



The Impact of Empowerment Leadership, Social Capital, and Sustainability Programs on Long-Term Community Welfare: A Systematic Literature Review Study

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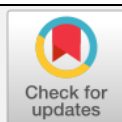
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ARTICLE INFO

Publication Info:

Research Article



How to cite:

Kamal. M., Hasyim, A. W., Daud, N., & Sabuhari, R. (2025). The Impact of Empowerment Leadership, Social Capital, and Sustainability Programs on Long-Term Community Welfare: A Systematic Literature Review Study. *Society*, 13(2), 1018–1036.

DOI: [10.33019/society.v13i2.924](https://doi.org/10.33019/society.v13i2.924)

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Received: February 10, 2025;

Accepted: April 27, 2025;

Published: July 7, 2025;

ABSTRACT

Capturing the breadth of research on social capital, empowering leadership, sustainable initiatives, and community welfare is the goal of this systematic literature analysis. Five publications that satisfied the inclusion requirements were found after a thorough search of the Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) databases using PRISMA, which was done between January 2010 and November 2024. The compilation of these articles demonstrates that social capital, sustainable programs, and community welfare have been primarily studied in the healthcare industry. Furthermore, research findings were also conducted in African countries, Turkey, Italy, Canada, and various other countries. Furthermore, the research methods employed were predominantly qualitative. Future research directions are also provided, along with theoretical and practical contributions.

Keywords: Community Welfare; Empowering Leadership; Social Capital; Sustainable Programs; Systematic Literature Review

1. Introduction

Community welfare is one way to demonstrate the success of a nation's development (Dosinta et al., 2024). The main driver and goal of a country's development is its people; thus, Human growth reflects a nation's well-being (Ferraz et al., 2025). Well-being includes subjective and objective well-being (Prayitno et al., 2022). Achieving a certain level of wealth within a realistic framework is essential for development, especially human development, to ensure sustainable development. Since well-being varies from person to person, it is typically subjective to measure, and prior research has connected it to variables such as social capital, sustainable programs, and empowered leadership (Collins et al., 2024; Lundqvist & Wallo, 2023; Núñez-Naranjo et al., 2024; Oduor, 2020; Shan et al., 2014).

Social capital is believed to be an essential human resource (Prayitno et al., 2022). Social capital is typically identified as a "feature of social organization" with networks of cooperation, trust, and reciprocity as well as social standards that foster community effectiveness in collective action (Christoforou, 2022). Networks with access to and use common resources built on reciprocity, trust, and mutual support are another way to characterize social capital. All aspects of interpersonal interaction that affect human well-being, including relationships, networks, formal organizations, behavioral standards, and rule systems, have been included in the idea of social capital. Building and sustaining cooperative and mutually supporting societies requires social capital, which is regarded as a valuable resource that can promote harmonious social life and collective activity.

Social capital is a predictor, that is, a characteristic that affects variables related to community well-being (Kisat, 2022). Jia et al. stated that social capital builds proactive and reactive organizational resilience by encouraging knowledge collaboration and confidence in acting against others (Jia et al., 2020). Social capital encourages public acceptance and compliance with control measures by building trust and norms at the individual level. Additionally, it can activate neighborhood-level network resources and promote group action (C. Wu, 2021). High levels of interpersonal ties, community involvement, and trust are also crucial (Saptutyningsih et al., 2020). Social capital fosters relationships and collaboration between people and organizations working toward shared objectives. However, local knowledge is also essential for establishing and preserving long-lasting alliances that might eventually enhance the well-being of a community.

Social capital can also determine community well-being. Social capital, which encompasses social networks, norms, and trust, is crucial in determining community well-being (Ancillai et al., 2025). Substantial social capital can enhance community efficiency, coordination, and cooperation, ultimately contributing to increased well-being. Social capital is not just about social relationships, but also about collective assets that can be leveraged to achieve shared goals. By strengthening social capital, communities can improve well-being in various aspects of life, including economic, social, and political. Community empowerment that strengthens social capital can be key to achieving sustainable and inclusive development.

Furthermore, sustainability programs emphasize the need to enhance participatory processes through which citizens can collectively create a resilient future (Dushkova & Ivlieva, 2024). However, governments, the commercial sector, and financial institutions are primarily responsible for implementing these sustainability initiatives, which are mostly grounded in scientific data and frequently seek to enhance decision-making. Nonetheless, local communities or civil society continue to be the only beneficiaries of these sustainability initiatives, or at most, passive ones. Although the concept of empowerment is rarely, if ever, incorporated into the methods employed there, communities cannot be viewed as merely passive recipients or users

of ecosystem services or natural benefits because they also can impact local sustainability decision-making (Toniolo et al., 2023; Zeigermann et al., 2023).

