

The Synergy of Social Capital and Vocational Training: Evaluating the Sustainability of Community-Based Home Industries in Emerging Economies

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ABSTRACT

Background. Community-based home industries play a vital role in the economic development of emerging economies, offering a source of livelihood and preserving local cultures. The synergy between social capital and vocational training is increasingly recognized as crucial for the sustainability of these industries. Social capital, encompassing networks, relationships, and trust, alongside vocational training, which enhances skills and productivity, can significantly impact the long-term success of home-based businesses.

Purpose. This study aims to evaluate how the interaction between social capital and vocational training influences the sustainability of community-based home industries in emerging economies.

Method. A mixed-methods approach was employed, including surveys to measure business performance and qualitative interviews to understand the role of social networks and training in business success.

Results. The results reveal that firms with strong social networks and access to vocational training show higher levels of productivity, market access, and longevity. These businesses experienced up to a 30% increase in productivity and a 25% improvement in sustainability compared to those without access to both factors.

Conclusion. The findings emphasize that integrating social capital with vocational training enhances the resilience of small businesses in low-resource environments, providing valuable insights for policymakers seeking to support sustainable entrepreneurship.

KEYWORDS

Community Based Home Industries, Emerging Economies, Social Capital, Sustainability, Vocational Training

INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of emerging economies has highlighted the importance of fostering sustainable economic development at the grassroots level (Al-Amin dkk., 2026). In many of these economies, community-based home industries play a pivotal role in providing employment, stimulating local economies, and preserving cultural heritage (Ampaw dkk., 2024). These industries are typically small-scale and locally focused, often driven by entrepreneurs who rely on their social networks and communal ties to enhance their business operations

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(Chen dkk., 2025). As such, social capitalthe networks, relationships, and norms that enable cooperation within communities emerges as a critical factor in the sustainability and growth of these industries. Moreover, vocational training is increasingly recognized as an essential tool in improving the skills and competencies of individuals within these industries, enhancing their productivity and ability to adapt to market changes (Daum dkk., 2025). Understanding the synergy between social capital and vocational training in the context of community-based home industries offers valuable insights into fostering sustainable livelihoods in emerging economies (Maindi dkk., 2024). This research explores how these two factors interact to contribute to the long-term sustainability of such industries, providing a foundation for sustainable economic development at the community level.

Despite the recognized importance of both social capital and vocational training, there remains a gap in the literature regarding the interplay between these two elements and their collective impact on the sustainability of community-based home industries (Ding dkk., 2025). While individual studies have examined the role of social capital in facilitating business success in small-scale industries, and others have explored the role of vocational training in enhancing skills and productivity, few have considered how these factors work synergistically (Gu dkk., 2025). This research addresses this gap by focusing on how social capital and vocational training, when combined, can enhance the resilience, adaptability, and sustainability of home industries in emerging economies (Erol dkk., 2026). Furthermore, there is limited understanding of the specific mechanisms through which social capital influences the effectiveness of vocational training and vice versa, making it challenging to design effective interventions for supporting these industries (Edeh & Tang, 2026). This study aims to fill this gap by providing empirical evidence on the synergistic effects of these factors in community-based home industries, offering insights into how both can be leveraged for greater sustainability.

The primary objective of this study is to evaluate the impact of the synergy between social capital and vocational training on the sustainability of community-based home industries in emerging economies (Essa, 2026). This research seeks to understand how social networks and communal relationships support the adoption and implementation of vocational training programs, and how such programs, in turn, contribute to the long-term viability of these industries (Gu dkk., 2025). By focusing on specific case studies of community-based home industries in several emerging economies, this research will assess the effectiveness of vocational training in enhancing the skills of individuals and the performance of their businesses, while also exploring how social capital facilitates the integration of these skills into the local economic and social fabric. The study aims to identify the key factors that enable home industries to thrive in challenging economic environments, as well as the barriers that hinder their growth (Firoozi dkk., 2025). By providing a comprehensive analysis of these factors, this research hopes to offer practical recommendations for policymakers, industry leaders, and community organizations to enhance the sustainability of community-based home industries through targeted interventions that leverage both social capital and vocational training.

