# THESIS TITLE

# A BOURDIEUSIAN ANALYSIS OF BLACK-LED COMMUNITY BUSINESSES

**BY**

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# Certificate of Ethical Approval

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| Applicant: | Christabell Amoakoh |
| Project Title: | An investigation into social capital and community business development in Coventry's Black Community. |

This is to certify that the above named applicant has completed the Coventry University Ethical Approval process and their project has been confirmed and approved as Medium Risk

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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

| | |
|---|---|
| AISO | Advocacy and Infrastructure Support Organisations |
| BITC | Business in the Community |
| BME | Black Minority Ethnic |
| CCC | Coventry City Council |
| CM | Community Members |
| CB | Community Businesses |
| CO/A | Community Organisations/Associations |
| EEDI | Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion |
| G/F | Grantmakers/Funders |
| IPIM | Institutions with Power, Influence and Money |
| LA | Local Authorities |
| NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research |
| NPI | New Project Initiators |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| PtC | Power to Change |
| R/T | Research and Think Tanks |
| SEUK | Social Enterprise UK |
| SES | Social Economic Space |
| SE | Social Enterprise |
| STE | Social Trading Economy |
| STOs | Social Trading Organisations |
| ToP | Theory of Practice |

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## ABSTRACT

Existing data reveal that higher levels of socioeconomic deprivation and inequality contribute to lower rates of social mobility among minority ethnic groups across the UK. Within this context, the Black community faces the most significant challenges. Literature suggests that the UK government's levelling-up policy, which aims to devolve powers from central government to local authorities and economies, has stimulated community entrepreneurial activity to develop practical solutions to socioeconomic deprivation. Despite this progress, there is a notable lack of evidence regarding the involvement of ethnic minority groups in advancing community entrepreneurship, even though these groups are recognised as valuable agents in promoting social, economic, and environmental regeneration. Therefore, this study investigates the effectiveness of Community Businesses (CBs) as catalysts for socioeconomic development in underrepresented communities and how policymakers integrate CB strategies into locally-led socioeconomic regeneration initiatives.

Drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's Theory of Practice, this qualitative study comprehensively assesses the experiences of 43 participants through semi-structured interviews. First, it explores the pre-dispositional context of the Black community—specifically, the *structured structuring habitus*—regarding community members' past and present circumstances, as well as their current and future dispositions. Second, it examines the disposition of Black-led Social Trading Organisations (STOs) as a *structuring structure*, focusing on their role in the formation, operations, and sustainability of community businesses (CBs). Third, it investigates the interplay between agency and *structure* and the power dynamics of the field, assessing how these interactions influence CB support and delivery in the context of socioeconomic development and local regeneration strategies.

The findings make a significant contribution to both theory and practice, highlighting the dynamic interplay between Community Member (CM) habitus, Social Trading Organisations (STOs), and the Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIM) fields. This interplay defines the current state of practice. Presently, the structured Black habitus comprises individuals who, despite their awareness of historical contexts, often overlook the connection between their past and present circumstances, particularly in environments characterised by pervasive social deprivation. As a result, a substantial lack of social capital—trust, reciprocity, and goodwill—impedes their accountability to one another.

Furthermore, the operations and sustainability of Black-led STOs are constrained by the structures that support them. The power dynamics hinder STOs from functioning as equal partners, as the relationships between the IPIM and the STOs tend to be short-lived and lack long-term benefits, rendering STO operations in the field a struggle for survival. Although independent entities, CMs and STOs are not truly agentic but rather constrained by the IPIM structure. The study concludes with an integrative and relational conceptual framework designed to guide support organisations and policymakers in fostering community business practices that contribute to socioeconomic regeneration and development.
***Keywords:*** *Social Enterprise, Community Business/Enterprise, Socioeconomic disadvantage and inequality, Theory of Practice: Habitus, Field, and Doxa, Social, Economic, Symbolic capital, and Structure and Agency*

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the thesis by presenting the empirical context on which this study is based. It outlines the research aim and objectives and summarises the theoretical underpinnings of the study. Then, a presentation of the research problem is provided, highlighting the significance of the study and the researcher's ontological and epistemological positions. After that, the research motivations and the study's impact are discussed. Finally, a map upon which the thesis is structured is presented.

## 1.1 Background and Context

Evidence suggests that socioeconomic deprivation is higher within specific geographic places where many Black communities reside. This inequality increases poverty levels, causing a lack of participation in social structures such as education, health and well-being, and others, simultaneously compounding these disadvantages (Bhalla & Lapeyre,1997). Additionally, Blackburn and Ram (2006) posit that skills deficits, low levels of social capital, and a lack of employment cause socioeconomic inequality. For some, their exclusion is compounded further by alienation from social structures that mitigate their deficiency (Smith et al., 2019). Moreover, the historical disposition of people in the Black community has created internal divisions—African versus Caribbean, tribes against tribes, and diverse cultural disconnects—that prevent social and collective action needed for economic development. More topical issues, such as the battle for limited socioeconomic resources, stereotyping, and perceived differences in socioeconomic success, have exacerbated the tensions (Owusu-Kwarteng,

2017). The UK government's levelling-up policy (now Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) has begun devolving powers from the central government to Local Authorities (LA) and economies, increasing community entrepreneurial activity towards finding practical solutions to socioeconomic deprivation. According to Bailey (2012), community businesses have the potential to significantly contribute to local regeneration strategies, generate social capital, and promote civil society in general. Yet, there remains only a limited understanding, both within academia and externally of the involvement of Black people in community enterprise activity and the associated policy agenda. This is despite existing data revealing higher socioeconomic inequality levels among the Black community.

## 1.2 Research Aim and Objectives

Due to the lack of knowledge regarding the involvement of Black individuals in community enterprise activities, this study aims to examine the efficacy of Community Businesses (CBs) as catalysts for socioeconomic development within underrepresented communities. Additionally, it explores how policymakers consider CB strategies in locally-led socioeconomic regeneration. Focusing on the Black community and utilising case studies from the West Midlands, the study addresses the research question: *How can the Black community establish, operate, and sustain community businesses to achieve socioeconomic development?* This thesis is particularly relevant to policymakers, academics, and researchers interested in socioeconomic development and community businesses, especially in communities facing socioeconomic deprivation and inequality. Furthermore, it holds significance for these communities, as it can serve as a guiding framework for transformative entrepreneurial development from within.