Furthermore, empowerment leadership can also impact sustainable programs and community well-being. Empowerment leadership focuses on granting authority, responsibility, and autonomy to individuals or groups within an organization or community (Jabid et al., 2025). Empowerment leadership and sustainable programs play a crucial role in improving community well-being. Empowerment leadership allows communities to develop their potential and actively participate in decision-making, while sustainable programs ensure that welfare-improving efforts can be sustained over the long term. Empowerment leadership is key to implementing sustainable programs, ensuring they are relevant and beneficial to the target community. Conversely, sustainable programs provide a platform for empowering leadership to develop and have a broader impact. Empowering leadership and sustainable programs are two crucial aspects in efforts to improve community well-being. Additionally, several studies have demonstrated that leaders and empowered stakeholders can actively plan, decide, protect, manage, or restore ecosystems, thereby contributing significantly to the advancement of socio-economic development, resilience, and sustainable change (Gonzalez-Porras et al., 2021; Hölsgens et al., 2023; Kurniawan et al., 2023; Sieber et al., 2024).

This field continues to develop based on real-world examples supported by existing research findings. However, it requires in-depth and comprehensive studies using various approaches for research on social capital, empowered leadership, sustainable programs, and community well-being, especially those published in internationally reputable journals, such as Scopus and WoS. The absence of a thorough and systematic synthesis of the current state of research in the literature, which is required to direct future studies and produce managerial implications, is another effect of this evolution.

By reviewing the literature on social capital, empowered leadership, sustainability programs, and community well-being, this review aims to fill this research gap. Three empirical investigations are included in a systematic literature review (SLR) based on a comprehensive multilevel framework. Five lines of inquiry are used to examine the selected articles and ascertain the current state of knowledge: (1) Which countries have conducted the most research on social capital, empowered leadership, sustainability programs, and community well-being? (2) Which industries have received the most research on social capital, empowered leadership, sustainability programs, and community well-being? (3) What research designs have been used in studies related to social capital, empowered leadership, sustainability programs, and community well-being? (4) What theories have been used in studies related to social capital, empowered leadership, sustainability programs, and community well-being? (5) What are the final findings on social capital, empowered leadership, sustainability programs, and community well-being? Finally, this study also serves as a guide for future researchers.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Empowerment Leadership

Empowerment reflects a person's value orientation toward working in the community. It offers a theoretical framework for comprehending the procedures and outcomes of individual attempts to influence and control certain decisions. Empowered leaders give their staff members complete authority, autonomy, and responsibility to promote involvement in decision-making (Waseel et al., 2025; Xu & Zhang, 2022). These decisions can affect the lives of others or the functioning of the organization (Kurniasih, 2025). Community conditions can also be improved through empowerment.

Additionally, it implies that some people's intentions, attitudes, and motives influence their decisions for the community's welfare (Utomo et al., 2022). The individual's abilities, powers, and control over their circumstances are further linked to this empowerment (S.-Y. Wu et al., 2022). Researchers have previously examined the function of leadership in providing services and interacting with employees to apply empowerment theory to organizational studies (Arshad et al., 2022; Dennerlein & Kirkman, 2022). Scholars have also emphasized applying empowerment theory to governmental decision-making to promote societal well-being (Sharma et al., 2022).

Even while empowering leadership theory has been extensively addressed in governmental and organizational contexts, more research is necessary to provide depth and specificity when used in rural settings. Rural areas frequently have particular difficulties, like a lack of infrastructure, resources, and opportunities, necessitating a customized empowerment strategy (Ma et al., 2024). Empowerment leadership is linked to community well-being. The impact and benefits of empowerment leadership on community well-being include improving community well-being by empowering individuals and communities to make decisions and control resources. Furthermore, empowerment leadership can reduce poverty by increasing access to resources and opportunities. Moreover, empowerment leadership can increase community resilience to challenges and crises by strengthening the capabilities and skills of individuals and communities. Empowerment leadership can increase individual and community awareness of their rights and obligations. Empowerment leadership can also increase the active participation of individuals and communities in decision-making processes. It can enhance the capabilities and skills of individuals and communities to improve their well-being. Therefore, empowerment leadership is crucial in improving community well-being by empowering individuals and communities to make decisions and control resources.