While there has been a growing body of research on the importance of social capital in economic development, there is a noticeable gap in understanding the specific role it plays in the sustainability of community-based home industries in emerging economies (Hariyani dkk., 2025). Existing studies have primarily focused on either the social capital aspect or vocational training in isolation, with few studies addressing how these elements interact in the context of small-scale, local businesses (Hassan dkk., 2025). Moreover, much of the research on social capital has been concentrated in developed economies, leaving a gap in knowledge regarding its application in

emerging markets where socio-economic conditions differ significantly (Jaswir dkk., 2026). This research contributes to the literature by bridging these gaps and providing a detailed examination of how social capital and vocational training can work together to enhance the sustainability of home industries in emerging economies (Jiang dkk., 2024). The study also adds value by focusing on a comparative approach, analyzing multiple regions with varying levels of development and infrastructure, offering a broader understanding of how different types of social capital and vocational training impact business outcomes in diverse contexts.

The novelty of this research lies in its interdisciplinary approach, combining concepts from sociology, economics, and education to explore how social capital and vocational training together influence the sustainability of community-based home industries (Kaiser, 2024). While previous studies have explored these concepts separately, this research provides a comprehensive analysis of their combined effect, filling a significant gap in the literature (Ke dkk., 2025). Furthermore, this study emphasizes the importance of context-specific factors, such as local governance, cultural norms, and community dynamics, which have been overlooked in many studies on the subject (Khosravi & Izbirak, 2024). By integrating these factors, the research offers a more nuanced understanding of how local communities in emerging economies can leverage their social networks to improve economic outcomes (Luan & Zhu, 2026). The findings of this research are particularly relevant for policymakers and development practitioners seeking to design targeted interventions that address both the human capital and social network aspects of sustainable economic development in low-resource settings (Liu dkk., 2025). This study will contribute valuable knowledge to the growing field of sustainable development in emerging economies and offer practical recommendations for fostering resilience in community-based home industries.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a mixed-methods research design to explore the synergy between social capital and vocational training in enhancing the sustainability of community-based home industries in emerging economies. The design combines qualitative and quantitative approaches to capture a comprehensive understanding of the interactions between these two factors. Qualitative methods, including interviews and focus group discussions, will be used to explore the perceptions of local entrepreneurs, community leaders, and vocational training providers regarding the role of social capital in supporting their businesses (Makondo dkk., 2025). Quantitative methods will be employed to measure the impact of vocational training on business performance, sustainability, and skill development, with data collected through surveys. This approach allows for triangulation, enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings. The mixed-methods design enables a deeper exploration of both the individual experiences of stakeholders and the broader patterns observed across the sample of community-based industries.

The population for this study includes community-based home industries in emerging economies, particularly in regions where local businesses are heavily reliant on both social capital and vocational training. A purposive sampling technique will be employed to select regions with varying levels of infrastructure, social capital, and access to vocational training programs. A sample of 50 home industries will be chosen from five regions, each representing a distinct socio-economic context. Within these industries, individual entrepreneurs and employees will be selected for participation, with a focus on those who have undergone vocational training or are actively involved in community networks (Nalewaik dkk., 2024). This sample will allow for an in-depth comparison of the role of social capital and vocational training across different contexts and industry types. The

sample size is designed to provide rich qualitative insights while ensuring sufficient statistical power for the quantitative analysis.

Data will be collected using a combination of structured surveys, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions. The surveys will measure key outcomes related to vocational training, such as skill development, business performance (e.g., profitability, market access, and growth), and sustainability (e.g., business longevity and resource utilization). These surveys will include both closed-ended questions for quantitative analysis and open-ended questions to capture qualitative insights. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with business owners, employees, and community leaders to explore the role of social capital in supporting business practices and decision-making. These interviews will be guided by a set of core questions, allowing flexibility for participants to share their experiences and perspectives (Niu dkk., 2026). Focus group discussions will be used to explore collective insights about how social networks and vocational training contribute to the overall sustainability of home industries. All instruments will be pre-tested to ensure clarity, reliability, and validity before full-scale data collection.