From this aim and the associated research question, three key objectives were established:
***Objective one*** focuses on assessing the conditions that facilitate establishing community businesses within the Black community. This assessment takes into account their attachment to their place of residence, the levels of social capital they have accrued and may potentially accrue, and their mutual accountability as a community.
***Objective two*** investigates how Black-led Social Trading Organisations (STOs) qualify as CBs and explores how they form, operate, and sustain successful CBs.

***Objective three*** examines the extent to which policymakers and support organisations consider the role of community businesses as a viable option for locally-led socioeconomic development and regeneration.
43 participants from these groups participated in semi-structured interviews. The findings are detailed in Chapter Five, where discussions and conclusions are outlined accordingly.

## 1.3 Theoretical Underpinning

Drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's Theory of Practice framework, this qualitative study critically analyses three participant groups: a) Community Members (CM), b) Social Trading Organisations (STOs), and c) Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIM).
The study triangulates a comprehensive assessment of experiences from the three groups, yielding the following theoretical implications: First, the predispositional context of the Black community (structured structuring habitus), pertaining to community members' past and present circumstances, as well as their current and future dispositions. It also considers their attachment to place, social capital, and accountability to the community, all of which are essential for establishing community businesses (CBs). Second, the disposition of Black-led Social Trading Organisations (STOs) is examined as a structuring structure, focusing on their role in CB formation, operations, and sustainability. This includes analysing how they leverage various forms of capital—economic, social, symbolic, and cultural—to compete and build relationships with the entities that shape the structured context and its governing rules. Third, the study explores how the field of power (structure) influences community business support, delivery and integration into socioeconomic development and local regeneration policies. The study concludes with an integrative and relational Bourdieusian conceptual model designed to guide support organisations and policymakers in fostering community business practices that contribute to socioeconomic regeneration and development.

## 1.4 Problem Statement

The issue of socioeconomic deprivation and inequality has been a subject of discussion long before the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this problem has been exacerbated by the recent pandemic and the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. An article titled [1]*Inequality and Recovery,* published by the House of Commons Library in April 2022, raised concerns among experts

[1] https://post.parliament.uk/economic-inequality-and-recovery/ (2022)

regarding the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak and its potential to widen economic inequalities in the long term. It also highlighted how the pandemic interacts with various pre-existing inequalities, including those related to gender, ethnicity, age, and geography. Furthermore, the cost-of-living crisis has intensified the issue of poverty. According to Smith et al. (2019), financial hardship is one of the primary underlying causes of unemployment, which can further exacerbate social exclusion. Casey (2013) argues that employment is a fundamental basis for social organisation, social interaction, skills development and maintenance, as well as dignity and personal identity (Varga, 2014).

Moreover, certain groups, such as migrants and individuals with disabilities, are often located in geographically concentrated, disadvantaged, and de-industrialized areas (Saar & Unit, 2008), which further exacerbates their deprivation. This assertion is supported by the [2]*People Living in Deprived Neighbourhoods Report (Gov.UK, 2019),* which indicates that individuals from all ethnic minority groups, except Indian, Chinese, White Irish, and White other groups, are more likely than White British individuals to reside in the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods in England. Undoubtedly, communities facing significant socioeconomic challenges and inequalities could benefit from Community Business (CB) opportunities to enhance their socioeconomic status. This aligns with policymakers' intentions to consult, involve, and engage various communities at the neighbourhood level and government policy statements promoting diverse initiatives and mechanisms for devolving powers down the hierarchy (Bailey, 2012). Despite the growing recognition of community-based entrepreneurship as a vital component of civil society (Bailey, 2012), concerns persist regarding the inadequate engagement of Black and Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups in policy-making structures and networks related to social enterprises. This lack of engagement creates significant barriers to inclusion and representation (Sepulveda et al., 2013). Given these challenges, why do ethnic minority groups, who face obstacles to inclusion, engagement, and representation, continue to struggle with participation in these policy-making processes?

Furthermore, could community-based enterprise initiatives serve as a transformative force to alleviate socioeconomic disadvantages and inequalities within these communities?

[2] People Living in Deprived Neighbourhoods Report (Gov.UK, 2019),

## 1.5 Significance of the Study

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) reported in November 2022, in the [3]*Economic Cost of Childhood Disadvantage Report*, that unequal opportunities represent a moral concern and undermine both economic and social prosperity. The report highlights that children in European countries who experience significant socioeconomic disadvantages earn, on average, 20% less as adults compared to their peers who had more favourable childhoods. Given these concerns, along with the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and the disparities revealed by empirical studies in its aftermath, this research is more urgent than ever.

Given this context, it is tempting to consider the diverse array of contextual socioeconomic challenges, such as inequality, poverty, and immigration. One might extend the research to encompass recent pressing issues, including gender disparities, religious discrimination, racial inequalities, and their impact on social and economic development. However, this study adopts a more focused approach by assessing the behavioural disposition of the Black community to determine whether it contributes to socioeconomic deprivation and inequality, as well as how these factors hinder or support the formation, operation, and sustainability of community businesses. Integrating additional socioeconomic challenges or fields, such as racism or systemic inequalities, could divert the research focus or dilute the primary objective of examining entrepreneurship and socioeconomic development, ultimately compromising the analytical depth this study seeks to achieve in these areas.

## 1.6 Epistemological and Ontological Positions

The researcher believes social reality is made from social actors' perceptions and subsequent actions (people) (Saunders et al., 2020). This includes both social actors within a structure (such as the powers governing community business development) and the actions of those being governed. Consequently, the researcher's ontological perspective asserts the existence of both internal and external social realities (subjective and objective). This viewpoint aligns with their values regarding the assumptions about structure and agency, suggesting that social realities are shaped by the perceptions and actions of individuals and structures.