2.2. Social Capital

Putnam, Coleman, and Fukuyama are frequently recognized for their foundational concepts of social capital, which emphasize reciprocal relationships, mutual trust, networks, norms, and shared values within communities (Coleman, 1988; Fukuyama, 1995; Putnam, 1993). Over the past few decades, social capital, a multifaceted social science concept, has been a significant study area in sociology, psychology, and public health (Carradore, 2022). Despite ongoing debate over its definition and measurement, there is scholarly agreement on the fundamental components of social capital, which include social networks, social involvement, trust, reciprocity, and shared norms (Zhao et al., 2024).

The resources and advantages people or groups derive from their social networks are called social capital. These are usually obtained through community involvement, social contact, and trust. The social conditions of an organization, which include reciprocity, trust, and networks that promote coordination and collaboration for the benefit of all, are referred to as social capital. In a similar vein, social capital is described as a network that tries to improve the efficiency of collaboration within a company. A collection of formal and informal values among a group of people who have the chance to work together for the common good is referred to as social capital. Social capital gives value to a business by boosting professionalism and productivity, which makes it an asset. An organization's members or associated parties will be impacted if it becomes more productive and professional. Related parties will therefore benefit from improved social and economic circumstances or the chance to enhance their standard of living.

Social networks, social norms, and trust make up social capital. Trust among community members can strengthen cooperation and improve well-being. Strong social networks can help communities access resources and information. Positive social norms can promote behaviors that support community well-being. Personal characteristics like the number and quality of social networks, social support, information conduits, and collective characteristics like the degree of mutual trust among neighbors and standard social norms and values are essential components of social capital (Gao et al., 2025).

There are several sorts of operational dimensions of social capital, such as cognitive and structural; bonding, bridging, and connecting; strong and weak ties; and horizontal and vertical (Arcidiacono et al., 2025; Erices-Ocampo et al., 2025; Wang & Han, 2025). Cognitive social capital can be understood as an individual's perception of interpersonal trust, sharing, and reciprocity. Structural social capital refers to the density of social networks or patterns of civic participation. Relationships within homogeneous groups, such as those between close friends, family, neighbors, and coworkers, also called strong ties, are associated with bonding social capital. Connecting people or groups across power structures, such as weak links that bind people from different racial and occupational backgrounds, is a key component of bridging social capital. The ties of respect and trust between individuals interacting across formal or institutional authority or power gradients in society are called bridging social capital. Among them, bridging social capital is regarded as vertical, while bonding and bridging social capital are regarded as horizontal social capital.

Social capital is often associated with community welfare. The impact of social capital on community welfare is, first, increasing welfare, meaning social capital can improve community welfare by strengthening relationships between members and increasing access to resources. Second, social capital is considered capable of reducing poverty in society. This means social capital can play a role in poverty reduction by increasing access to economic opportunities and resources. Third, social capital can make communities more resilient to challenges and crises. In addition, the benefits of social capital for community welfare are considered capable of supporting vulnerable populations such as older people, children, and people with disabilities.

Furthermore, social capital can also increase community participation in social and economic activities. Finally, social capital can build cohesion and raise awareness of common interests. Therefore, social capital plays a vital role in improving community welfare through the communities within it.

2.3. Sustainable Programs

Sustainability research itself is fragmented (Åhlfeldt et al., 2023). There is no universally recognized definition of sustainability, and the topic is philosophically pluralistic (Birken et al., 2020). According to this study, sustainability and implementation are two different but connected ideas that can be seen as coexisting processes. Introducing a new concept, technique, or program into an organizational setting is known as implementation (Kwan et al., 2022). Sustainability is defined, according to Sohrabi et al., as a process in which "improvements are sustained, new ways of working become routine, surrounding systems are modified to support them, and innovations can even be developed, within a timeframe appropriate to the specific situation" (Sohrabi et al., 2023).

Three essential components that frequently appear in the literature are included in this concept of sustainability: (1) routineization, (2) program benefits, and (3) continuous improvement or adaptation to changing circumstances. Routineization, which can be viewed as a crucial or essential process of sustainability, is the main topic of this research (Bosco et al.,

2024). Routinization integrates a program into an organization's core services, structures, and procedures (Al-Balushi et al., 2025). This concept, however, emphasizes the need to maintain successful programs that offer advantages, including betterment for users and the organization, rather than advocating for the routinization of all programs (Scarano, 2024). Furthermore, routinized programs should not be static but should continually adapt to changes in the organizational and institutional environment and ultimately be discontinued when they become obsolete (Vettriselvan & Ramya, 2024).

