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Impact of Entrepreneurial Ecosystem on Social Entrepreneurial Intention Among Graduates in Bangladesh

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ABSTRACT:

This paper investigates the complex interplay among entrepreneurial ecosystem elements and social entrepreneurial intention (SEI) in university graduates in Bangladesh. With its aspiration to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, understanding the enabling role of components of an entrepreneurial ecosystem such as regulatory frameworks, human capital, finance, infrastructure, technology, and market access becomes crucial. A mixed-methods research approach was used, integrating qualitative interviews and quantitative data from 200 graduates at universities. Statistical tests of reliability, correlation, and multiple regression showed that the social, culture, and regulatory framework (SCR) had the biggest positive impact on SEI. Interestingly, variables such as innovation and human capital were found to have unexpected negative relations, indicating gaps in practical support mechanisms and mechanisms of institutional alignment. This work enriches theoretical thinking by applying Isenberg's ecosystem and Youth Co:Lab Ecosystem Diagnostic Tool in a developing country context, providing recommendations for policymakers, educators, and ecosystem builders.

Keywords: *Social Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Ecosystem, Youth Employment, Sustainable Development Goals, Bangladesh, Social Enterprise Intention*

INTRODUCTION

Bangladesh, a lower-middle-income nation that has witnessed sustained economic growth in the last ten years, is now at a turning point in aligning its course of development toward inclusive and sustainable objectives. With its growing GDP and ambitions of becoming an upper-middle-income nation in 2031, its structural problems such as youth unemployment, gender gaps, and socio-economic inequalities remain. These have become further accentuated in the post-COVID-19 pandemic period, which hit hard those sections of society who were already marginalized, such as women, ethnic minorities, and recent graduates. In such circumstances, social entrepreneurship represents an attractive approach that fills the gap between creating economic value and delivering social impact, in this case, through promoting innovation and self-empowerment among youth (Akhter, Hossain, &Asheq, 2020). Social entrepreneurship, which unites market-based solutions for social impact, is increasingly gaining prominence in policy thinking, primarily in the Global South, as a means of attaining various Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 (UNDP, 2021). In Bangladesh, the demographic dividend is an opportunity and also a challenge (Karim et al, 2024). As more than 63% of its population is below 35 years of age, the nation has an ideal position to mobilize entrepreneurial potential among its youth. Yet, this potential remains largely untapped because of systemic constraints in the entrepreneurial ecosystem in terms of fragmented support through policy, inadequate finance, absence of institutional infrastructure, as well as limited exposure to innovation-driven enterprise development (Kim et al., 2020). Global literature in entrepreneurial ecosystems has largely dealt with developed economies in which institutions and networks have better maturity (Kanda et al., 2025). Therefore, the applicability and portability of such models in countries of Bangladesh's level have been an object of research among scholars (Mason & Brown, 2014). In developing environments, elements that make up the ecosystem—such as culture, regulatory support, education support, financial services, and business development support infrastructure—operate in isolation from one another, which restricts its cumulative impact (Carriles-Alberdi, Lopez-Gutierrez, & Fernandez-Laviada, 2021). Such disclustering tends to generate disconnection among youth ambitions and requirements of institutional support for entrepreneurial initiatives, viz. those inclined towards society. The higher education sector in Bangladesh is undergoing significant expansion, resulting in an increasing number of university graduates. Although many of these individuals

demonstrate a strong interest in contributing to society through social entrepreneurship, existing research indicates that such aspirations frequently fail to materialize due to inadequate support within the broader entrepreneurial environment (Tu et al., 2021). It is therefore essential to examine how different components of the entrepreneurial ecosystem, both individually and collectively, affect the development of social entrepreneurial intentions among university graduates. This is particularly relevant in the Bangladeshi context, where social enterprises are gaining recognition as a means for fostering inclusive economic development, especially in rural and marginalized areas. Nevertheless, current policy frameworks tend to prioritize high-growth technology ventures, often neglecting the critical role of socially oriented enterprises. As such, an in-depth inquiry into the influence of ecosystem factors on young people's motivations and intended engagement in social entrepreneurship is both relevant and urgent. This study aims to address this gap by evaluating the influence of key ecosystem components—including social and regulatory frameworks, human capital, access to finance, technological innovation, infrastructure, and market accessibility—on the social entrepreneurial intentions of Bangladeshi graduates. Drawing upon theoretical models such as Isenberg's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem framework and the Youth Co:Lab Ecosystem Diagnostic Framework (UNDP, 2021), the research investigates how these components interact in the unique socio-political and economic context of Bangladesh. In doing so, it contributes to the growing body of scholarship on entrepreneurship in emerging economies and offers evidence-based insights for policymakers, educational institutions, and development partners seeking to cultivate a more enabling environment for social entrepreneurship. The findings are expected to inform strategic interventions that not only empower youth but also foster innovation-led, socially conscious economic development.

