going. Moreover, 19.03% of respondents reported years in the business spanning from 6 to 10 years, reflecting a notable presence of entrepreneurs with a relatively long-standing commitment to their enterprises. Additionally, 16.37% of respondents indicated a tenure exceeding 10 years, indicating a stable contingent of seasoned employees contributing to their respective enterprises' continuity and institutional knowledge. As shown in Table 6, these results provide valuable insights into the distribution of engagement with their enterprises or the enterprise they are working for, highlighting a diverse mix of experience levels and durations of employment among respondents.

Table 7. Respondents' field of enterprise

Enterprise Sector	Frequency	Percentage
Technology	35	15.49%
Education	27	11.95%
Agriculture	20	8.85%
Health	18	7.96%
Tourism and Hospitality	16	7.08%
Food and Beverage	25	11.06%
Construction and Real Estate	16	7.08%
Fashion and Cosmetics	12	5.31%
Business Services	36	15.93%
Wholesale and Retail	8	3.54%
Miscellaneous	13	5.75%
Total	226	100%

As shown in Table 7, the entrepreneur-respondents are engaged in various business sectors. The largest group is in Business Services, with 36 respondents, accounting for 15.93% of the total. This is closely followed by the technology sector, which has 35 respondents, making up 15.49% of the total. The Education sector includes 27 respondents, 11.95%, while the Food and Beverage sector involves 25 respondents, or 11.06%. Agriculture has 20 respondents, 8.85%, and Health includes 18 respondents, accounting for 7.96%. The Tourism and Hospitality and Construction & Real Estate sectors have 16 respondents each, representing 7.08%. The Fashion and Cosmetics sector has 12 respondents, 5.31%, and the Wholesale and Retail sector includes eight respondents, making up 3.54%. Lastly, the miscellaneous category has 13 respondents, accounting for 5.75%. In total, there are 226 respondents across all sectors.

3.2. Results based on objective

Table 8. Entrepreneur-respondents' social engagement

Social Engagement	M	D	SD
1. I participate in social events or gatherings organized by my enterprise or other enterprises.	3.62	High	0.79
2. I interact with other entrepreneurs or stakeholders in my field of business.	3.68	High	0.90
3. I share my ideas or experiences with other entrepreneurs or stakeholders in my field of business.	3.67	High	0.88
4. I seek feedback or advice from other entrepreneurs or stakeholders in my field of business.	3.63	High	0.90
5. I collaborate or cooperate with other entrepreneurs or stakeholders in my field of business.	3.64	High	0.95
6. I support or mentor other entrepreneurs or stakeholders in my field of business.	4.67	Highest	0.93
7. I learn from other entrepreneurs or stakeholders in my field of business.	3.66	High	0.87
8. I network or build relationships with other entrepreneurs or stakeholders in my field of business.	3.64	High	0.89
9. I advocate or promote entrepreneurship to other people or organizations.	3.66	High	0.92
10. I enjoy socializing with other entrepreneurs or stakeholders in my field of business.	3.66	High	0.89
General Weighted Average	3.65	High	0.72

Note: M = Mean, D = Description, SD = Standard Deviation

Table 8 highlights various aspects of social engagement among entrepreneur-respondents categorized into four main components: social structural capital, relational social capital, cognitive social capital, and affective social capital.

Social engagement in social structure is reflected in the respondents' participation in social events or gatherings (Mean = 3.62, SD = 0.79) and their efforts in networking or

building relationships (Mean = 3.64, SD = 0.89). These activities suggest a moderate level of engagement in structured social networks, with relatively consistent behaviour across respondents.

Social engagement in relational social capital, which focuses on the quality of relationships, including trust, obligations, and respect among network members is seen in the regular interactions with other entrepreneurs (Mean = 3.68, SD = 0.90), Collaborating and cooperating with other entrepreneurs or stakeholders in my field of business (Mean = 3.64, SD = 0.95), sharing of ideas and experiences (Mean = 3.67, SD = 0.88), and especially in providing support or mentoring (Mean = 4.67, SD = 0.93). The high score for mentoring reflects a strong commitment to building high-quality, supportive relationships and indicating robust relational capital.