A dynamic, bottom-up perspective that emphasizes local agency, adaptation, and ongoing learning contrasts with a rationalistic, top-down perspective that emphasizes fidelity, planning, and control in the literature on sustainability (Di Fabio & Cooper, 2023). Sambodo et al. presented a three-tiered framework of sustainability-influencing elements in a seminal review (Sambodo et al., 2023). This framework summarizes the elements often appearing in the literature from both top-down and bottom-up viewpoints. It includes aspects about (1) the implementation project and (2) the larger institutional and community context.

The features of the implementation object are among the elements that affect how a project is implemented. For instance, simpler initiatives have a higher chance of sustainability than complex and resource-intensive ones (Chapman et al., 2023). Process elements include strategic planning, initial sustainability planning, project structure, communication, and the implementation of performance monitoring tools, including assessment and feedback, which are also considered project-level determinants (Tetteh et al., 2023). According to some academics, programs that can be adjusted and tailored to local circumstances have a higher chance of being sustainable (Dushkova & Ivlieva, 2024). According to some academics, implementation techniques and procedures modified and refined over time in response to continual review and learning have a higher chance of achieving sustainability (Tariq, 2024).

Support from other community organizations is one element of the institutional and larger community framework (Chaiya, 2025). For instance, cooperation and information sharing with other organizations running related initiatives increases the likelihood of sustainability. Access to essential resources, knowledge, fresh viewpoints, and political backing can all be improved by collaboration (Vaverková et al., 2025). The participation of universities and government organizations, various financing sources, and important funding agencies can help promote sustainability (Masuda et al., 2022). Furthermore, the institutional framework includes social norms, trends, beliefs justified in the local community, and the legal and regulatory environment.

Sustainable programs significantly impact and benefit community welfare, such as improving quality of life and environmental awareness, reducing poverty and community participation, and improving community resilience and the quality of data sources. Sustainable programs can enhance the quality of community life by providing access to adequate resources, increasing public awareness of the importance of the environment, and promoting environmentally friendly behavior. Furthermore, sustainable programs can play a role in poverty reduction by increasing access to economic opportunities, resources, and community participation in decision-making processes and promoting community ownership. Finally, sustainable programs can increase community resilience to challenges and crises by strengthening the capabilities and skills of individuals and communities and the quality of resources by promoting effective and efficient resource management.

Sustainable programs are also influenced by empowered leadership and social capital. Empowering leadership can develop, improve, and empower communities to make decisions, control resources, and participate in sustainable programs, thereby increasing community

ownership, awareness, and capacity regarding the effectiveness of managing and maintaining sustainable programs. Social capital can strengthen social networks among community members, thereby increasing, strengthening, and promoting positive social norms, such as awareness of the importance of the environment and community concern, trust between community members and their leaders, and cooperation and collaboration in sustainable programs.

2.4. Community Welfare

When everyone's material and non-material basic needs are satisfied, they are said to be in a state of well-being (Yuliarmi et al., 2020). Individual and societal well-being are intimately linked. Both objective and subjective methods can be used to measure welfare (Putri et al., 2024). The well-being of a person or group, as determined by established standards about social, economic, and other aspects, is known as objective well-being. Additionally, the degree of personal well-being assessed by happiness and satisfaction is known as subjective well-being. One may characterize and study happiness by asking people how they feel their lives are whole. People are adept at assessing their general level of well-being (Jalal Ahamed, 2025). Subjective well-being is synonymous with happiness.

Every person aspires to live a more successful life. In a similar vein, a country's objective is to guarantee the welfare of its citizens. Every person, every group, and even every country aspires to welfare. The state and well-being of a country's citizens should ideally be indicators of its prosperity (Prabowo et al., 2021). Putri et al. state that the balance between material and non-material components must be considered when calculating welfare. Basic human requirements, such as those for food, clothes, and housing, as well as those for education, health, communication, and transportation, are met by material elements (Putri et al., 2024). The satisfaction of spiritual wants, soul salvation, and mental purity and perfection are all related to fulfilling non-material components.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Data Source, Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

To gather as many pertinent and high-quality papers as feasible, a thorough literature search was conducted on pre-selected databases as part of the SLR process to address the research questions. This study used the PRISMA technique to guarantee the precision and openness of the literature review procedure. The literature relevant to the study's subject was found using the Scopus and WoS databases.