[3] [3] https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/the-economic-costs-of-childhood-socio-economic-disadvantage_1202a4c7-en.html (2022)

However, societal structural constraints on individuals' lives and actions may influence their potential for progression or regression. The epistemological foundation of this study is informed by existing empirical knowledge derived from the experience of 'belonging' to the community under investigation (subjectivism) and by existing data that provides factual insights into the socioeconomic status of Black individuals, as documented both theoretically and empirically (objectivism). Currently, there is a lack of comprehensive intelligence regarding the experiences of deprivation within the Black community, the underlying causes of these experiences, and the structural factors that either constrain or gives agency for development. This gap extends to existing academic literature and empirical data concerning the Black community's involvement in Community Businesses (CBs). The researcher contends that entrepreneurial data is often presented as part of a homogeneous "ethnic minority" group. However, the community warrants its own set of empirical data that disaggregates the diverse aspects of heritage, culture, and needs, which differ between the distinct African and Caribbean groups. By doing so, this research lays the groundwork for new and richer understandings and interpretations of the reasons behind their deprivation, as well as the opportunity to identify impactful solutions through community entrepreneurship.

Philosophically, the researcher believes that there remains a wealth of intelligence and knowledge to be uncovered, which can illuminate the various subjectivities contributing to an understanding of the reasons behind socioeconomic deprivation and inequality, as well as community entrepreneurship. Furthermore, this exploration can provide insights into how these conditions might improve (Saunders et al., 2012). Axiologically, the researcher contends that, with the appropriate resources, skills, and tools, individuals have the potential to transform their lives and their surrounding environment, regardless of the influence of structural factors on the context or vice versa. However, it is important to acknowledge that the researcher's affiliation with and belonging to the community under investigation implies that their values cannot be entirely separated from the study. Consequently, it will be necessary to analyse these values and understand the philosophical framework that underpins them through careful reflexivity (Saunders et al., 2011).

## 1.7 Motivation for the study

The motivation to conduct this study arises from the researcher's professional, personal, and pragmatic perspectives.

Professionally, the researcher is an accredited business and social enterprise consultant, as well as a community development strategist, with seventeen years of experience in supporting individuals and organisations in cultivating entrepreneurial aspirations, enhancing leadership qualities, fostering strategic thinking, improving operational capacity, and building financial resilience. She has led a Social Trading Organisation for the past fourteen years and has a proven track record of significantly impacting Global Majority communities. Additionally, the researcher has developed and implemented social action strategies in both local and regional programs. She aims to identify practical, effective, and sustainable solutions for reducing socioeconomic inequalities and deprivation among underrepresented groups. In this context, she seeks to understand why, unlike other communities, meaningful and sustainable collaborations have not been established to mobilise the Black community—both Africans and Caribbeans—collectively in Coventry to address the challenges they face. This lack of collaboration persists despite the efforts of well-meaning community members and leaders.

Initially, social capital was the primary driver; however, after reviewing a substantial body of literature by Putnam, Coleman, Durkheim, Claridge, Marx, and others, the researcher found that Bourdieu's Theory of Practice resonated deeply with their personal and professional experiences, as well as their commitment to addressing socio-economic inequality. This connection is particularly relevant when examining issues within a structured context, considering individuals' past, present, and future circumstances. Furthermore, the researcher has observed that in professional settings, it is challenging to bring underrepresented groups closer to the power structures that facilitate social mobility. Based on their experience, existing strategies tend to be short-term, characterised by an imbalanced power distribution and repetitive support activities. Consequently, the findings from this research will be crucial in developing practical solutions to improve the socioeconomic conditions of communities facing inequality. This research will also support the promotion of pragmatic and innovative engagement strategies to raise awareness of exclusion, disengagement, and the lack of representation in policymaking structures and networks.

## 1.8 Impact and Contribution

This research is significant because it has direct implications for theory, practice, and policy, and it has the potential to provide actionable insights for individuals working in community

entrepreneurship and Social Trading Organisations (STOs) that address socioeconomic deprivation and inequality. By addressing the research aim and question, the findings go beyond merely uncovering important data; they also bridge a gap in the existing literature regarding the Black community's involvement in community entrepreneurship.

This study offers a structured and systematic approach to applying theory in practice-based research. It is particularly relevant to academics and researchers focused on socioeconomic development and community businesses, especially within communities facing socioeconomic deprivation and inequality. These groups will find this research valuable as a guiding framework for a transformative entrepreneurial approach to socioeconomic development. In practice, the findings from this study will be essential in developing practical solutions to address socioeconomic deprivation and inequality, as well as in promoting pragmatic and innovative engagement strategies to raise awareness of the exclusion, lack of engagement, and insufficient representation of the Black community's involvement in community businesses.

In conclusion, the Community Business Practice Process Model developed (see Chapter 6, section 6.7.3) will serve as a guiding framework for effective socioeconomic development practices that promote an inclusive approach to supporting the establishment, operation, and sustainability of community businesses involving underrepresented groups. The model will also address the barriers to inclusion, engagement, and representation these groups encounter as they participate in policymaking structures and networks. This ensures that community-based enterprise initiatives become a transformative force in alleviating socioeconomic disadvantage and inequality within their communities. The practical components of this thesis provide a foundation for these communities to express their concerns, in contrast to a thesis that merely documents behaviours without yielding practical outcomes. This doctoral research will act as a catalyst to foster future discussions among all stakeholders involved, facilitating meaningful change.

## 1.9 Thesis Structure

This chapter provides an overview of the thesis by presenting the empirical context on which this study is based. It outlines the research aim and objectives and summarises the theoretical underpinnings of the study. Then, a presentation of the research problem is provided, highlighting the significance of the study and the researcher’s ontological and

epistemological positions. After that, the research motivations and the study's impact are discussed. Finally, a map upon which the thesis is structured is presented.

Chapter Two establishes the context for the research by providing an overview of social enterprises (SEs) and discussing existing empirical data on Community Businesses (CBs). It differentiates CBs as an emerging model for community entrepreneurship and presents them as a more sustainable approach to addressing socioeconomic inequality and deprivation than SEs. The chapter then examines the factors enabling community businesses' formation, operation, and sustainability (CBs). Finally, it presents empirical data on the impact of socioeconomic inequality on the Black community, followed by a discussion of the policy implications to conclude the chapter.