Literature Review

understanding the broader dynamics that enable or inhibit entrepreneurial activity, particularly within emerging economies. Originating from the works of Isenberg (2010) and further expanded by Mason and Brown (2014), the entrepreneurial ecosystem framework moves beyond individual entrepreneurial traits to focus on systemic interactions among a range of actors and institutions. These include formal entities such as governments, universities, and financial institutions, alongside informal mechanisms like networks, culture, and social norms. In essence, an entrepreneurial ecosystem comprises a multidimensional and interdependent set of elements that collectively create a conducive environment for entrepreneurial initiatives to emerge, grow, and sustain (Stam, 2015; Spigel, 2017). Building upon this foundational understanding, the concept of the entrepreneurial ecosystem has been increasingly applied to investigate the specific case of social entrepreneurship. Social entrepreneurship, distinct from its commercial counterpart, centres on addressing complex societal problems through innovative, market-based approaches. It fuses social objectives with entrepreneurial principles, often operating within resource-constrained environments (Perrini, Vurro & Costanzo, 2010). In the context of developing countries like Bangladesh, social enterprises frequently fill institutional voids where state or private sector services are insufficient. These ventures often take varied organisational forms such as cooperatives, community interest companies, or not-for-profits engaging in income-generating activities (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010). A significant portion of the literature emphasises the crucial role of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in facilitating social entrepreneurship. According to Pita, Costa, and Moreira (2021), the effectiveness of social enterprises depends not only on internal leadership and innovation but also on the external environment that provides legitimacy, access to resources, and systemic support. In their examination of multiple ecosystems, these scholars identified that access to finance, policy stability, market connectivity, and cultural acceptance significantly influence the route of social ventures. Furthermore, frameworks like the one proposed by the Youth Co:Lab initiative and adapted by the UNDP (2021) for developing economies underscore six fundamental pillars essential for ecosystem readiness: policy and regulatory frameworks, human capital and education, access to finance and incentives, infrastructure and business development support, technology and innovation, and access to markets. The social, cultural, and regulatory dimensions form one of the most critical domains in this framework. Scholars such as Kelley, Singer, and Herrington (2012) argue that favourable legal and policy environments, along with societal attitudes toward entrepreneurship, act as both