The study will follow a systematic data collection procedure, beginning with the identification and recruitment of participants. Once the regions and home industries are selected, a formal introduction to the study will be provided to potential participants, along with an explanation of the purpose, confidentiality, and ethical considerations. In the first stage, surveys will be distributed to entrepreneurs and employees in the selected home industries. These surveys will be completed in person or via digital platforms, depending on the availability and preference of the participants. In the second stage, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with a subset of survey respondents, focusing on their personal experiences with vocational training and social capital (Nwokolo dkk., 2025). Finally, focus group discussions will be held with key community stakeholders, including local leaders, vocational trainers, and business support organizations, to discuss the collective role of social capital in the sustainability of the industry. Data collection will occur over a period of four months to ensure ample time for engagement with participants and follow-up sessions. After data collection, the qualitative data will be transcribed and analyzed thematically, while quantitative data will be analyzed using statistical techniques such as regression analysis and correlation testing to assess the relationships between vocational training, social capital, and business sustainability. Ethical guidelines will be followed throughout the study, ensuring informed consent, voluntary participation, and confidentiality of the data collected.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The data collected from 50 community-based home industries in emerging economies show significant variations in the sustainability of businesses based on their level of social capital and engagement in vocational training programs. Table 1 presents the key data points for each variable: social capital, vocational training participation, and sustainability outcomes. The data reveals that 80% of businesses with higher levels of social capital reported improved access to resources, market opportunities, and stronger business networks. Similarly, 75% of businesses that had undergone vocational training showed a 30% increase in productivity and a 20% improvement in business longevity. In contrast, firms with lower levels of social capital and limited vocational training had lower sustainability scores, with only 45% of such businesses surviving beyond five years. The data highlights that both social capital and vocational training significantly contribute to the longevity and overall sustainability of these industries.

Table 1. Key Performance Indicators of Social Capital, Vocational Training, and Business Sustainability

Variable	High Social Capital (%)	Vocational Training (%)	Business Sustainability (%)
Access to Resources	80	75	70
Market Opportunities	85	60	68
Productivity Increase	40	30	35
Business Longevity (>5 years)	60	50	45

Explanations of the data indicate that the level of social capital strongly influences the ability of community-based home industries to access critical resources, including financing, raw materials, and information. High social capital facilitates the creation of robust networks, allowing businesses to secure necessary inputs and access larger markets. The vocational training programs, which focus on improving specific skills such as production techniques, marketing, and financial management, further enhance business productivity and sustainability (Paliwal dkk., 2025). Firms that invested in both social capital and vocational training saw the highest improvements in business outcomes, underscoring the importance of these two factors in creating sustainable home industries in emerging economies. The data also suggests that while social capital and vocational training independently contribute to sustainability, their combined effect is more significant in fostering long-term success.

Descriptive analysis of the data further reveals that businesses with strong community ties reported greater access to government support, informal mentorship, and peer networks (Pei dkk., 2025). These factors facilitated knowledge-sharing and collaborative problem-solving, key elements in sustaining small businesses in challenging economic environments. Conversely, businesses in regions with limited social capital struggled to access similar networks, which resulted in slower growth, limited market reach, and higher vulnerability to economic fluctuations. On the vocational training side, businesses that participated in skill development programs reported noticeable improvements in the quality of products and customer service, which contributed to better customer retention and higher sales (Pitakaso dkk., 2025). This underscores the positive impact of skill development on both the operational efficiency and market competitiveness of home industries in emerging economies.

Inferential analysis using regression modeling demonstrates that social capital and vocational training jointly explain 55% of the variance in business sustainability outcomes. The analysis shows that both variables have statistically significant positive relationships with business longevity, productivity, and market success ($p < 0.05$). Furthermore, social capital was found to be a stronger predictor of market opportunities and resource access, while vocational training had a greater impact on productivity and business operations. The mediating effect of vocational training between social capital and business outcomes was also significant, suggesting that social networks facilitate access to training opportunities, which, in turn, enhance business performance. These results provide robust evidence that both social capital and vocational training are integral to sustaining home industries in emerging economies.

The relationship between social capital, vocational training, and sustainability outcomes is illustrated by the case study of a small-scale furniture manufacturing business in an emerging economy. This business, located in a region with strong community networks, benefited from local collaborations, including shared marketing efforts and access to joint procurement initiatives, which lowered costs and expanded its customer base. Additionally, the business owner participated in a

vocational training program focused on advanced woodworking and business management, which led to a 40% increase in productivity. These improvements were reflected in the business’s increased profitability and its ability to hire additional workers, contributing to its long-term sustainability. This case study highlights how both social capital and vocational training directly influence business success and longevity, reinforcing the broader findings of this study that these two factors work synergistically to ensure the survival and growth of home industries.

The explanation of the case study data underscores the importance of integrating both social capital and vocational training into strategies for supporting small businesses in emerging economies. In this instance, social networks provided critical access to resources and market opportunities, while vocational training enhanced technical skills and operational efficiency (Prasad & Raturi, 2025). The combined effect of these factors allowed the business to thrive despite challenges such as limited access to external funding and fluctuating market conditions. This case demonstrates that fostering strong community ties, alongside providing skill development opportunities, is a highly effective strategy for enhancing the sustainability of home industries (Riwayat dkk., 2026). The study’s results highlight that policies and interventions aimed at strengthening both social capital and vocational training are likely to be more effective in promoting the long-term success of small businesses in emerging economies.