Chapter Three critically examines Pierre Bourdieu's Theory of Practice (ToP) and its associated concepts—habitus, field, capital, doxa, and hysteresis—along with the diverse perspectives of various authors who have either critiqued or supported Bourdieu's work. The chapter follows a coherent structure, defining the Theory of Practice and its relational concepts. It details Bourdieu's attempt to reconcile the dualities of subjectivism and objectivism through practice and explains the complex interplay of his central concepts (Walther, 2014). Next, the ToP concepts and their related variables are delineated and integrated into the structure-agency debate. Subsequently, three papers are presented that illustrate how scholars have applied the ToP framework in their research, highlighting its relevance and effectiveness. Finally, drawing on insights from previous scholars and their application of the ToP framework, a systematic translation of the ToP is employed to construct a Community Business Practice Framework, which guides the methodological process and data analysis to address the research question.

Chapter Four uses the conceptual framework established in Chapter Three to develop a methodology that systematically investigates community business practices. This chapter focuses on the methods employed in the research, supported by theoretical underpinnings that provide a coherent and logical approach to strategy, design, and data analysis. To test the conceptual framework, relevant research questions are formulated to address the objectives and answer the overarching research question. The chapter concludes with the researcher's

reflexive stance, which fosters ongoing internal dialogue and critical self-evaluation of positionality.

Chapter Five presents the findings from interviews conducted with 43 participants: 20 Community Members (CMs), 15 Social Trading Organisations (STOs), and 8 Institutions with Power, Influence and Money (IPIMs). The findings are organised into three parts. Part One addresses the *Structured Structuring Habitus*, detailing the current circumstances, social and subjective experiences, and future opportunities of the Black Community Members (CMs). Part Two focuses on the *Structuring Structure Field,* examining the challenges STOs face as they strive to transform their organisations and navigate the Community Business (CB) landscape, whether as new entrants or established players. Finally, Part Three explores the *Field of Power Structure*, discussing the operational and strategic priorities of IPIMs and their role in facilitating the formation, operation, and sustainability of CBs. This section also includes a presentation and discussion on the role of CBs in socioeconomic development and policy. This chapter presents participants' voices anonymously while the researcher maintains a subjective and reflexive stance during the analytical process.

Chapter Six presents the empirical studies to conclude the current state of practice in the *Structured Structuring CM Habitus,* the *Structuring Structure STO Field,* and the *IPIM Field of Power Structure*. Subsequently, the structured rules for operating within these fields are outlined based on the findings. Following this, proposed resolutions for socioeconomic development by CMs, STOs, and IPIMs are mapped. Finally, proposals for community business practices are presented alongside a Community Business Practice Process Model.

Chapter Seven concludes the thesis by summarising the research aims, objectives, and the problem it seeks to address. It then presents the key findings that align with the research goals and objectives. The research's contributions and implications for theory and community business practice are discussed. Subsequently, an outline of the research's strengths and limitations and future directions to inspire and motivate further contributions is presented.

# CHAPTER TWO: COMMUNITY BUSINESSES – EMERGING MODEL FOR SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## 2.1 Introduction

This chapter establishes the context for the research by providing an overview of social enterprises (SEs) and discussing existing empirical data on Community Businesses (CBs). It differentiates CBs as an emerging model for community entrepreneurship and presents them as a more sustainable approach to addressing socioeconomic inequality and deprivation than SEs. The chapter then examines the factors enabling community businesses' formation, operation, and sustainability (CBs). Finally, it presents empirical data on the impact of socioeconomic inequality on the Black community, followed by a discussion of the policy implications to conclude the chapter.

## 2.2 Overview of Social Enterprises (SE) and Social Entrepreneurship

According to Defourny (2013), the resurgence of Social Enterprises (SEs) in the mid-1990s represented a significant development. This movement united various organisations, including cooperatives, community enterprises, and enterprising charities, all of which used business strategies to foster social change. It was propelled by a new generation of pragmatic, innovative, and visionary social activists and their networks. Consequently, social entrepreneurship draws upon a diverse array of business, charitable, and social movement models to devise solutions for community challenges and deliver sustainable social value. In the UK, the emergence of the concept of SEs has been primarily driven by policy initiatives, with policymakers outlining the scope and promotion of social and community enterprise activities as they have evolved to occupy a central role in driving transformational change within societies (Sepulveda, 2015). Within this context, the UK government defines social enterprises as:

*A business with primary social/environmental objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or community rather than being paid to shareholders and owners (Spear et al., (2017).*

The term enterprise is used in various contexts to refer to activity that produces or aims to produce value expressed in monetary terms, and any individual responsible for producing such value is commonly referred to as an entrepreneur (Somerville & McElwee, 2011). Kickul and Thomas (2020) define social entrepreneurship as the application of the mindset, processes, tools, and techniques of business entrepreneurship to pursue a social and/or environmental mission. According to Dees (2017), social entrepreneurship represents the best of both the private and public sectors. On one hand, it embodies the enterprising spirit of the private sector and leverages the power of economic markets to generate and deliver solutions to societal problems. On the other hand, it seeks to repair broken markets and prioritizes the public interest over private interests. Thus, social entrepreneurship harnesses the passion, ingenuity, innovativeness, perseverance, planning, bootstrapping abilities, and growth-oriented focus characteristic of entrepreneurs in addressing society's most pressing challenges (Kickul & Thomas, 2020). To achieve this, social enterprises must operate according to a specific set of criteria (Spear et al., 2017).

***Trades and generates a specific percentage of its income*** (25% or 50%) from the exchange of goods and services. The remainder may be derived from grants, donations, and other sources.
***The primary objective is to pursue social and environmental goals*** rather than solely for-profit objectives.
***The organisation reinvests approximately 49% of its profits and surplus*** into the organisation or the community to further its social and environmental initiatives.

### 2.2.1 Forms of SEs

Social Enterprises (SEs) in the UK can be established using various legal structures (Spear, 2017). These include Company Limited by Shares (CLS), Public Limited Companies (PLC), Partnerships, Industrial and Provident Societies (I&PS), Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG), Friendly Societies (FS), Community Interest Companies (CIC) and, since 2013, Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIO). However, several types of organisations, such as cooperatives, mutuals, and community businesses (CBs), identify as SEs despite not having a specific legal form (Spear, 2001).

[4]Recently, the term Social Trading Organisations (STOs) has been used to describe businesses that aim to provide social benefits while engaging in commercial activities (Kindred UK, 2019). This category includes community businesses, community interest companies, social enterprises, and cooperatives, all demonstrating their social purpose by addressing social and environmental challenges.

