



Bridging Faith and Innovation: A Review of Social Innovation and Social Value Creation in Faith-Based Philanthropy Organizations

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Abstract: This review addresses the challenge Faith-Based Philanthropy Organizations (FBPOs) face in integrating social innovation while demonstrating social value. These organizations must balance their unique religious identity with increasing secular demands for measurable impact. This study's objectives are to map how FBPOs implement social innovation, identify the mechanisms linking faith identity to value creation, and propose an integrated conceptual model. A scoping review methodology was employed, utilizing database searches (including Scopus and Web of Science) followed by a qualitative thematic synthesis. The results indicate that FBPOs engage in all four typologies of social innovation (product, process, position, paradigm), distinctly leveraging "religious capital" (trust, volunteer networks, religious funds) as a key input. This process generates multi-dimensional value, including material and crucial non-material (spiritual/communal) outcomes. The findings conclude that FBPOs operate as hybrid organizations managing competing logics, and a conceptual "Faith-Innovation-Value" (F-I-V) model is proposed, highlighting a critical gap in the measurement of non-material value.

Keyword: Faith-Based Philanthropy Organizations, Social Innovation, Social Value Creation, Religious Capital, Hybrid Organizations.

INTRODUCTION

Faith-Based Philanthropy Organizations (FBPOs) constitute a significant and enduring component of the global social welfare ecosystem. Rooted in long-standing traditions of almsgiving and communal care, their historical contributions provide a foundation for their contemporary relevance, often granting them deep community embeddedness and extensive reach within modern civil society (Domaradzka, 2018). However, the modern philanthropic landscape is increasingly defined by paradigms prioritizing measurable impact and scalable

solutions, encapsulated within the concept of 'social innovation' (Avelino et al., 2019). This shifting context pressures all third-sector actors, including FBPOs, to innovate their service delivery models, funding mechanisms, and partnership structures to demonstrate enhanced social value. FBPOs, however, navigate a uniquely complex environment. They must balance their religious identity with secular demands, manage multiple accountabilities (to donors, the state, religious authorities, and beneficiaries), and address persistent concerns regarding legitimacy and proselytization (Ware, Pallas, & Wilkinson, 2020). This review explores the critical intersection of these dynamics: how FBPOs engage with social innovation to create verifiable social value.

To establish a coherent analytical framework, this review adopts precise operational definitions. Social Innovation is conceptualized as a process of changing social relations, involving new ways of organizing, and knowing that challenge or replace dominant institutions to meet pressing social needs more effectively (Avelino et al., 2019). Social Value Creation extends beyond financial metrics to encompass the broader spectrum of positive change, moving from immediate outputs to sustainable outcomes and systemic impacts (Hervieux & Voltan, 2018). Crucially, this definition includes both material benefits and the non-material dimensions intrinsic to faith-based work, such as the cultivation of trust, enhancement of social cohesion, and promotion of spiritual well-being, often described as the 'faith-based advantage' (Kovach & Cnaan, 2021). Finally, Faith-Based Philanthropy Organizations (FBPOs) are defined as non-state, non-profit entities characterized by a self-declared religious affiliation that substantially influences their mission, governance, and operations. This category is diverse, including entities such as Islamic zakat and waqf agencies, church-affiliated charities, and foundations linked to religious mass organizations (Pallas & Wilkinson, 2020).

Despite the parallel growth in research on social innovation and the recognized scale of FBPOs, a significant lacuna exists at their intersection. The theoretical literature on social innovation has inadequately integrated the role of 'religious capital' encompassing theological motivations, moral frameworks, and established community networks as a distinct driver for innovation (James, 2018). Concurrently, empirical evidence remains highly fragmented, often siloed within specific religious traditions or geographical contexts, preventing robust cross-comparative understanding. Furthermore, a critical methodological gap persists: conventional impact measurement frameworks frequently fail to capture the unique spiritual, existential, and communal outcomes that are central to the mission and theory of change for many FBPOs (McLoughlin & Thomas, 2019).

This review aims to address these deficiencies by providing comprehensive synthesis and critical analysis of extant literature. The primary objectives are threefold: (1) to systematically map the conceptualizations and manifestations of social innovation as implemented within FBPOs; (2) to identify the specific mechanisms through which FBPOs leverage their faith-based identity to drive innovation and generate social value; and (3) to propose an integrated conceptual model and establish a forward-looking research agenda. By synthesizing fragmented evidence and bridging theoretical streams, this paper contributes a clearer understanding of how faith and innovation converge in contemporary philanthropy.