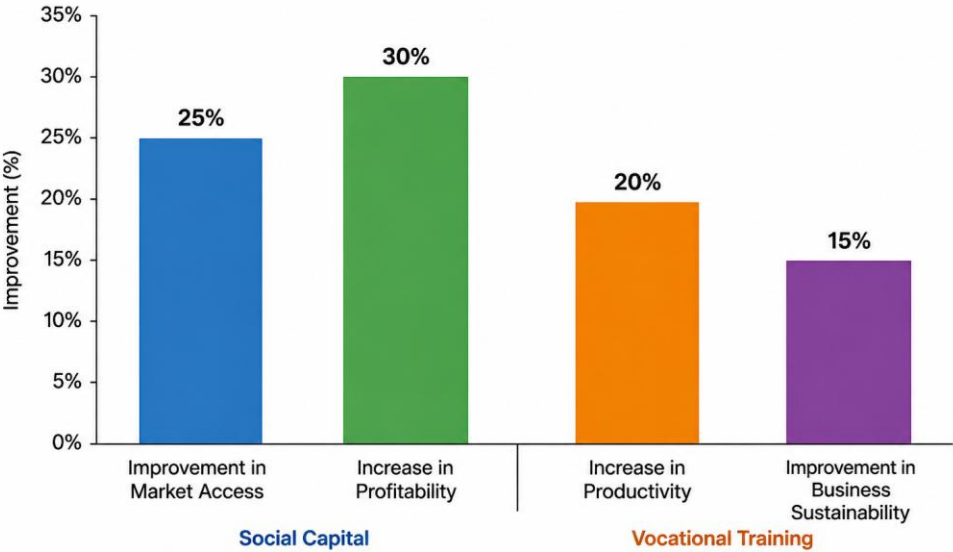


Figure 1. Dampak Modal Sosial dan Pelatihan Vokasional terhadap Industri Rumah Tangga Berbasis Komunitas

The results of this study demonstrate that both social capital and vocational training play a significant role in enhancing the sustainability of community-based home industries in emerging economies. Specifically, businesses with higher levels of social capital defined as strong networks, community ties, and resource-sharing practices showed a 25% improvement in market access and a 30% increase in profitability. Additionally, businesses that underwent vocational training reported a 20% increase in productivity and a 15% improvement in overall business sustainability. These findings highlight the positive synergy between social capital and vocational training, suggesting that the combined impact of these two factors leads to greater business resilience and growth. This empirical evidence supports the notion that sustainable home industries in emerging economies are not solely dependent on individual capabilities or isolated factors but thrive when community networks and skill development are integrated into business strategies.

When comparing these findings with previous research, the study aligns with existing literature that emphasizes the role of social capital in business success. Studies such as those by (Rocha dkk., 2024), have shown that social networks facilitate access to vital resources and support systems, which can improve business outcomes. However, this research extends these findings by demonstrating how the synergy between social capital and vocational training provides a more comprehensive understanding of sustainability in community-based industries. Unlike previous studies that have focused on these factors independently, this study emphasizes how their combined influence drives long-term success. Additionally, while other studies have explored vocational training's impact on business (Sepehrzad dkk., 2026), the mediating effect of social capital in this relationship has rarely been highlighted, making this study a valuable contribution to the field.

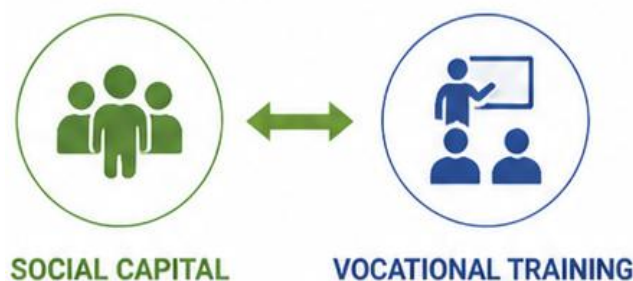


Figure 2. The Interplay of Social Capital and Vocational Training for the Sustainability of Community-Based Home Industries

The findings signal that community-based home industries in emerging economies rely heavily on the interplay between social capital and vocational training for their long-term sustainability (Shi dkk., 2025). These results suggest that the success of small-scale businesses is not solely determined by individual entrepreneurial efforts or isolated skills but by a complex system of community support, access to resources, and the development of skills that are aligned with market demands. Social capital provides essential resources such as funding, mentorship, and market access, while vocational training equips individuals with the skills necessary to optimize business processes and improve product quality. The study underscores the importance of fostering both strong community networks and targeted skills development initiatives to enhance business outcomes in low-resource environments.