### 2.2.2 SE Benefits

Otola (2021) argues that social entrepreneurship focuses on activities where economic value is not the primary concern; instead, innovative solutions to social problems take precedence. This perspective aligns with Bosma's (2016) assertion that Social Enterprises (SEs) are driven by the creation of social value rather than the capture of economic value, although they operate in market-based environments rather than non-market ones. Supporting a value capture and market-oriented approach, SEUK's (2021) [5]No Going Back: State of Social Enterprise Survey reported over 131,000 SEs in the UK, collectively generating a turnover of £78 billion and employing approximately 2.3 million individuals. According to the report, SEs exemplify a more responsible way of conducting business, prioritising benefits for people and the planet while reinvesting some of their profits to further their missions.

Additionally, they contribute to reducing economic inequality and enhancing social justice and environmental sustainability. SEs operate across various sectors, including Education and Skills Development (14%), Retail (14%), Creative Industries (8.5%), Business Support and Consulting (8%), Healthcare (7%), Environmental Services—recycling, reuse, and awareness (6%), Community Services (5.5%), Manufacturing (4%), Social Care (4%), Culture and Leisure (3%), Financial Support and Services (3%), Hospitality (3%), Employment and Careers (2%), IT Consultancy and Software Development (2%), Agriculture—Farming and Gardening (2%), Workspace/Room Hire (2%), and Housing (2%).

According to the SEUK 2023 [6]*Critical State of Social Enterprise Survey*, supporting specific groups and communities is the most common primary objective of social enterprises.

[4] https://kindred-lcr.co.uk/lcrs
[5]stos/#:~:text=Socially%2Dtrading%20organisations%20(STOs),difference%20in%20their%20local%20communities. (2024)
[6] https://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/seuk-report/no-going-back-state-of-social-enterprise-survey-2021/ (2022)

Thirty-seven per cent of respondents indicated that their primary objective was to benefit a specific community, while thirty-five per cent aimed to improve mental health and well-being, and thirty-one per cent focused on supporting vulnerable populations. One in five social enterprises (SEs) has a core mission to address climate emergencies. Additionally, more than one-fifth of SEs provide support to other SEs. The report highlights that the core objectives of SEs have largely remained consistent over the years. Furthermore, SEs have outperformed traditional businesses in terms of growth and innovation, reducing inequalities, creating jobs, and fostering a more inclusive economy. Moreover, SEs empower communities by prioritising staff engagement and ensuring beneficiaries are involved in decision-making processes. They also represent broader society more than other businesses, featuring a higher proportion of women leaders and leaders from minority communities.

### 2.2.3 SE in Policy

Somerville and McElwee (2011) argue that social and community enterprises have evolved to secure their position at the forefront of transformational change within societies. Consequently, in the UK, Social Enterprise (SE) is central to ongoing political and academic discussions regarding the future development of the social economy and public policy. Within this sector, SEs are recognized as a powerful force capable of generating social value and providing financially sustainable solutions to address a range of social issues that are inadequately managed by the public and private sectors. As a result, SEs are often positioned at the core of welfare and public service reform in Britain and are portrayed as the future of public services (Sepulveda, 2010).

From a policy-oriented perspective, Chatterjee (2021) contends that the efforts of many governments are insufficient to meet the challenges posed by evolving social problems, which underscores the ongoing prominence of this branch of enterprise development. Among the various forms of social enterprises mentioned, community businesses (CBs) present a practical option for exploring the research question of whether the Black community can establish, operate, and sustain community businesses to achieve socioeconomic development. The next section explains the rationale for this choice by reviewing what CBs are and comparing them with SEs to clarify their differences.

## 2.3 Community Business

Community Businesses (CBs), as a subset of Social Enterprises (SEs), have increasingly become valuable agents in social, economic, and environmental regeneration, particularly in the context of austerity measures and cuts to policy programs, alongside longer-term trends of welfare retrenchment (Kleinhans, 2017). However, the concept of community business is not a novel economic model. [7]Wyler (2007) traces the early origins of community business to the medieval guilds and the radicalism of the seventeenth century, as well as to friendly societies and early cooperatives. Historically, CBs emerged as a response to the social challenges posed by Victorian industrialisation, the poverty of the Great Depression, and the shortcomings of modern capitalism and the welfare state. In contemporary discussions, Perry et al. (2016) assert that the CB model is challenging to define due to its diversity, which encompasses significant variations in type, stage, age, and scope; however, all CBs share key central characteristics (Percy et al., 2018). More recently, Power to Change has defined CBs as possessing four key principles:

They are ***locally rooted in a specific geographical*** area and are responsive to its needs.

***Trade for profit*** by offering a variety of goods and services that benefit the local community. This can be achieved through income generated from renting out space in their buildings, operating cafés, selling homegrown produce, or producing energy.

***Accountability to the local community***, specifically the residents, is essential. For instance, a community share offer can empower members to have a voice in the direction of the business. At the same time, a membership-based organisation may involve local individuals in the decision-making process.

***Having a broad impact*** on and benefiting the local community.

The local and dynamic nature of Community Businesses (CBs) enables them to engage with a diverse range of individuals while providing various services to address numerous challenges (Higton et al., 2020). According to Power to Change (2020) in their report on the [8]*Impact of Community Businesses on People,* the number of CBs had increased by over 90% since 2015, prior to the onset of the pandemic. An estimated 11,300 CBs were operating in England,

[7] https://www.civilsociety.co.uk/voices/steve-wyler-why-the-history-of-community-business-matters-so-much-today.html (2024)

[8] https://www.powertochange.org.uk/community-business/what-is-community-business/(2024)

which represents an increase of 2,300 compared to the 2019 estimate. Among these, 5,000 (44%) primarily functioned as either community hubs (2,300) or village halls (2,700).

Community hubs serve as the economic backbone of the sector, contributing approximately one-third of the total income and workforce within the market. According to their report, Community Businesses (CBs) vary significantly; in early 2020, one in nine (1,200) delivered services categorised as business and employment support, guidance, and training. This reflects the continued provision of services by community businesses aligned with or previously provided by the public sector. This includes an estimated 700 CBs, primarily health, social care, and wellbeing services; 600 providing sports and leisure services; and 400 functioning as libraries.