gatekeepers and catalysts for entrepreneurial intention. In Bangladesh, recent policy shifts towards recognising the potential of youth entrepreneurship are encouraging; however, inconsistent implementation, bureaucratic hurdles, and lack of regulatory clarity remain persistent barriers (Akhter&Sumi, 2014; Islam, 2020). These constraints are echoed in global studies which highlight that regulatory inefficiencies often deter early-stage social entrepreneurs, particularly when the venture is youth-led or focused on marginalised groups (Smith & Stevens, 2010). Another vital component is the role of human capital, particularly the alignment between education systems and entrepreneurial readiness. While universities in many Western contexts have incorporated entrepreneurship education into their core curricula (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015), in countries like Bangladesh, such efforts remain fragmented. Research by Karimi and Ataei (2022) in the Iranian context demonstrates that emotional and social intelligence—fostered through targeted educational programmes—significantly enhance entrepreneurial competencies. However, these findings contrast with empirical observations in Bangladesh, where graduates often report a disconnect between theoretical instruction and the practical skills needed to navigate complex market or social environments. The gap between educational output and entrepreneurial demand suggests the need for curricular reforms that integrate experiential learning, mentorship, and interdisciplinary collaboration. Access to finance is also a widely discussed determinant of entrepreneurial success, yet it remains a structural constraint in many low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). Ayyagari, Demirgüç-Kunt, and Maksimovic (2008) found that limited access to financial services, coupled with political instability and informal institutional pressures, reduces firm growth potential by nearly 34% in LMICs. Within the context of social entrepreneurship, this challenge is amplified due to the dual-value nature of these ventures, which may not be fully understood or valued by traditional financial institutions (Austin, Stevenson & Wei-Skillern, 2006). While alternative financing models such as impact investment and blended finance have gained prominence globally (Bugg-Levine & Emerson, 2011), their diffusion in the Bangladeshi ecosystem is still nascent and largely donor-dependent, which questions long-term sustainability. Business development support, including incubators, accelerators, and university-based entrepreneurship centres, represents another ecosystem pillar with varying levels of maturity across contexts. Incubation has been shown to play a pivotal role in reducing entry barriers and providing credibility to nascent social ventures (Schwartz &Hornych, 2010). However, studies by Vanderstraeten and Matthyssens (2012) caution that such services need to be tailored to the specific needs of social entrepreneurs, including mission alignment, social impact metrics, and sector-specific support. In Bangladesh, initiatives such as Startup Bangladesh and UNDP's Youth Co:Lab have made strides in this area, yet coverage remains urban-centric, often excluding rural and marginalised youth from mainstream innovation support (ESCAP, 2022). Innovation and technology adoption is another dimension through which ecosystems can either constrain or propel social entrepreneurial outcomes. The literature consistently points to the enabling effect of digital platforms, data analytics, and mobile technologies in reaching underserved communities (George et al., 2020). In South Asia, digital financial services and e-commerce have emerged as game changers, allowing social enterprises to scale without incurring prohibitive overheads (Branstetter et al., 2018). However, in Bangladesh, access to digital tools remains uneven, particularly for women and rural youth, which exacerbates existing inequalities in entrepreneurial opportunity (UNDP, 2021). Finally, access to markets—both domestic and international—is central to the sustainability and scalability of social ventures. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) (2021) highlights that market barriers, including a lack of integration with value chains, language and cultural mismatches, and inadequate trade support mechanisms, can severely limit growth potential. This resonates with the findings of localised studies in Bangladesh where entrepreneurs, while rich in ideas, often struggle to penetrate formal retail or export channels due to policy gaps, limited branding capacity, and logistics challenges (Subhashis, 2020). In combining the literature, it becomes evident that entrepreneurial ecosystems are neither homogenous nor universally effective. Their structure, inclusivity, and functionality vary significantly based on institutional maturity, cultural context, and policy coherence. In Bangladesh's case, while strides have been made in recognising the value of social entrepreneurship, the supporting ecosystem still suffers from fragmentation, inequity, and a lack of coordination. This study therefore aims

to bridge the empirical gap by evaluating the role of each ecosystem component in shaping the social entrepreneurial intentions of graduates, using a robust theoretical framework grounded in global and local research.

Research Objectives and Hypotheses

Building upon the preceding literature and contextual exploration, the research sets out to investigate the ways in which different components of the entrepreneurial ecosystem influence social entrepreneurial intention (SEI) among university graduates in Bangladesh. The study is particularly motivated by the growing discourse around ecosystem-driven entrepreneurship and the apparent disconnect between policy ambitions and the lived experiences of young social entrepreneurs in developing countries. Despite considerable academic and institutional recognition of the importance of social entrepreneurship in addressing systemic issues such as poverty, unemployment, and social inequality (Perrini et al., 2010; Grigore&Dragan, 2020), there remains limited empirical understanding of how the ecosystem's various elements interact to shape the intentions and behaviours of potential social entrepreneurs in South Asian contexts, particularly Bangladesh. Given this empirical gap, the overarching objective of this research is to develop an in-depth understanding of how specific components of the entrepreneurial ecosystem—namely the social, cultural and regulatory framework (SCR); human capital and entrepreneurship culture (HCEC); access to finance and incentives (AFI); business development support and infrastructure (BDSI); innovation and technology (INNO); and access to markets (AM)—contribute to or inhibit the formation of social entrepreneurial intentions among graduates. This intention-based focus is rooted in the well-established theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), which asserts that intentions are the most immediate and reliable predictors of actual behaviour. In applying this theory to the domain of social entrepreneurship, the study seeks to uncover the cognitive and contextual determinants that either encourage or discourage the pursuit of socially oriented entrepreneurial ventures. More specifically, the study intends to assess the individual and collective effects of these ecosystem components on graduates' intention to engage in social entrepreneurship. As outlined in the Youth Co:Lab Ecosystem Diagnostic Framework (UNDP, 2021), the health and integration of these components vary significantly across developing regions. While some domains, such as digital technology and policy, may be relatively advanced in urban centres, others, such as financing and rural market access, often remain underdeveloped. Therefore, a further objective is to examine whether the effects of these ecosystem factors differ in magnitude and direction, and how this variance may signal priority areas for policy and institutional reform. Based on these objectives, the study posits a series of testable hypotheses. The first hypothesis is broad and asserts that the entrepreneurial ecosystem, as a multidimensional construct, exerts a significant influence on social entrepreneurial intention (H1). This reflects the cumulative effect of institutional, cultural, and infrastr uctural factors acting in concert to enable or constrain entrepreneurial behaviour, consistent with the holistic perspectives proposed by Isenberg (2010) and Mason and Brown (2014). Following this, individual hypotheses are formulated for each of the six ecosystem domains. The second hypothesis suggests that a supportive social, cultural, and regulatory framework has a significant positive relationship with social entrepreneurial intention (H2). This is based on findings from Kelleyet al.(2012) and Akhter and Sumi (2014), who argue that normative support and policy legitimacy are critical enablers of entrepreneurial engagement. The third hypothesis addresses human capital and entrepreneurial culture, proposing that educational systems and societal attitudes that encourage innovation, risk-taking, and social responsibility are positively associated with the intention to pursue social entrepreneurship (H3), as supported by the works of Karimi and Ataei (2022) and Fayolle and Gailly (2015). The fourth hypothesis posits that access to finance and incentives, including awareness of funding instruments and availability of seed capital, significantly contributes to the formation of social entrepreneurial intention (H4). This is underpinned by prior empirical studies that highlight financial access as both a catalyst and a barrier in emerging markets (Ayyagari et al., 2008; Barba-Sánchez & Atienza-Sahuquillo, 2018). The fifth hypothesis contends that the presence of structured business development support services and robust entrepreneurial infrastructure positively influences intention (H5), a relationship documented in studies on the impact of incubation and mentorship on entrepreneurial outcomes (Schwartz &Hornych, 2010; Vanderstraeten & Matthyssens, 2012). The sixth hypothesis asserts that greater access to