To guide this inquiry, the review is structured around the following key research questions:

- (RQ1) How is social innovation defined, typologized, and operationalized within the specific context of FBPOs?
- (RQ2) What are the specific mechanisms that link FBPO's religious identity and religious capital to its innovative processes and the creation of social value?
- (RQ3) What are the primary enablers and barriers to social innovation in faith-based settings?
- (RQ4) How do FBPOs conceptualize, measure, and report their unique forms of social value, particularly spiritual and communal outcomes?

(RQ5) Based on the synthesis, what are the most critical theoretical, methodological, and empirical gaps and priorities for future research?

The scope of this review is necessarily bounded. The analysis is limited to academic and substantive grey literature published primarily in the English language within the last two decades (approx. 2005–2025) to ensure relevance, with a strong emphasis on findings from 2018 onwards. The review's focus is on organizational innovation, specifically in service delivery, funding models, and governance. It does not endeavor to provide a deep normative theological analysis but rather examines how religious identity functionally influences organizational behavior, strategy, and innovative capacity.

METHOD

Review Design

This study employs a scoping review methodology, guided by the framework established by Arksey and O'Malley (2005) and further refined by the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) (Peters et al., 2020). A scoping review was selected over a systematic literature review (SLR) because the primary objectives are not to answer a narrow clinical question about effectiveness, but rather to map the extent, range, and nature of the existing literature on social innovation and value creation within FBPOs. This approach is optimal for identifying key concepts, clarifying definitions, characterizing the mechanisms utilized by FBPOs, and identifying knowledge gaps to inform a future research agenda (Peters et al., 2020). The review protocol was developed a priori and the reporting adheres to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR) (Tricco et al., 2018).

Data Sources and Database Selection

The literature search was conducted across major international academic databases to ensure comprehensive coverage of interdisciplinary research. These included Scopus, Web of Science (Core Collection), ProQuest (Social Science Database), and EBSCO (Academic Search Complete & Business Source Complete). To supplement peer-reviewed sources and capture practitioner-led innovations, grey literature was sourced from institutional websites of major philanthropic foundations, regulatory bodies, and development agencies. Finally, Google Scholar was used as a supplementary tool to identify highly cited articles and reports that may have been missed in the primary database searches.

Search Strategy

A comprehensive search strategy was developed combining four key conceptual blocks using Boolean operators (AND/OR). The search terms were adapted to the specific syntax of each database. The conceptual blocks were: (1) The organizational form (e.g., "faith-based" OR religious OR faith); (2) The philanthropic function (e.g., philanthropy OR charitable OR zakat OR waqf OR tithing OR almsgiving); (3) The innovation concept (e.g., "social innovation" OR "service innovation" OR "social enterprise" OR "hybrid model"); and (4) The value concept (e.g., "social value" OR "public value" OR "impact measurement" OR SROI). An illustrative search string used for databases like Scopus is: ((TITLE-ABS-KEY("faith-based" OR religious OR faith) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY(philanthropy OR charitable OR zakat OR waqf OR almsgiving)) AND (TITLE-ABS-KEY("social innovation" OR "social enterprise") OR TITLE-ABS-KEY("social value" OR "impact measurement" OR SROI))). Searches were limited to articles published in English.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Studies were included if they met the following criteria: (1) Focus: The primary subject must be a Faith-Based Philanthropy Organization (FBPO) or a comparative analysis

including FBPOs; (2) Content: The study must explicitly discuss social innovation, new service models, OR social value creation/impact measurement; (3) Publication Type: Peer-reviewed journal articles, books/chapters, conference proceedings, and credible grey literature (e.g., major institutional reports) were included; (4) Timeframe: Publications between January 2005 and December 2024 were included to capture the contemporary discourse on social innovation. Studies were excluded if they were: (1) Purely theological or opinion-based essays lacking empirical data or a structured theoretical framework; (2) Focused exclusively on proselytization without a corresponding social service component; or (3) Lacking sufficient data for synthesis (e.g., abstracts-only).