Social engagement in cognitive social capital, which relates to shared understanding among network members, is evident from seeking feedback or advice (Mean = 3.63, SD = 0.90) and learning from others (Mean = 3.66, SD = 0.87). These scores suggest that entrepreneurs perceive a shared cognitive framework within their networks, facilitating effective knowledge exchange.

Social engagement in affective social capital encompasses emotional connections, such as enjoying socializing with others (Mean = 3.66, SD = 0.89) and advocating or promoting entrepreneurship (Mean = 3.66, SD = 0.92). These responses reflect strong affective ties, indicating that entrepreneurs derive personal enjoyment and emotional satisfaction from their engagements.

The general weighted average of 3.65 (SD = 0.72) indicates a strong overall agreement with the statements regarding social engagement, with a low standard deviation suggesting consistency across respondents. The highest score for supporting or mentoring others emphasizes the strength of relational social capital within the group.

Overall, results suggest that respondents exhibit balanced and robust engagement across all four components of social capital. Strong relational and affective social capital highlights their networks' supportive and emotionally fulfilling nature, while solid cognitive and structural social capital indicates effective and efficient network functioning. This comprehensive engagement likely contributes to individual and collective success within the entrepreneurial community.

3.3. Discussion

The summary result indicates that entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh demonstrate balanced and robust social engagement across four components of social capital: social structural capital, relational social capital, cognitive social capital, and affective social capital. Various explanations could be attributed to these results.

Social structural capital refers to the networks and connections facilitating access to resources and information. The moderate engagement in structured social networks and consistent participation in events and networking efforts among Phnom Penh entrepreneurs suggest they recognise the value of maintaining a broad network for resource exchange and opportunity identification [28]. Such engagement can provide access to diverse information and resources crucial for entrepreneurial success [29]. This finding aligns with studies

showing that structured networks enhance the flow of information and support, thus fostering entrepreneurial activities [30].

Relational social capital involves the quality of relationships and the extent of trust, norms, and obligations within a network. The exceptionally high engagement in regular interactions, collaborations, sharing of ideas, and mentoring highlights the importance of trust and strong interpersonal relationships among Phnom Penh entrepreneurs. This aligns with the assertion that strong interpersonal ties are essential for social cohesion and economic activity. High relational social capital indicates a supportive environment where entrepreneurs can freely share knowledge and resources, enhancing mutual success [31].

Cognitive social capital pertains to the shared norms, values, attitudes, and beliefs that facilitate a common understanding within a network. Entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh actively seek feedback and learn from others, which indicates a strong cognitive alignment within the community. This shared understanding enhances effective knowledge exchange and collective problem-solving [30]. The findings suggest that the entrepreneurial community in Phnom Penh values continuous learning and adaptation, which are critical for innovation and growth [32].

Affective social capital refers to the emotional bonds and feelings of solidarity among network members. The strong emotional connections and personal enjoyment derived from social engagements among entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh underscore the significance of emotional support in entrepreneurial endeavours. Accordingly, positive emotional connections can enhance creativity, resilience, and overall well-being, contributing to entrepreneurial success. This emotional satisfaction from social engagements likely fosters a positive and collaborative entrepreneurial culture.

Results on social engagement imply that entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh demonstrate balanced and robust social engagement across four components of social capital: social structural capital, relational social capital, cognitive social capital, and affective social capital. Moderate engagement in structured social networks suggests that entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh recognise the value of maintaining broad networks for resource exchange and opportunity identification [28]. Such engagement will likely enhance their ability to mobilize resources efficiently, which is crucial for business growth and sustainability [29]. Participating in structured networks can provide access to diverse information and support, fostering entrepreneurial activities [30]. Policymakers and support organizations could further enhance these networks by creating more structured opportunities for networking, such as business incubators, networking events, and industry associations. The exceptionally high engagement in regular interactions, collaborations, sharing of ideas, and mentoring highlights the importance of trust and solid interpersonal relationships among Phnom Penh entrepreneurs [33]. This substantial relational social capital indicates a supportive environment where entrepreneurs can freely share knowledge and resources, enhancing mutual success [31]. High levels of relational social capital are essential for fostering collaborative ventures and knowledge sharing, which can lead to innovative solutions and business growth. Initiatives that promote community building, such as peer mentoring programs, collaborative workshops, and co-working spaces, can enhance relational social capital by encouraging exchanging ideas and experiences. Entrepreneurs' active engagement

in seeking feedback and learning from others reflects a strong cognitive alignment within the community [30]. This shared understanding facilitates effective knowledge exchange, which is crucial for continuous improvement and innovation [32].