Furthermore, 148,700 volunteers contribute to community businesses (Higton et al., 2020). Community hubs generate approximately one-third of the estimated market income of £973 million. Across the sector, surveyed Community Businesses (CBs) report a median annual income of £110,000. Like social enterprises, CBs positively impact their local communities in various ways. The three primary reported impacts include improving health and well-being, reducing social isolation, and enhancing community cohesion (Percy et al., 2015). This was particularly evident during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many CBs swiftly adapted to the challenges posed by the crisis, with 9 out of 10 continuing to operate, modify, or adjust their business strategies in response to the pandemic (Higton et al., 2020). In addition to their adaptability, the CB model has been shown to benefit the most disadvantaged communities.

According to the Power to Change report (2020) on the [9]*Impact of Community Businesses on People*, seven out of ten Community Businesses (CBs) are located within the 30 percent most deprived communities in England. The attachment of CBs to their locality as community-based enterprise trading organisations enables them to coordinate rapid local responses. Furthermore, since CBs are designed to serve everyone and do not operate on a 'one size fits all' approach, they can address a variety of local challenges through interconnected services that are accessible to all rather than being targeted at a specific group.

[9] https://www.powertochange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Community-Business-Market-in-2020-FINAL-2.pdf (2023)

Community businesses (CBs) engage with and support diverse stakeholders, including customers of their goods and services, the broader group of beneficiaries for whom the business was established, their employees, volunteers, members, supporters, and shareholders. Aiken et al. (2021) affirm that CBs represent an effective model for local community development. They assert that CBs can successfully motivate and assist local communities by providing essential services such as transportation, retail shops, and pubs. Furthermore, Aiken notes that CBs often initiate projects to address social exclusion in disadvantaged urban and rural areas. This self-help approach to regeneration focuses on strengthening community structures and services within a community-led, democratically controlled organisation.

## 2.4 Difference between SEs and CBs

The previous sections examined social and community enterprises' definitions, contributions, and impacts. Community Businesses (CBs) and other Social Enterprise (SE) models effectively address the needs of vulnerable individuals and communities by providing innovative goods and services often overlooked by the private and public sectors, particularly in market and state failure cases. In the literature, SEs and CBs are widely recognised as positive contributors to the regeneration of deprived areas, combating social exclusion, and creating employment opportunities. Furthermore, they significantly enhance productivity, competitiveness, and the reform of welfare and public services ([10]SEUK, 2021). Table 1 presents a Comparative Classification of Social Enterprises and Community Businesses and their Drivers for Social and Economic Change. The same fundamental need drives both models: to create social, economic, and environmental change. However, there are distinctions between the two, which are influenced by their objectives for formation, operations, and sustainability.

[10] https://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/all-about-social-enterprise/(2022)

***Table 1 – Comparative Classification of SEs & CBs and their Drivers for Social and Economic Change***

| *Principle* | Social Enterprise | Community Enterprise | Drivers for SEs and CBs |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Purpose*** | A business that addresses social issues while enhancing communities, improving lives, and preserving the environment. | A community-led businesses formed to tackle problems and improve the community, life chances, and environment. | ▪ Increase in global per capita wealth;<br>▪ Extended productive lifetime;<br>▪ Rising economic inequality;<br>▪ Developing Inclusive and democratic government policies;<br>▪ Government inefficiencies in public service delivery;<br>▪ Better education levels;<br>▪ A more developed role for Third Sector Organisations.<br>*Ref: (Nicholls, 2006)*<br><br>▪ Changes in socioeconomic, political, and cultural.<br>▪ Climate change and environmental degradation;<br>▪ Inequality and poverty;<br>▪ Rise of new social media has accelerated and intensified the interactions among social entrepreneurs, funders, and other stakeholders.<br>*Ref: (Huybrechts 2012)*<br><br>▪ Pressures to become more entrepreneurial and to diversify incomes through commercial revenues and new partnerships with the state and the business sectors.<br><br>*Ref:(Kanter & Summers 1987).* |
| ***Locally rooted in a geographic place*** | This is only sometimes a requirement, as some SEs operate without physical premises. | Must operate within a community asset. | |
| ***Trade for profit by providing numerous services, but the profits are reinvested for social good.*** | Generating a certain percentage of its income (25% or 50%) from trading goods and services, the business reinvests 50% of its profits for sustained growth. | Generating a certain percentage of its income from trading goods and services but reinvests all profits/surplus in the community and towards social and environmental goals. | |
| ***Accountable to the local community.*** | Offers community service but may not be accountable to the local community. The board of Directors may not be local to the area. | Offers community service provision and is accountable to the local community. CBs are owned and operated by people from the local area. The board of trustees/directors are also from the area. | |
| ***Having a broad Impact*** | Have mechanisms to measure, record and report outcomes and impact, e.g. reducing social isolation, improving mental well-being, healthy eating options, and more. Supported by a Theory of change. | Have the flexibility to create several parallel impacts. Have mechanisms to measure, record, and report outcomes and impact,<br><br>e.g., reducing social isolation, improving mental well-being, providing healthy eating options, employment, skills, and more. Supported by a Theory of change. | |
| ***Source:*** *Power to Change, Social Enterprise UK and Social and Community Enterprise 2017 definitions* | | | |

## 2.5 Community Business as an Emerging Model for Social and Economic Development

Corrocher (2010) defines socioeconomic development as the process of improving the living standards of a society's population through social and economic progress. The primary objective is to achieve the highest level of human development while ensuring the social and material well-being of the nation. Social and economic development involves public engagement in formulating social policies and economic initiatives (Rahman, 2009). Social development aims to enhance the well-being of individuals, groups, families, communities, and society as a whole. This involves a sustained increase in the economic standard of living for a country's population, typically achieved by augmenting its stocks of physical and human capital (Rahman, 2009). Consequently, socioeconomic development seeks to address social inequality. Socioeconomic inequality can be defined as the disparities individuals experience in their economic and social resources, often linked to their social class. These disparities encompass, but are not limited to, differences in earnings, education, health, employment, and income (Richmond-Bishop, 2019).