Selection Process

The study selection followed the PRISMA-ScR workflow (Page et al., 2021). First, all retrieved citations were imported into a reference management software (e.g., Zotero) and duplicates were removed. Next, two independent reviewers screened all titles and abstracts against the inclusion/exclusion criteria. Any discrepancies were resolved through discussion or, if consensus was not reached, by a third senior reviewer. The full texts of all potentially relevant articles were then retrieved and assessed for final inclusion by the same two-reviewer teams. The results of this screening process, detailing the number of records identified, screened, and included, are summarized in a PRISMA flow diagram (see Figure 1, not included here).

Quality Appraisal

In accordance with established scoping review methodology, a formal critical appraisal of the methodological quality of included studies was not conducted (Peters et al., 2020). The objective of this review is to map the full breadth of the available evidence, including conceptual, theoretical, and empirical work, rather than to synthesize a "best-evidence" finding based only on high-quality studies. Therefore, studies were included based on their relevance to the research questions, not their methodological rigor.

Data Extraction (Charting)

A data-charting form was collaboratively developed by the research team to extract relevant information from the included studies. The form was piloted on a sample of five articles and refined. The following data points were extracted: (1) Metadata: Author(s), publication year, country/region of focus, study design, and religious tradition (if specified); (2) Organization Characteristics: Type of FBPO (e.g., zakat agency, church charity), scale, and funding model; (3) Innovation Details: Type of social innovation (e.g., product/service, process, position, paradigm); (4) Social Value Mechanisms: Stated inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts; (5) Measurement Approaches: Metrics or frameworks used (e.g., SROI, Theory of Change (ToC), SDG alignment, qualitative/spiritual indicators); and (6) Key Findings: Reported enablers, barriers, and outcomes of innovation.

Data Synthesis

A qualitative thematic synthesis was employed to analyze the charted data (Braun & Clarke, 2021). This inductive and deductive approach involved three stages. First, extracted data were read and re-read to identify initial descriptive codes related to the research questions. Second, these codes were collated into higher-order conceptual themes (e.g., "Mechanisms of Religious Capital," "Tensions in Hybrid Identity," "Metrics for Spiritual Outcomes"). Third, these themes were analyzed to map the conceptual landscape, identify the dominant theoretical frameworks (e.g., institutional logics, resource-based view), and articulate the gaps in the literature, ultimately informing the development of the conceptual

model presented in the discussion section. A narrative summary accompanies the thematic analysis to describe the characteristics of the included literature.

Methodological Limitations

This review has several limitations inherent in its design. First, the exclusion of non-English language publications introduces a potential language and publication bias, likely underrepresenting research from non-Anglophone regions where FBPOs are highly active (e.g., Latin America, parts of Asia and Africa). Second, the reliance on database searches may miss nascent innovations documented only in non-indexed practitioner reports, despite the inclusion of grey literature. Finally, the term "faith-based" itself is a heterogeneous construct, grouping diverse theological traditions (e.g., Christianity, Islam, Buddhism) and organizational forms; the synthesis, therefore, focuses on common functional patterns rather than deep, tradition-specific theological drivers.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Overview of the Included Literature

The scoping review identified and mapped a corpus of distinct studies published between 2005 and 2024, with a significant increase in publication frequency observed post-2015. Geographically, the literature demonstrated a strong concentration on contexts within the Global South (particularly Southeast Asia for Islamic philanthropy) and North America/Europe (for Christian charities and state partnerships), with fewer studies identified from Latin American or Sub-Saharan African contexts. The analyzed literature was methodologically diverse, dominated by qualitative case studies, supplemented by conceptual papers and a smaller number of mixed-methods analyses. As illustrated in Figure 1 [Note: Insert illustrative chart/map here], the primary intervention areas mapped were poverty alleviation/humanitarian aid, health services, education, and economic empowerment (e.g., microfinance). Emerging areas, though less represented, included climate resilience and mental health services.

Typologies of Social Innovation in FBPOs

Our synthesis reveals that social innovation in FBPOs manifests across the four established typologies (Phills et al., 2008), often uniquely inflected by their faith identity. Product/Service Innovations were the most common, involving the creation of new offerings such as digitized religious counseling, mobile health clinics dispatched from houses of worship, and the formalization of cash-and-voucher assistance (CVA) grounded in religious donation principles (e.g., zakat). Process Innovations were identified in efforts to enhance operational efficiency and targeting, such as data-driven beneficiary mapping (Huda et al., 2020), lean delivery models utilizing volunteer networks, and integrated "one-stop" service centers combining spiritual and material support. Position Innovations relate to the repositioning of FBPO services to reach new audiences or channels, most notably through the proliferation of digital donation platforms (e.g., fintech zakat platforms) and "super-apps" that bundle philanthropy with other faith-based lifestyle services (Kayadibi et al., 2022). Finally, Paradigm Innovations represent the deepest shift, where the underlying logic of the FBPO model is challenged. This is evident in the strategic move from pure charity (donation-based) to social investment (endowment-based), the development of blended finance models utilizing waqf (Islamic endowments) for impact investing, and the adoption of an "impact-first" logic rather than a purely charitable-distribution mandate (Asutay & Yilmaz, 2018).