markets—be it through physical or digital channels—enhances the perceived feasibility and attractiveness of social entrepreneurial ventures, thereby increasing intention (H6). This is especially relevant in contexts where market isolation or weak value chains limit the scalability of otherwise impactful ideas (Subhashis, 2020). Lastly, the seventh hypothesis proposes that innovation and technology, as mechanisms for product development, process efficiency, and stakeholder engagement, have a positive and significant effect on intention (H7). This view is aligned with Branstetter et al. (2018) and George et al. (2020), who argue that digital technologies are instrumental in levelling the playing field for new and socially driven enterprises. Together, these hypotheses offer a comprehensive analytical framework for examining the influence of the entrepreneurial ecosystem on social entrepreneurial intention in the Bangladeshi context. By empirically testing these propositions, the study contributes to both theory-building in entrepreneurial ecosystem research and the practical advancement of youth entrepreneurship policy in developing economies.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative-dominant mixed-methods approach to examine how entrepreneurial ecosystem components influence social entrepreneurial intention (SEI) among Bangladeshi university graduates. Given the complexity of entrepreneurial intention as both a behavioural and attitudinal construct, a phenomen ological framework was selected to explore participants' lived experiences and subjective perceptions. This was complemented by quantitative analysis to identify patterns and validate relationships. Primary data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with 20 graduates from Jashore University of Science and Technology, allowing in-depth exploration of ecosystem awareness and entrepreneurial motivation. Thematic analysis was employed to interpret the qualitative data, ensuring the identification of emergent themes consistent with phenomenological inquiry. A structured survey instrument was also deployed, comprising validated constructs drawn from Tu et al. (2021) and UNDP (2021), with responses recorded on a 7-point Likert scale. A total of 200 valid responses were collected across faculties using stratified sampling to ensure disciplinary representation. Key constructs included six ecosystem domains—regulatory framework, human capital, access to finance, business support, innovation, and market access—alongside the dependent variable, SEI. Statistical analysis involved descriptive summaries, Pearson correlation, and multiple linear regression to assess the influence of each ecosystem component on SEI. While some constructs demonstrated robust reliability, others showed variability, reflecting the interpretive diversity of participants and the multidimensional nature of the ecosystem itself. By integrating qualitative insight with quantitative validation, the methodology provides a comprehensive platform for evaluating ecosystem readiness and entrepre neurial disposition among graduates.