Table 1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criteria	Description
Inclusion	1. Published in a peer-reviewed journal 2. Focused on empowerment leadership, social capital, Sustainability Programs, and Long-Term Community Welfare 3. Written in English 4. Published between January 2010 and December 2024
Exclusion	1. Not peer-reviewed (e.g., blogs, reports, conference abstracts) 2. Not written in English

Criteria	Description
	3. Published outside the specified time range 4. Irrelevant to the study's objectives after title/abstract screening

Several inclusion and exclusion criteria were established to gather pertinent material consistent with this investigation's goals. The first requirement for inclusion in this study is that the literature must be published in peer-reviewed journals that examine the relationship between well-being and income. Second, it was published between 2010 and 2024. Third, English-language publications are required. However, any literature that does not fit the three requirements will be disregarded in the final review and undoubtedly left out of this study. **Table 1** provides explanations of the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

3.2. Search Strategy

The search was completed in 2024 and conducted in the Scopus and Web of Science databases from January 2010 to November 2024 using two keywords: the first keyword: ('leadership AND empowerment' OR 'social AND capital' OR 'sustainable AND programs') AND ('community AND welfare'). The second keyword ('leadership AND empowerment' OR 'social AND capital') AND ('sustainable AND programs'). Using these keywords, 77 articles were obtained from the search process, with details of the first keyword of 26 articles and the second keyword of 51 articles. After that, not a single article was excluded because not all were detected as duplicates and entered the title and abstract screening stage. None were disqualified after the title and abstract were screened; instead, they were deemed qualified to proceed to the evaluation phase in accordance with the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Five works of literature that satisfied the inclusion requirements were found following an extensive, careful, and rigorous review procedure. **Figure 1** provides an overview of the literature selection procedure.

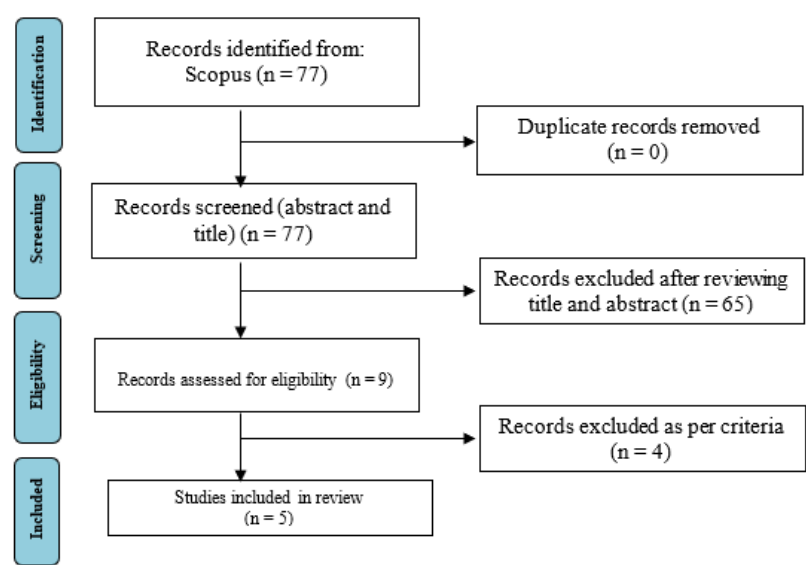


Figure 1. Article Selection Process

4. Results and Discussion

Table 2. Summary of Systematic Literature Review

No	Author(s)	Country	Industry	Method/Design	Theory	Findings
1	(Gutiérrez et al., 2011)	Various countries	Fishery	Mixed-Methods	-	Social capital is considered a form of joint management capable of increasing community welfare in the context of fisheries success.
2	(Shan et al., 2014)	Kanada	Health	Mixed-Methods	-	Institutional social capital, through enhancing the local connections of individual staff, can be instrumental to program success and long-term sustainability in local communities.
3	(Cavicchi & Vagnoni, 2017)	Italia	Health	Qualitative	-	Social capital enables sustainable projects/programs to be systematic and aligned with the medical staff's awareness of sustainability issues.
4	(Kısat, 2022)	Turki	Tourism	Qualitative	-	Small-scale tourism projects can increase all forms of capital, including social capital, and impact community welfare.
5	(Oduor, 2020)	Kenya, Africa	Plantation	Qualitative	-	Social capital is considered to be able to increase community welfare.

This systematic literature review study includes five studies that meet the inclusion criteria (Table 2). The literature is then classified based on the year of publication, country, industry, method, theory, and findings.

4.1. Distribution of literature by country

Figure 2 displays the literature distribution by nation. The findings demonstrate the paucity of research on the effects of sustainability initiatives, social capital, and empowered leadership on the well-being of communities. This is evident from the fact that this study was only carried out in five countries: Italy, Turkey, African countries, and Canada, with only one study in each country being used as the location for the research.