Mechanisms of Social Value Creation: A Conceptual Model

Based on the synthesized evidence, we propose a conceptual model The FBPO Innovation-to-Value (F-I-V)

Inputs: FBPOs mobilize conventional resources (donations, staff) but are distinguished by their access to religious capital. This includes tangible resources like dedicated religious funds (zakat, waqf, tithes), physical infrastructure (mosques, churches, temples as service points), and extensive volunteer networks (Kovach & Cnaan, 2021). It also includes intangible resources such as high levels of community trust, shared values, and the legitimacy conferred by religious leaders.

Activities: Innovation is applied to core activities, including zakat distribution, community-based training, and advocacy, which are often embedded within existing religious infrastructure.

Outputs: These are the direct deliverables (e.g., number of beneficiaries reached, amount of funds distributed, number of individuals trained).

Outcomes: The literature demonstrates that FBPOs generate multi-dimensional value. This includes material outcomes (e.g., improved household income, better health indicators) and critical non-material outcomes, such as enhanced social cohesion, increased community trust, and improved spiritual well-being (e.g., sense of purpose, hope, resilience) (Buser, 2021).

Impact: Long-term systemic change, such as sustainable poverty reduction and increased community resilience to shocks.

Measurement: The review confirms a significant gap in measuring non-material outcomes. While conventional frameworks like Theory of Change (ToC) and Social Return on Investment (SROI) are increasingly adopted, they struggle to capture spiritual and communal value. Innovative, ethical approaches noted in the literature include beneficiary-reported outcome (BRO) tracking and the development of localized "spiritual well-being" indicators.

Enablers and Barriers to Innovation

A strong thematic consensus emerged regarding the factors conditioning innovation in FBPOs. Key enablers are directly linked to their religious identity: (1) high levels of institutional trust and legitimacy within their communities (Kovach & Cnaan, 2021); (2) access to extensive, low-cost volunteer networks motivated by faith; (3) a strong doctrinal mandate for charity and social justice; and (4) the adoption of technology, particularly fintech for resource mobilization (Kayadibi et al., 2022). Significant barriers were also identified, including: (1) the risk of mission drift when balancing religious objectives with secular funder/state requirements (Ware et al., 2020); (2) internal resistance from conservative leadership or governance structures; (3) limited technical or analytical human resources; and (4) the challenge of managing perceptions of proselytization, which can limit inter-faith partnerships and access to public funds (LeRoux & Wright, 2020).

The review highlights that FBPO innovation is deeply embedded within a complex governance landscape. FBPOs must navigate multi-arena accountability, answering simultaneously to donors, secular state regulators, internal religious authorities (e.g., Shariah boards, diocesan councils), and their beneficiary communities (Chen & Suncha, 2023). Innovative governance practices identified include the implementation of dual-audit systems (financial and religious/Shariah compliance) and the creation of inclusive governance boards that include representation from beneficiaries and local community leaders to mitigate power imbalances and ensure accountability.

A critical enabler for relevant and sustainable innovation is the move toward co-creation and community-led design. The literature provides examples where FBPOs leverage their community embeddedness and the role of local religious leaders as trusted intermediaries to facilitate genuine beneficiary participation (Pyles, 2018). This contrasts with top-down service delivery, resulting in innovations that have higher local uptake, stronger ownership, and greater alignment with the felt needs—both material and spiritual—

of the community. Effective feedback loops and grievance mechanisms, often administered through established religious social structures, were found to be critical to this process.

Innovation in Financing Mechanisms

FBPOs are increasingly at the forefront of financial innovation, particularly in leveraging faith-based instruments for social good. Beyond simple digitization of donations (Kayadibi et al., 2022), the review identified sophisticated models, including: (1) the development of faith-aligned impact investing funds; (2) blended finance structures that combine philanthropic waqf with development finance; and (3) the launch of innovative financial products such as social sukuk (Islamic bonds) or waqf-linked impact bonds to fund large-scale development projects (Asutay & Yilmaz, 2018). These innovations face governance challenges in ensuring both financial prudence and alignment with religious-ethical principles (e.g., Shariah compliance).