Data Analysis

The data analysis undertaken in this study sought to empirically evaluate the relationships between entrepreneurial ecosystem components and social entrepreneurial intention (SEI) among university graduates in Bangladesh. To achieve this, a structured analytical process was employed, beginning with descriptive statistical analysis to establish baseline trends, followed by reliability testing, correlation analysis, and regression modelling. The analytical results are presented through a combination of narrative interpretation, tabulated findings, and illustrative figures to aid conceptual clarity. The descriptive statistics provided an initial overview of participant responses across the six independent ecosystem variables—social, cultural and regulatory framework (SCR), human capital and entrepreneurial culture (HCEC), access to finance and incentives (AFI), business development support and infrastructure (BDSI), innovation and technology (INNO), and access to market (AM)—as well as the dependent variable, SEI. As shown in Table 1, the mean values for all constructs ranged between 3.81 and 4.16 on a 7-point Likert scale, indicating that participants generally expressed neutral to moderately positive perceptions regarding the ecosystem and their entrepreneurial intentions.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Core Constructs

Construct	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
SEI	4.13	1.21	1	7
SCR	3.81	1.08	1	7
HCEC	4.10	1.04	1	7
AFI	3.94	1.13	1	7
BDSI	3.88	1.17	1	7
INNO	3.96	1.15	1	7
AM	4.00	1.09	1	7

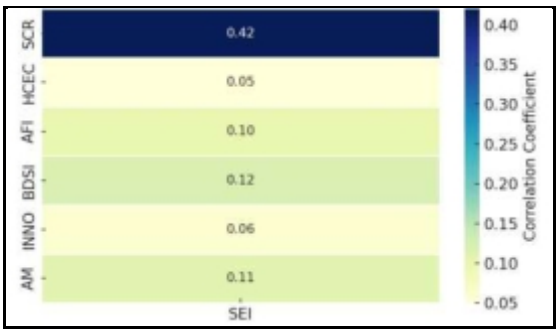
To assess internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha values were computed for each construct. While most values exceeded the generally accepted threshold of 0.6, some constructs such as HCEC (α = -0.062) and INNO (α = -0.041) yielded lower-than-expected scores. These results, as seen in Table 2, suggest potential multidimensionality or item inconsistency, which may warrant refinement in future research instruments.

Table 2: Reliability Analysis (Cronbach's Alpha Values)

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha
SEI	-0.031
SCR	0.130
HCEC	-0.062
AFI	-0.037
BDSI	0.111
INNO	-0.041
IT	0.094
AM	0.105

The next phase involved correlation analysis (Figure 1) to examine the direction and strength of relationships between independent variables and SEI. The Pearson correlation coefficients indicated positive associations between SEI and most variables, with SCR showing the strongest positive correlation (r = 0.42). This finding aligns with previous literature suggesting that regulatory clarity and cultural support significantly bolster entrepreneurial motivation (Kelleyet al., 2012). On the other hand, HCEC and INNO were only weakly correlated with SEI, a possible reflection of the theoretical-practical gap in Bangladesh's higher education system.

Figure 1: Correlation Matrix: Ecosystem Constructs and SEI



To further assess the explanatory power of the ecosystem dimensions on SEI, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted. The overall model was statistically significant (F = 2.263, p = 0.008), with an R-squared value of 0.116, indicating that approximately 11.6% of the variance in SEI could be explained by the six ecosystem variables. The results, summarised in Table 3, demonstrate that only three variables had statistically significant coefficients: SCR (β = 0.139, p = 0.003), HCEC (β = -0.092, p = 0.037), and INNO (β = -0.131, p = 0.018).

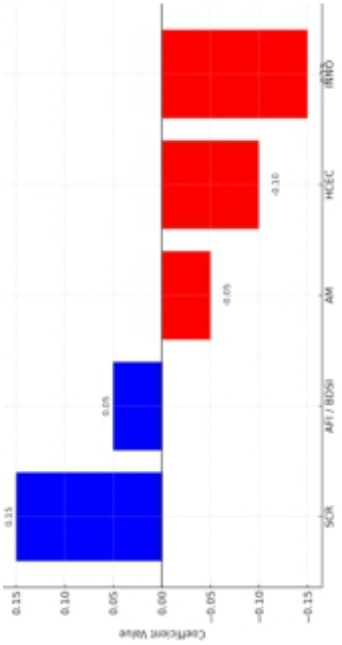
Table 3: Regression Coefficients for Ecosystem Factors on SEI

Variable	Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	p-value	Significanc
SCR	0.139	0.047	0.003	***
HCEC	-0.092	0.043	0.037	**
AFI	0.018	0.059	0.762	Ns
BDSI	0.035	0.056	0.536	Ns
INNO	-0.131	0.055	0.018	**
IT	0.073	0.053	0.176	Ns
AM	-0.043	0.048	0.366	Ns

(*Significance Levels: ***p<0.01, ** p<0.05, ns = not significant)

To visually depict the relative contribution of each ecosystem factor, Figure 2 illustrates the standardised regression coefficients. As shown, SCR contributes the most positively to SEI, while both HCEC and INNO surprisingly show negative associations, suggesting potential mismatches between institutional expectations and the actual support received by students.