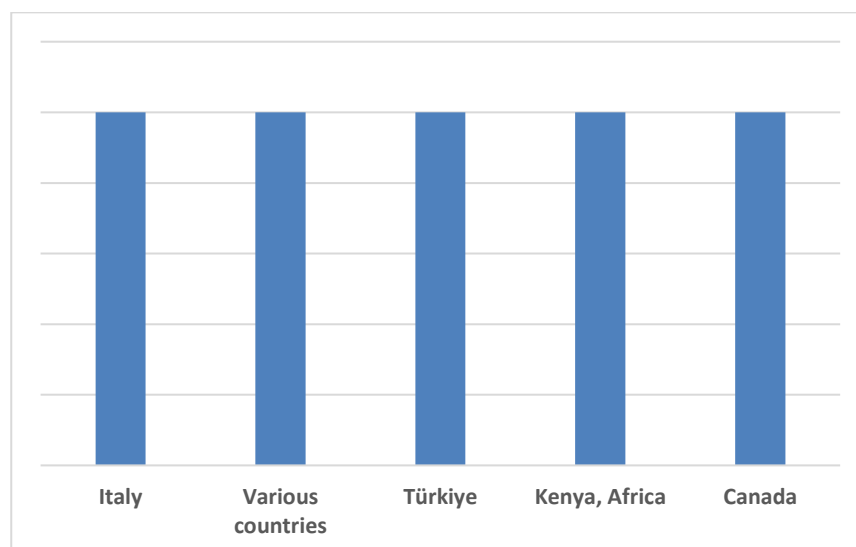


Figure 2. Distribution of articles by country

4.2. Distribution of literature by Industry

The distribution of publications by industry is also displayed in Figure 3. The results show that only four industries were examined out of the five researched areas. Health was the most researched sector, followed by fisheries, tourism, and plantations. These findings suggest that studies on empowering leadership, social capital, and sustainability programs for community welfare are only conducted in specific sectors.

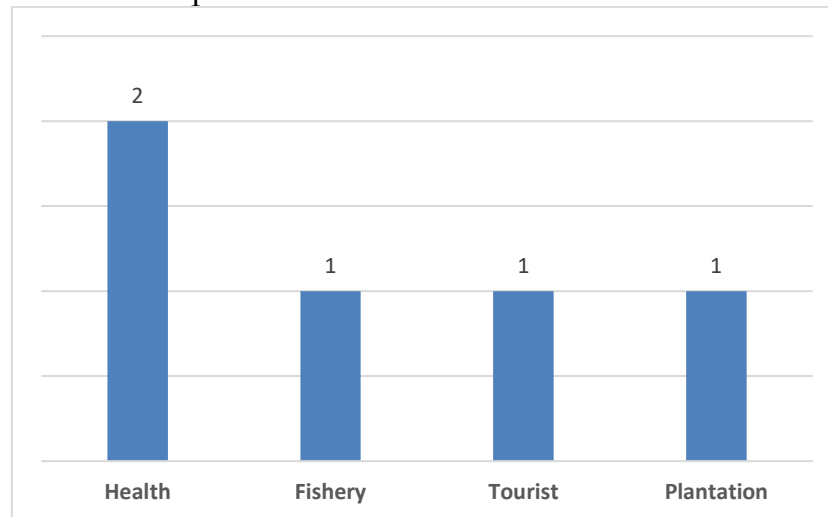


Figure 3. Distribution of articles by Industry

4.3. Distribution of literature by year

Figure 4 displays the distribution of literature from January 2010 to November 2024. It is well known that studies on empowering leadership, social capital, and sustainability programs in communities are still scarce. The search results, as shown in Figure 4, explain that published research on this topic was only conducted in 2011, 2012, 2017, 2020, and 2022, with only one study each year.

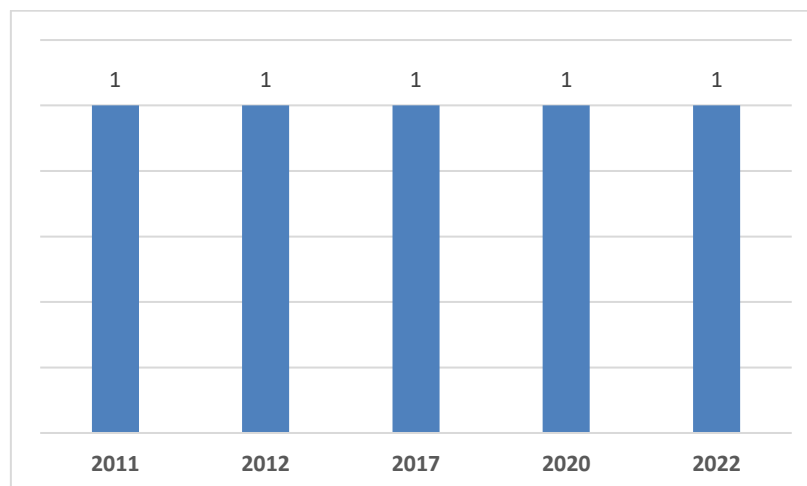


Figure 4. Distribution of articles by year

4.4. Methods Used

The techniques employed in this investigation are shown in Figure 5's analytical results. It is evident from the three results that this study concentrated on two approaches. Each study employed mixed methods (two studies) and qualitative methods (three investigations).