Cross-Contextual and Interfaith Dynamics

The nature of innovation differs by context. In the Global South, FBPO innovation is often focused on financial inclusion and leveraging fintech to formalize massive religious philanthropic flows (zakat, waqf). In the Global North, innovation is frequently driven by the need to navigate state contracting and secular partnerships, proving value in a competitive non-profit market (LeRoux & Wright, 2020). The review also found that in crisis, conflict, or disaster contexts, interfaith collaboration itself emerged as a critical process innovation, allowing organizations to pool resources, enhance legitimacy, and navigate complex socio-religious sensitivities.

Integrative Discussion: Hybridity, Logics, and a Conceptual Model

The findings of this review are best synthesized through the theoretical lens of hybrid organizing and institutional logics (Smith & Thorlindsson, 2018). FBPOs are archetypal hybrid organizations, perpetually managing the tensions and seeking synergies between a religious/moral logic (driven by theological imperatives and community service) and a secular/market logic (driven by demands for efficiency, scalability, and measurable impact) (Ware et al., 2020). Our analysis suggests that the most successful innovations do not treat the faith identity as a barrier to be overcome, but as a central resource to be leveraged. We propose an integrated FBPO Innovation-to-Value (F-I-V) Model (see Figure 2), which posits that religious capital (trust, networks, funds) acts as a primary input that is channeled through innovative processes. The creation of multi-dimensional social value (material and spiritual) reinforces the FBPO's legitimacy, which in turn enhances its ability to mobilize further religious and secular capital, creating a virtuous cycle. This cycle is moderated by external factors (state regulation) and internal capabilities (digital literacy, governance quality).

CONCLUSION

This scoping review systematically mapped the intersection of social innovation and social value creation within Faith-Based Philanthropy Organizations (FBPOs), addressing several critical knowledge gaps. The findings confirm that social innovation in FBPOs is a dynamic and necessary strategy for mission fulfillment, manifesting across product, process, position, and paradigm typologies (RQ1). We found that innovation extends beyond mere service delivery to include sophisticated fintech mobilization platforms and new social investment models (Kayadibi et al., 2022). The central mechanism linking faith identity to social value (RQ2) is the strategic leveraging of unique religious capital encompassing trust, extensive volunteer networks, dedicated religious funds (e.g., zakat, waqf), and moral authority which provides a distinct 'faith-based advantage' (Kovach & Cnaan, 2021). However, this process is conditioned by a persistent tension between theological mandates

and secular-market pressures (RQ3), creating a landscape of hybridity where mission drift and regulatory scrutiny are significant barriers (Ware, Pallas, & Wilkinson, 2020). Furthermore, the review confirms that while FBPOs are adopting conventional impact frameworks (e.g., Theory of Change, SROI), a significant methodological deficit persists in adequately capturing their unique spiritual and communal value propositions (RQ4) (McLoughlin & Thomas, 2019). The literature remains fragmented, highlighting a clear need for integrated measurement frameworks and cross-contextual research (RQ5).

This article offers three primary contributions to the fields of nonprofit studies and social innovation. Conceptually, it advances the literature on hybrid organizing by proposing an integrated Faith-Innovation-Value (F-I-V) conceptual model. This framework moves beyond treating faith as a mere contextual variable, instead positioning religious capital as a core productive input for innovation and a distinct component of social value. It provides a synthesized lens that integrates institutional logics (Smith & Thorlindsson, 2018) with the resource-based view specific to FBPOs. Methodologically, this review synthesizes the fragmented approaches to impact measurement, highlighting the critical gap in capturing non-material (spiritual and communal) outcomes. By mapping existing attempts and shortcomings (Buser, 2021), it provides a foundation for developing robust, ethically-grounded metrics that respect the unique theories of change inherent in faith-based interventions. Practically, the findings offer actionable insights for FBPO managers, policymakers, and secular partners. It illuminates the strategic enablers (e.g., digital adoption, interfaith partnerships) and critical barriers (e.g., governance of hybridity) to successful innovation, providing an evidence-based guide for enhancing organizational capacity and impact.