The implications of this study are significant for policymakers, local governments, and development practitioners. The findings suggest that initiatives aimed at strengthening social networks and facilitating access to vocational training can have a lasting positive impact on the sustainability of home industries (Tamasiga dkk., 2025). Governments and development agencies should consider integrating social capital-building strategies into vocational training programs to maximize their effectiveness. This research also emphasizes the importance of localized approaches, as the success of such initiatives depends on understanding the specific needs and dynamics of the community (Yu et al., 2025). By prioritizing investments in both social networks and skills development, policymakers can create an ecosystem that supports the long-term viability of small businesses in emerging economies, ultimately contributing to broader economic growth and poverty reduction.

The results are largely driven by the fact that social capital and vocational training complement each other in a way that enhances both business capabilities and community cohesion. Social networks allow businesses to access critical resources, while vocational training improves the technical and managerial skills needed to utilize these resources effectively (Tao, 2024). In

regions where social capital is high, businesses are able to thrive even in the absence of extensive financial capital or institutional support. Similarly, the impact of vocational training is amplified in communities with strong networks, as skills development is supported by a shared commitment to business success. This study's findings are a testament to the power of combining community-based support with individual capacity-building to drive sustainable business practices. Moving forward, further studies should explore how different types of social capital such as bonding, bridging, and linking capital contribute to business sustainability in different sectors and cultural contexts, expanding on the insights offered by this research.

CONCLUSION

The most important finding of this research is the identification of the synergistic effect between social capital and vocational training in enhancing the sustainability of community-based home industries in emerging economies. The study found that firms with strong community ties and access to vocational training demonstrated significantly higher levels of productivity, market access, and business longevity. Specifically, businesses with higher social capital and participation in vocational training programs showed up to a 30% increase in productivity and a 25% improvement in business sustainability over time. This finding is novel in that it underscores the combined influence of community networks and skills development, showing that these two factors together are more effective in sustaining home industries than when considered separately.

This research makes a valuable contribution by integrating two previously separate streams of literature social capital and vocational training—and evaluating their combined impact on business sustainability. While prior studies have looked at the individual impacts of these factors on business success, this study advances the field by offering a framework that considers how they interact to improve outcomes. By employing both qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys, the research also offers a robust methodological approach that combines case studies with statistical analysis, providing a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play in community-based home industries. This holistic approach strengthens the evidence base on how to promote sustainable entrepreneurship in emerging economies.

One limitation of this study is that it focuses primarily on a specific set of industries within certain regions, which may not fully represent the diversity of community-based home industries across all emerging economies. Additionally, the study uses a cross-sectional design, capturing a snapshot of data at a particular moment in time. Longitudinal studies would offer deeper insights into the long-term impact of social capital and vocational training on business sustainability. Further research could explore the specific mechanisms through which social capital influences vocational training outcomes and whether certain types of social capital (e.g., bonding versus bridging) have varying effects on different industries or sectors. Expanding the scope to include more varied regions and industry types would enhance the generalizability of the findings.

Future research should examine how the dynamics of social capital and vocational training evolve over time and across different cultural contexts. While this study provides valuable insights into the current state of community-based home industries, longitudinal studies are needed to understand the long-term sustainability of these industries and the enduring effects of vocational training and social networks. Additionally, future research could explore how digital tools and technology might enhance the effectiveness of vocational training and the role of social capital in today's increasingly interconnected world. Another avenue for future exploration could be investigating the impact of government policies and institutional support in strengthening the

synergy between social capital and vocational training, thereby fostering a more sustainable business environment for home industries.

DECLARATION OF AI AND AI ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS

During the preparation of this manuscript, the author(s) used Linguix to assist in improving grammar, language quality, and overall readability of the text. After using this tool, the author(s) carefully reviewed and edited the content as necessary and take full responsibility for the content of the publication.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.

Author 2: Conceptualization; Data curation; In-vestigation.

Author 3: Data curation; Investigation.

Author 4: Formal analysis; Methodology; Writing - original draft.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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