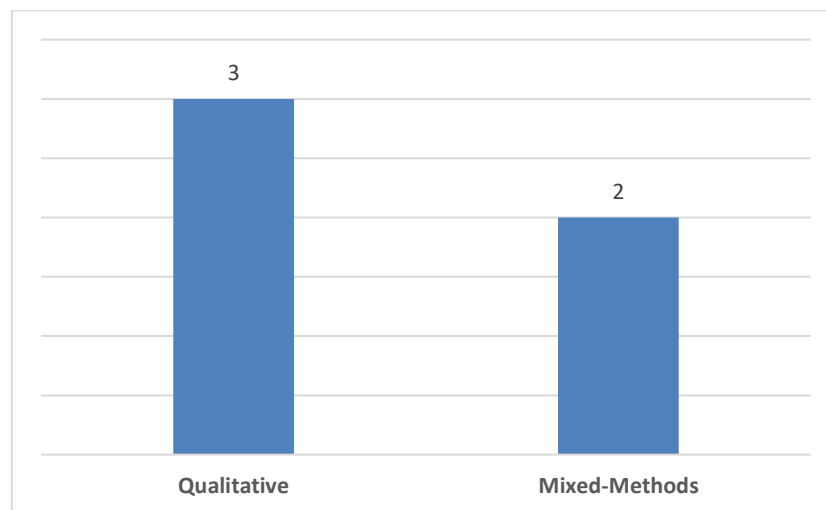


Figure 5. Methods Used

4.5. Discussion

Based on a systematic literature review of five published studies that met the inclusion criteria, the study identified the role of empowerment leadership, social capital, and sustainable programs in influencing community well-being. Studies related to this topic were conducted only in Canada, Italy, Turkey, Africa, and various countries. In the industrial sector, studies related to this topic were limited to specific industries. The health sector was the most frequently studied, followed by fisheries, tourism, and plantations. Furthermore, the methods used to answer the research questions were qualitative and mixed. Qualitative methods were the most frequently chosen for the five published studies, followed by mixed methods in the next and final order.

Furthermore, three of the five reviewed literatures confirmed that community well-being has to do with social capital. The concept of social capital is a multidimensional concept (Vaverková et al., 2025). Social capital can be conceptualized regarding functions and dimensions (Abunyewah et al., 2023). Social capital has been applied to various formal and informal institutions. This social capital process requires members to trust each other and their community-based structures, which instills cultural pride as they become agents of change in the community. For example, mission volunteers organize themselves into small groups to serve at the community restaurant, and they help each other when one cannot come to work, demonstrating reciprocity and cooperation. Leaders also use their social ties in the community to engage people with specialized skills who can train others. When members agree on broader community goals and develop trust in one another, we observe that they take action to develop their projects further. When this happens, it indirectly contributes to the self-satisfaction and well-being of community members.

Furthermore, two literature sources confirm that social capital plays a significant role in sustainable programs and their consequences for community well-being. An endeavor or program that aims to satisfy present demands without endangering the capacity of future generations to meet their own needs is known as a sustainable program. The goal is to create conditions that enable humans and the environment to coexist harmoniously and sustainably. Sustainable programs encompass various aspects, including environmental, social, and economic (United Nations Development Programme, 2025). Social capital is closely related to program sustainability and its implications for community well-being. Social capital, which encompasses networks, trust, and norms within a community, is essential to supporting and

strengthening various aspects of sustainability, such as environmental, economic, and social sustainability. Thus, social capital plays a crucial role in supporting program sustainability. Building and strengthening social capital within a community can be key to the success of sustainable development programs.