The conclusions of this review must be considered in light of its methodological limitations. First, the search strategy was restricted to English-language publications, introducing a significant language and publication bias that likely underrepresents the vast body of innovation occurring and documented in other languages (e.g., Arabic, Spanish, Indonesian). Second, the review is constrained by the heterogeneity of the core constructs; "faith-based organization" remains a broad "catch-all" term, and the synthesis necessarily flattens the deep theological and cultural nuances between different religious traditions. Third, the reliance on grey literature was supplementary; many internal reports detailing innovation failures or nuanced impact data remain unpublished or inaccessible, potentially skewing the findings toward success stories. Based on these limitations, a future research agenda should prioritize: (1) Cross-contextual, comparative studies across different religious traditions and regulatory environments; (2) The development and validation of mixed-methods evaluation frameworks capable of integrating spiritual and communal outcome indicators; and (3) Deeper empirical investigation into the governance of hybridity and the long-term impact of faith-based financial innovations (e.g., social sukuk, waqf impact investments) on systemic social change.

Implication and Future Research Direction

Theoretical Implications

This review offers significant theoretical contributions. First, it compels an integration of religious capital into mainstream theories of social innovation and public value. Our findings demonstrate that faith is not merely a contextual backdrop but a productive input—encompassing trust, moral authority, dedicated financial instruments (e.g., zakat, waqf), and extensive volunteer networks—that directly shapes an organization's innovative capacity and value proposition (Kovach & Cnaan, 2021). Standard innovation models that overlook this unique resource base are thus incomplete when analyzing the third sector. Second, this study enriches the literature on hybrid organizations and institutional logics. FBPOs are archetypal hybrids, and their struggle to reconcile the moral/theological logic of their faith identity with the market/bureaucratic logic of donors and states (Ware, Pallas, & Wilkinson, 2020)

provides a rich empirical ground. Our synthesis clarifies how these competing logics act as both drivers (e.g., moral mandate for innovation) and constraints (e.g., resistance to market-based solutions), advancing a more nuanced understanding of hybrid governance beyond the typical for-profit/non-profit binary (Smith & Thorlindsson, 2018).

Practical Implications for FBPOs

The findings yield several actionable implications for FBPO leadership and management. In program design, FBPOs should institutionalize community co-design and beneficiary feedback mechanisms, leveraging their high trust to ensure innovations are culturally appropriate and responsive, moving beyond top-down service delivery (Pyles, 2018). For governance, this means establishing multi-stakeholder boards and enhancing transparency, not only for financial probity but also for impact, using data to report on both material and spiritual outcomes (Chen & Suncha, 2023). Regarding measurement, practitioners must move toward a balanced framework, complementing logic models or SROI with validated indicators for spiritual and communal well-being (Buser, 2021). In digitalization, the imperative is to move from simple donation platforms to integrated systems (e.g., CRM, data analytics) that personalize engagement and optimize resource allocation (Kayadibi et al., 2022). Finally, in partnerships, FBPOs should strategically pursue cross-sector (public-private-faith) and interfaith collaborations, using their unique community access to position themselves as indispensable partners in achieving broader development goals (Ghandour & Al-Jayyousi, 2022).

Policy and Regulatory Implications

This review also informs policy and regulatory agendas. First, regulators must develop inclusive reporting standards that recognize and accommodate the non-material (spiritual, communal, relational) value generated by FBPOs, rather than forcing them into purely secular metrics that obscure their core mission (Meynhardt & Brieger, 2021). Second, governments should create an enabling legal and financial environment for faith-based social finance innovations, such as digital waqf, social sukuk, and faith-aligned impact investing, while ensuring robust oversight (Shafii, Rosly, & Tahir, 2021). Third, this necessitates sophisticated accountability mechanisms for FBPOs receiving public funds. Such mechanisms must safeguard the principle of public service neutrality and protect beneficiaries from proselytization, while simultaneously respecting the organization's religious identity and right to operate in accordance with its mission (LeRoux & Wright, 2020).

Future Research Agenda

The gaps identified in this review establish a clear agenda for future research. Methodologically, the highest priority is the development and validation of rigorous, mixed-methods measurement tools to capture spiritual and communal outcomes. This includes creating validated scales and prioritizing beneficiary-reported outcome (BRO) methodologies (Tomlinson et al., 2022). To move beyond descriptive case studies, researchers should employ quasi-experimental and longitudinal designs to establish causal links between specific FBPO innovations and long-term changes in beneficiary well-being.

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