The findings suggest that the entrepreneurial community in Phnom Penh values continuous learning and adaptation. Educational programs and workshops focusing on skill development, feedback mechanisms, and learning opportunities can strengthen cognitive and social capital. These programs can foster a culture of continuous learning and adaptation among entrepreneurs. The strong emotional connections and personal enjoyment derived from social engagements among entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh underscore the importance of adequate social capital in maintaining emotional well-being and motivation [34]. This emotional support can enhance resilience and perseverance in the face of challenges. Implementing initiatives that support emotional well-being, such as mental health resources, social events, and support groups, can help maintain high levels of affective social capital. These initiatives ensure that entrepreneurs remain motivated and emotionally supported. The low general standard deviation in responses indicates a high level of consistency in social engagement across the entrepreneurial community. This consistency suggests a cohesive and supportive network for collective success and resilience [35]. Strengthening these networks through consistent and inclusive engagement activities can enhance social cohesion.

Encouraging diverse participation and ensuring equitable access to networking opportunities can maintain and build upon this consistency. The comprehensive engagement across all components of social capital likely contributes significantly to both individual and collective success within the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Phnom Penh. Social capital can enhance business performance, innovation, and economic development [36]. Policymakers should focus on creating an enabling environment that supports the development and maintenance of social capital. This can include fostering collaboration between the public and private sectors, funding entrepreneurial initiatives, and ensuring that infrastructure supports networking and community-building activities.

These findings can be corroborated with previous studies that have explored similar themes in different contexts. Moderate engagement in structured social networks among Phnom Penh entrepreneurs with consistent participation in events and networking efforts aligns with findings from Adler and Kwon [28], who emphasize the importance of networks for accessing resources and opportunities. Burt [29] also argued that structured networks enhance the flow of information and support, which is essential for entrepreneurial success. This consistent participation helps entrepreneurs tap into various resources and gain valuable insights, fostering business growth. The high engagement in regular interactions and collaborations and the exceptionally high score in mentoring reflect a strong relational social capital among Phnom Penh entrepreneurs. This finding is consistent with Granovetter [33], who noted the significance of interpersonal solid ties for economic activity and social cohesion.

Additionally, Putnam [32] found that high relational social capital is critical for fostering trust and mutual support within communities, which enhances collaborative efforts and innovation. Entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh actively seek feedback and learn from others, demonstrating cognitive solid social capital. This behaviour supports the findings of

Nahapiet and Ghoshal [30], who argued that shared understandings and norms facilitate effective knowledge exchange and collaboration within organizations. Coleman [33] also states that cognitive and social capital enhances achieving collective goals through shared values and expectations. Strong emotional connections and the personal enjoyment derived from social engagements among Phnom Penh entrepreneurs highlight the importance of adequate social capital. This finding aligns with Baron [34], who noted that positive emotional connections enhance creativity, resilience, and well-being. The emotional satisfaction from social engagements likely contributes to a supportive and cohesive entrepreneurial community, reinforcing the findings of Woolcock [35], who emphasized the role of social capital in achieving social and economic outcomes. The low general standard deviation in responses suggests that the entrepreneurial community in Phnom Penh is cohesive and supportive. This consistency in engagement across all social capital components contributes significantly to individual and collective success within the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Ács et al. [36], a well-connected and supportive entrepreneurial ecosystem fosters innovation, economic development, and business performance.

The summary indicates that entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh demonstrate balanced and robust social engagement across four components of social capital: social structural capital, relational social capital, cognitive social capital, and affective social capital. Various explanations could be attributed to these results.