Regarding the impact of sustainable programs on community well-being, sustainable programs are considered capable of improving community well-being because they focus on development that meets current requirements without jeopardizing the capacity of future generations to satisfy their own. It entails finding equilibrium among social fairness, environmental sustainability, and economic growth (Gürses et al., 2021; Pucelj et al., 2024). Increasing access to essential services, including good health, education, and sanitation, is a common goal of sustainability initiatives. These initiatives guarantee that everyone in society, especially marginalized and vulnerable groups, shares fairly in growth advantages (Borgaonkar & Marhaba, 2021; Johnston, 2023). Sustainable development promotes economic growth that creates jobs and provides equal opportunities for everyone to participate in and benefit from that growth. By prioritizing environmental preservation, sustainability programs help safeguard natural resources essential to people's lives and well-being, both now and in the future (Boroushaki et al., 2021). Sustainability programs help communities better prepare for climate change, economic fluctuations, and natural disasters. Thus, sustainability programs are oriented toward economic growth and equitable, just, and environmentally sound development, which ultimately improves society's overall well-being.

According to the aforementioned results, this study could not locate any studies on the connection between community welfare, sustainability initiatives, and empowered leadership. Empowered leadership still has a relatively small impact on sustainability initiatives. This is due to several factors (Kasim, 2021; Xu & Zhang, 2022). Furthermore, the success of sustainability programs is also influenced by various factors beyond leadership, such as government policies, economic conditions, and organizational culture. First, sustainability is a broad and multidimensional concept, encompassing environmental, social, and financial aspects. It is difficult to isolate the specific influence of one type of leadership on all aspects of sustainability. Second, the impact of sustainability programs is often only apparent over the long term, while research tends to focus on short-term outcomes. This makes it challenging to link leadership actions directly to sustainability outcomes seen years later. Third, the success of sustainability programs is also strongly influenced by the organizational context, including the company's culture, structure, and strategy. These factors can interact with leadership style, making it difficult to generalize findings from one study to another. Fourth, the definition and measurement of empowered leadership also vary in the literature, which can lead to different results in different studies. Fifth, many studies still use simple quantitative research designs, which may not adequately capture the complexity of the relationship between leadership and sustainability. Qualitative or mixed-methods research can provide a deeper understanding. Sixth, although there is much discussion about the importance of leadership in sustainability, research specifically examining this shows little correlation between sustainability initiatives and empowered leadership.

In study settings, several factors frequently restrict the impact of empowered leadership on community well-being (Hou & Cai, 2024; Lestrai & Sunardi, 2024). First, community well-being is a multidimensional concept encompassing various economic, social, health, education, and environmental aspects. It is not easy to accurately measure the influence of empowered leadership on all of these aspects individually or collectively. Second, implementing empowered leadership in a community requires profound cultural and behavioral changes.

This often faces resistance from various parties, both leaders and the community. Third, although there is much research on empowered leadership in an organizational context, research examining its impact on community well-being is still limited. Many studies focus only on the individual or small group effects, rather than the broader impact on society. External variables that are not always under the control of leaders or organizations, such as governmental regulations, prevailing economic conditions, and societal shifts, can also have an impact on the impact of empowering leadership. Therefore, to strengthen the influence of empowering leadership on community well-being, more comprehensive research, effective empowerment organizational design, and a deeper understanding of the local context and factors influencing community participation are needed.

5. Conclusion

Based on the previous results and discussion, the following conclusions can be drawn: first, only three studies have examined the relationship between social capital and community welfare. Furthermore, only two studies have examined the relationship between social capital and sustainable programs and their impact on welfare. These five studies were conducted in the Fisheries, Health, Tourism, and Plantation sectors, so further research in other sectors is highly feasible. Furthermore, this study was conducted in African countries, Turkey, Italy, and Canada, so it is possible to conduct further research in other countries. In light of this study's findings, the methods used were only qualitative and mixed-method, so that further research could utilize more quantitative methods.

This study has several limitations based on the previous results, discussion, and conclusions. First, the literature search only found research linking social capital, community welfare, and sustainable programs. Second, the search also did not find research linking empowered leadership, community welfare, and sustainable programs; thus, it can be concluded that research addressing these variables is still very limited. Another limitation is that this search found no research discussing informal communities based on local wisdom, especially in an island context. Communities based on local wisdom emphasize the Island cultures that have evolved knowledge, values, skills, and customs to help them adapt to and survive in their environment. Therefore, future research could consider the limitations of this study as a basis for further research. Furthermore, future research could include the variable of opportunity management, as the combination of social capital and empowered leadership can create a conducive environment that, in turn, can improve community well-being through increased income, access to public services, and an improved quality of life.

6. Acknowledgment

The authors wish to express their sincere appreciation to all parties, both individuals and institutions, whose valuable insights, constructive comments, and continuous support have significantly contributed to the development and refinement of this study.

7. Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors affirm that there are no known financial or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this article.

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