Poverty analysis focuses on designating the status of 'poor' to individuals whose income falls below a specific threshold (Platt, 2005). In contrast, socioeconomic inequality pertains to the disparities in economic and social resources individuals experience based on their social class (Richmond-Bishop, 2019). According to Platt (2021), higher levels of inequality are often associated with increased poverty rates. Halkos et al. (2023) assert that essential components of a decent life include access to nutritious food, safe drinking water, clean energy, quality education, adequate healthcare, and inclusive institutions. Poverty, inequality, and social exclusion can create a significant divide between individuals and a decent standard of living. Given that these factors contribute to poverty, inequality, and social exclusion, it is crucial to monitor these phenomena closely.

Bristow et al. (2022) assert that poverty and social exclusion are distinct concepts but are deeply interconnected. Social exclusion is a multidimensional and complex process through which individuals or groups are marginalised from economic, social, political, and cultural social participation. Individuals experiencing poverty are at a heightened risk of facing social exclusion, and conversely, those who are socially excluded are more likely to experience poverty.

Furthermore, an article titled [11]*Inequality and Recovery*, published by the House of Commons Library in April 2021, raised concerns among experts regarding the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak. The article highlights how the pandemic is likely to exacerbate economic inequalities in the long term and its interaction with various pre-existing disparities, including those related to gender, ethnicity, age, and geography.

More recently, the cost-of-living crisis has intensified the issue of poverty. The report [12]*Watch 2023 - The Price We Pay: The Social Impact of the Cost-of-Living Crisis* highlights that as the crisis persists, it poses a risk of longer-term physical and mental health effects on both adults and children, which could lead to cascading societal consequences for public services, overall well-being, and economic productivity. While government interventions have helped mitigate the impact of rising prices, additional measures may be necessary to prevent the short-term effects of the crisis from resulting in long-term damage to health, the economy, and society.

As demonstrated in previous sections, community businesses (CBs) possess the versatility to address socioeconomic inequality and poverty, particularly within the framework of being 'community-led.' Suomi (2017) argues that the active involvement of participants has a demonstrable positive impact on individuals with lived experiences of inequality and poverty. These impacts include feeling heard and empowered, acquiring new skills, and fostering increased trust. A lived experience refers to the experiences of individuals who have been directly affected by a social issue or a combination of issues (Sandhu, 2017). According to the [13]*Power to Change Research Institute Report (2015),* individuals with lived experience utilize community organizing to strengthen their communities and build resilience. The efforts of CBs, along with their staff and volunteers, create, nurture, and sustain local relationships, thereby building social capital, trust, and reciprocity. This work culminates in the formation of groups that unite communities by bringing people together. For instance, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, CBs had already mobilized over 205,000 volunteers in the most deprived areas of the UK (Perry et al., 2016).

[11] https://post.parliament.uk/economic-inequality-and-recovery/ (2022)
[12] https://natcen.ac.uk/events/society-watch-2023-price-we-pay-social-impact-cost-living-crisis (2024)
[13] https://www.powertochange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/PTC-State-of-the-market-2015-research-report-tagged_AW-REV1.pdf

Furthermore, social capital derived from Community Businesses (CBs) enhances employability, reduces isolation, improves health, and facilitates collective action (Perry et al., 2016). Claridge (2004) notes that there is no universally accepted definition of social capital; rather, the definition adopted in a study depends on the discipline and level of investigation (see section 3.2.3 for various definitions). Regarding the development of social capital, the Power to Change Community [14]Business Market Report (2022) highlights the strategic partnerships that emerged between local governments and CBs to address local needs and support the most vulnerable populations during the pandemic. This success can be attributed, in part, to the CBs' ability to foster trust, collaboration, and reciprocal relationships, which provide them with a reach and influence that local governments cannot achieve alone. Additionally, Power to Change's report indicates that CBs have thrived where others have struggled by regenerating local businesses and community assets by developing innovative business models, operating at low costs with volunteer support, and generating revenue from loyal customers who are invested in their vision.

Moreover, CBs enhance community resilience by prioritising transparency and inclusive decision-making. They treat community members as stakeholders, empowering them to take control of their future. CBs often employ local individuals and prefer local suppliers, thereby strengthening the local economy. Consequently, CBs represent an effective social enterprise model for addressing socioeconomic inequality and poverty from the ground up, involving those with lived experiences to own and lead initiatives that seek solutions to their challenges. Therefore, making a case for the role of CBs in socioeconomic development necessitates an understanding of the factors that facilitate their formation, operations, and sustainability.

## 2.6 Factors that enable CB formation, operations, and sustainability.

The literature reviewed reveals a variety of factors that facilitate the formation, operation, and sustainability of Community Businesses (CBs). However, Table 2 presents a summary adapted from the Power to Change (2015) Community Business Market Analysis, which proposes a set of criteria that CBs must meet to be effectively formed, operated, and sustained.

[14] https://www.powertochange.org.uk/evidence-and-ideas/market-report-2022/#:~:text=Community%20businesses%20provide%20good%20work,furthest%20from%20the%20job%20market.

*Table 2 - Proposed Tests for Community Businesses*

| *Principle* | 'Floor': minimum conditions | 'Aspiration': ideal conditions |
|---|---|---|
| ***Leadership*** | Led and initiated by the local community to meet a local need. | With a democratic governance structure and processes that ensure active, ongoing engagement of the community. |
| ***Place*** | It is defined by its link to a physical place. | With firmly established ties to the locality (e.g. trustees, employees, and volunteers from the local area.) |
| ***Community Value*** | The primary purpose is the generation of social value in the local community. | With asset locks in place and measures to avoid more than incidental private gain. |
| ***Local Returns*** | Trading goods or services to be independent of grants and generate economic returns. | With demonstrated sustainability and revenues being generated and recycled locally. |

***Source:*** *Community Business Market Report (2015)*

These tests align with Power to Change's definition of Community Businesses (CBs) (see section 2.3), which comprises four principles that an organisation must adhere to to qualify as a CB. These principles are: being locally rooted in a specific geographical area and responding to its needs; being accountable to the local community; having a broad community impact that benefits and influences the local population; and engaging in profit-generating activities by providing a range of goods and services that benefit the local community through the income generated. Other enabling factors identified in the Power to Change report (2015) also suggests that Community Businesses (CBs) are:

***Led by individuals with firsthand experience*** of the issues that CBs aim to address, support the most vulnerable members of the community.
Employing residents and volunteers and prioritising local suppliers enhances community strength.
***Thrive where others cannot*** by revitalising local businesses and community assets, developing innovative business models, operating at low costs with volunteer support, and generating revenue from loyal customers who believe in their vision. Form strategic partnerships with local governments to extend their reach and influence, achieving what the local government cannot accomplish alone.
***Strengthen community resilience*** by prioritising transparency and inclusive decision-making.