Social structural capital refers to the networks and connections facilitating access to resources and information. The moderate engagement in structured social networks and consistent participation in events and networking efforts among Phnom Penh entrepreneurs suggest they recognise the value of maintaining a broad network for resource exchange and opportunity identification [28]. Such engagement can provide access to diverse information and resources crucial for entrepreneurial success [29]. This finding aligns with studies showing that structured networks enhance the flow of information and support, thus fostering entrepreneurial activities [30].

Relational social capital involves the quality of relationships and the extent of trust, norms, and obligations within a network. The exceptionally high engagement in regular interactions, collaborations, sharing of ideas, and mentoring highlights the importance of trust and strong interpersonal relationships among Phnom Penh entrepreneurs. This aligns with the assertion that strong interpersonal ties are essential for social cohesion and economic activity. High relational social capital indicates a supportive environment where entrepreneurs can freely share knowledge and resources, enhancing mutual success [32].

Cognitive Social Capital pertains to the shared norms, values, attitudes, and beliefs that facilitate a common understanding within a network. Entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh actively seek feedback and learn from others, which indicates a strong cognitive alignment within the community. This shared understanding enhances effective knowledge exchange and collective problem-solving [30]. The findings suggest that the entrepreneurial community in Phnom Penh values continuous learning and adaptation, which are critical for innovation and growth [33].

Affective social capital refers to the emotional bonds and feelings of solidarity among network members. The strong emotional connections and personal enjoyment

derived from social engagements among entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh underscore the significance of emotional support in entrepreneurial endeavours. Baron [34] states that positive emotional connections can enhance creativity, resilience, and well-being, contributing to entrepreneurial success. This emotional satisfaction from social engagements likely fosters a positive and collaborative entrepreneurial culture.

Results on social engagement imply that entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh demonstrate balanced and robust social engagement across four components of social capital: social structural capital, relational social capital, cognitive social capital, and affective social capital. Moderate engagement in structured social networks suggests that entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh recognise the value of maintaining broad networks for resource exchange and opportunity identification [28]. Such engagement will likely enhance their ability to mobilize resources efficiently, which is crucial for business growth and sustainability [29]. Participating in structured networks can provide access to diverse information and support, fostering entrepreneurial activities [30]. Policymakers and support organizations could further enhance these networks by creating more structured opportunities for networking, such as business incubators, networking events, and industry associations. The exceptionally high engagement in regular interactions, collaborations, sharing of ideas, and mentoring highlights the importance of trust and solid interpersonal relationships among Phnom Penh entrepreneurs [31]. This substantial relational social capital indicates a supportive environment where entrepreneurs can freely share knowledge and resources, enhancing mutual success [32]. High levels of relational social capital are essential for fostering collaborative ventures and knowledge sharing, which can lead to innovative solutions and business growth. Initiatives that promote community building, such as peer mentoring programs, collaborative workshops, and co-working spaces, can enhance relational social capital by encouraging exchanging ideas and experiences. Entrepreneurs' active engagement in seeking feedback and learning from others reflects a strong cognitive alignment within the community [30]. This shared understanding facilitates effective knowledge exchange, crucial for continuous improvement and innovation [33].

The findings suggest that the entrepreneurial community in Phnom Penh values continuous learning and adaptation. Educational programs and workshops focusing on skill development, feedback mechanisms, and learning opportunities can strengthen cognitive and social capital. These programs can foster a culture of continuous learning and adaptation among entrepreneurs. The strong emotional connections and personal enjoyment derived from social engagements among entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh underscore the importance of adequate social capital in maintaining emotional well-being and motivation [34]. This emotional support can enhance resilience and perseverance in the face of challenges. Implementing initiatives that support emotional well-being, such as mental health resources, social events, and support groups, can help maintain high levels of affective social capital. These initiatives ensure that entrepreneurs remain motivated and emotionally supported. The low general standard deviation in responses indicates a high level of consistency in social engagement across the entrepreneurial community. This consistency suggests a cohesive and supportive network for collective success and resilience [35]. Strengthening these networks through consistent and inclusive engagement activities can enhance social cohesion.