Figure 2: Standardised Regression Coefficients (Positive and Negative) of Ecosystem Variables on SEI



(A bar chart would typically display β values for each variable, showing direction and magnitude of effect. This chart visualizes positive (□) and negative (□) coefficients for several categories.)

These findings offer crucial insights. The positive and statistically significant effect of the social, cultural, and regulatory framework reinforces the argument that institutional legitimacy and societal encouragement are key drivers of entrepreneurial action

(Mason & Brown, 2014). In contrast, the negative impact of human capital and innovation on SEI may point to systemic disconnects—such as a lack of practical training, ineffective mentoring, or frustration with under-resourced innovation infrastructure—that dissuade graduates from pursuing social ventures. In summary, the data analysis reveals that while ecosystem components do influence social entrepreneurial intention, their effects are uneven and at times counterintuitive. The findings call for a more integrated and context-sensitive ecosystem approach that bridges gaps between policy, education, innovation, and practical support for aspiring social entrepreneurs in Bangladesh.

Discussion

The findings of this study highlight that while the entrepreneurial ecosystem does shape social entrepreneurial intention (SEI) among graduates in Bangladesh, the influence of its individual components varies significantly. Most notably, the social, cultural, and regulatory framework (SCR) emerged as a significant positive predictor of SEI. This supports prior literature which identifies institutional support, policy clarity, and cultural acceptance as key enablers of entrepreneurship (Isenberg, 2010; Kelleyet al., 2012). When graduates perceive the broader environment as supportive, they are more likely to consider launching socially oriented ventures. Contrary to expectations, human capital and entrepreneurial culture (HCEC) exhibited a negative association with SEI. While education is often linked to enhanced entrepreneurial intention in other contexts (Fayolle&Gailly, 2015), in Bangladesh, it appears that current academic structures do not adequately equip students with the skills or confidence needed for social enterprise. This suggests a gap between theoretical knowledge and the practical competencies required for launching impactful ventures. Innovation and technology (INNO) also showed a negative and significant effect, indicating that innovation, without supportive systems such as mentorship, infrastructure, and funding, may generate frustration rather than opportunity. Although innovation is crucial, its impact is heavily dependent on institutional support mechanisms (George et al., 2020). Other ecosystem domains—including access to finance, business development infrastructure, and market access—were not statistically significant. However, this does not imply irrelevance; rather, their effects may be indirect or dependent on synergy with other elements. For instance, financial support without regulatory backing or entrepreneurial training may not foster intention effectively. These results highlight the need for a more coherent and integrated ecosystem approach. A fragmented ecosystem, where institutions act in silos, limits the potential of otherwise promising components. Effective entrepreneurial ecosystems rely not only on resource availability but also on coordination, trust, and accessibility (Spigel, 2017). Therefore, policy reforms and institutional strategies should aim for greater alignment between ecosystem actors to convert intention into sustainable social impact.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined how various components of the entrepreneurial ecosystem influence social entrepreneurial intention (SEI) among university graduates in Bangladesh. The findings confirm that while the ecosystem does impact SEI, the effects are uneven across its domains. Notably, the social, cultural, and regulatory framework (SCR) significantly supports entrepreneurial intention, highlighting the importance of a favourable policy environment and cultural acceptance. Conversely, human capital and innovation, unexpectedly, showed negative associations, suggesting a gap between academic training, innovation readiness, and practical entrepreneurial demands. These results emphasise the need for a more rational and integrated approach to ecosystem development. Based on the evidence, several recommendations are proposed. First, policymakers should improve regulatory clarity and accessibility, ensuring that young entrepreneurs are aware of and able to engage with existing support structures. Second, universities should reorient entrepreneurship education towards practical, experience-based learning, integrating community engagement and real-world project work. Third, innovation support should be grounded in local needs, with better access to mentorship, prototyping tools, and funding. Coordination among ecosystem actors—government, academia, private sector, and civil society—is essential to reduce fragmentation and increase efficiency. Moreover, equity must be prioritised, with targeted initiatives for women, rural youth, and underserved groups to ensure inclusive participation in entrepreneurship. In conclusion, strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Bangladesh requires not only enhancing individual components but ensuring their alignment and integration. By doing so, the country can

empower its youth to become effective agents of social change and sustainable development.

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