Encouraging diverse participation and ensuring equitable access to networking opportunities can maintain and build upon this consistency. The comprehensive engagement across all components of social capital likely contributes significantly to both individual and collective success within the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Phnom Penh. Social capital can enhance business performance, innovation, and economic development [36]. Policymakers should focus on creating an enabling environment that supports the development and maintenance of social capital. This can include fostering collaboration between the public and private sectors, funding entrepreneurial initiatives, and ensuring that infrastructure supports networking and community-building activities.

These findings can be corroborated with previous studies that have explored similar themes in different contexts. Moderate engagement in structured social networks among Phnom Penh entrepreneurs with consistent participation in events and networking efforts aligns with findings from Adler and Kwon [28], who emphasize the importance of networks for accessing resources and opportunities. Burt [29] also argued that structured networks enhance the flow of information and support, which is essential for entrepreneurial success. This consistent participation helps entrepreneurs tap into various resources and gain valuable insights, fostering business growth. The high engagement in regular interactions and collaborations and the exceptionally high score in mentoring reflect a strong relational social capital among Phnom Penh entrepreneurs. This finding is consistent with Granovetter [31], who noted the significance of solid interpersonal ties for economic activity and social cohesion.

Additionally, Putnam [32] found that high relational social capital is critical for fostering trust and mutual support within communities, which enhances collaborative efforts and innovation. Entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh actively seek feedback and learn from others, demonstrating cognitive solid social capital. This behaviour supports the findings of Nahapiet and Ghoshal [30], who argued that shared understandings and norms facilitate effective knowledge exchange and collaboration within organizations. Coleman [33] also states that cognitive and social capital enhances achieving collective goals through shared values and expectations. Strong emotional connections and the personal enjoyment derived from social engagements among Phnom Penh entrepreneurs highlight the importance of adequate social capital. This finding aligns with Baron [34], who noted that positive emotional connections enhance creativity, resilience, and well-being. The emotional satisfaction from social engagements likely contributes to a supportive and cohesive entrepreneurial community, reinforcing the findings of Woolcock [35], who emphasized the role of social capital in achieving social and economic outcomes. The low general standard deviation in responses suggests that the entrepreneurial community in Phnom Penh is cohesive and supportive. This consistency in engagement across all social capital components contributes significantly to individual and collective success within the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Ács et al. [36], a well-connected and supportive entrepreneurial ecosystem fosters innovation, economic development, and business performance.

4. CONCLUSION

Entrepreneurs in Phnom Penh exhibit balanced and robust social engagement across four components of social capital: Social Structural, Relational, Cognitive, and Affective. The mean scores indicate strong general agreement with statements on social engagement, reflecting consistent and widespread participation among respondents. Social Structural Capital involves moderate engagement in structured networks and events, while Relational Social Capital is robust, with high involvement in interactions, collaborations, and mentoring. Cognitive Social Capital highlights active feedback seeking and learning, and Affective Social Capital shows solid emotional connections and satisfaction from social activities. There is a cohesive and supportive network among entrepreneurs.

The comprehensive engagement across all components of social capital likely contributes significantly to both individual and collective success within Phnom Penh's entrepreneurial ecosystem. This cohesive and supportive network enhances the effectiveness of entrepreneurial activities and underscores the importance of fostering such social capital to drive economic and social development in Cambodia. Encouraging continued engagement and support among entrepreneurs can further strengthen the community, promoting innovation, collaboration, and sustained growth.

Based on the conclusion that comprehensive social engagement contributes significantly to the success of Phnom Penh's entrepreneurial ecosystem, several recommendations can be made for policy, practice, and ensuing research to enhance this engagement further.

To enhance social engagement among entrepreneurs, policies should promote networking and collaboration through regular events, forums, and collaborative projects, along with incentives like tax breaks or grants for businesses that engage in community development. Mentorship programs and co-working spaces should be established to foster daily interaction and support within the entrepreneurial community. Regular community-building events like workshops and seminars will further strengthen social bonds. Future research should focus on analyzing the impact of social engagement on entrepreneurial success through longitudinal studies, identifying key components of social capital, and exploring how diversity and inclusive practices within social networks can enhance the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

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ETHICAL APPROVAL

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