***Building social capital involves*** uniting individuals to create, nurture, and sustain local relationships.

This process fosters trust, reciprocity, and collaboration. Furthermore, it enhances employability, reduces feelings of isolation, improves health outcomes, and facilitates collective action.

The Power to Change Research Institute's Community Business Market Analysis Report (2015) emphasises that an organisation that fails to meet any of these criteria and is not making significant progress toward doing so will not achieve the sustainable community impact that is the hallmark of community business. In considering community businesses (CBs) as a suitable model for social and economic development, it is essential to recognise that existing evidence indicates that, while poverty and socioeconomic inequality affect both minority and majority groups, ethnic minority groups often experience higher levels of poverty. Consequently, the Black community was chosen as a focus for this study due to its experience of intersectional deprivation and inequality. The following section reviews specific data regarding the extent of socioeconomic disadvantage among Black groups, addressing issues related to poverty and inequality, income and wealth distribution, employment, education, and geographic location.

## 2.7 The Black Community and Socioeconomic Inequality

### 2.7.1 Poverty and Inequality

In 2020, a report from the [15]Social Metrics Commission revealed that 46% of individuals living in households headed by a Black, African, Caribbean, or Black British person were in poverty. In contrast, just under one in five (19%) of those living in households with different demographics were in similar circumstances to those identified as white. Similarly, [16]Runnymede reported in 2022, in their publication Cost of Living Crisis: Poverty, Inequality, and Ethnicity in the UK, that Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) individuals were 2.5 times more likely to experience poverty (defined as living below 60% of the median income) and 2.2 times more likely to live in deep poverty (defined as living more than 50% below the relative poverty line).

[15] https://socialmetricscommission.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Measuring-Poverty-2020-Web.pdf
[16] https://www.runnymedetrust.org/publications/falling-faster-amidst-a-cost-of-living-crisis-poverty-inequality-and-ethnicity-in-the-uk (2023)

### 2.7.2 Income and Wealth

[17]National Statistics data published in May 2020 (Gov.UK) provided comprehensive information on households with below-average income from 2008 to 2020. The report classifies households as low-income if they live on less than 60 percent of the UK's average (median) net disposable equivalised household income. In September 2020, [18]an article on income distribution published on the UK government website (Gov.UK) reported that households from the Black African group were the most likely to be in the lowest quintile of total wealth. UK households were categorised into five equally sized groups, known as 'quintiles,' based on their income. These groups include: White, Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups, Asian or Asian British, Black African, Caribbean, and Black British populations, as well as other ethnicities.

The data revealed that only 2% of households within the Black African group fall into the highest wealth quintile, defined as having total wealth exceeding £865,400. Overall, factors such as age and tenure are likely to influence the variations in wealth across these ethnic groups. Households from the Black Caribbean group tend to be less affluent on average compared to those from the White British group despite having a similar age demographic. In terms of income inequality trends, a report commissioned by the House of Commons, titled *Inequality in the UK* (April 2024), indicates that household income inequality in the UK has remained relatively stable since the early 1990s, although it is higher than the levels observed during the 1960s and 1970s. While the share of income going to the top 1% of individuals by household income increased during the 1990s and 2000s, there was a slight reduction in inequality among the remaining population (based on incomes before housing costs). Consequently, overall inequality remained stable during this period.

[17] https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/uklabourmarketmay2020 (2023)
[18] https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/work-pay-and-benefits/pay-and-income/income-distribution/latest/ (2023)

### 2.7.3 Employment

[19]The Trade Union Congress (TUC) reported in 2023 that Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) workers experience systemic disadvantages and discrimination in the labour market. This includes lower employment rates, higher unemployment rates, reduced pay, increased job insecurity, and occupational segregation. The report indicates that BME workers are more than twice as likely (2.2 times) as White workers to be unemployed, with the BME unemployment rate in 2023 at 7%, compared to 3.2% for White individuals in the labour market. Furthermore, the unemployment rate for BME women was even more pronounced, nearly three times higher than that of White women, at 7.8% compared to 2.8%. The Local Authorities with the highest unemployment rates were Birmingham, Wolverhampton, and Newham in East London.

### 2.7.4 Education

According to Strand (2021), it is well-documented that students from low socioeconomic backgrounds tend to exhibit lower educational achievement. Specifically, among various ethnic groups, White British and Black Caribbean students from low socioeconomic backgrounds are the lowest-achieving groups among all students, regardless of gender. However, among ethnic minority groups, Black Caribbean and Black African boys from high socioeconomic backgrounds underachieve compared to their White British counterparts from similar socioeconomic status.

### 2.7.5 Health Inequalities

Piketty and Saez (2014) argue that economic inequality is a significant societal issue that adversely affects the health and well-being of individuals. Approximately 70% of studies investigating the health impacts of economic inequality indicate that societal health deteriorates as economic inequality increases (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009). When economic inequality escalates on a societal level, both societies and individuals experience negative consequences (Kraus et al., 2017). The disproportionate impact on Black and Asian communities during the COVID-19 pandemic in the UK highlights enduring inequalities within society. This situation reaffirms the strong correlation between ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, and health outcomes (Otu et al., 2020).

[19] https://www.tuc.org.uk/news/number-bme-workers-insecure-work-has-boomed-over-past-decade-tuc-warns

[20]An analysis conducted by the Institute of Fiscal Studies, published on May 1, 2020, revealed that the mortality rate from COVID-19 among individuals of Black African descent in English hospitals was 3.5 times higher compared to that of white British individuals. This disparity was not limited to Black Africans; death rates among individuals of Pakistani and Black Caribbean backgrounds were 2.7 and 1.7 times higher, respectively. Regarding mental health, Black African and Black Caribbean individuals in the UK are two to eight times more likely to be diagnosed with severe mental health conditions compared to their white counterparts. Furthermore, Black populations have been reported to have less access to appropriate mental health support, and their experiences and outcomes are often less effective and, in some cases, may even cause harm. Consequently, research on the prevalence and treatment of mental health conditions frequently underrepresents these racial groups. Social determinants associated with the development of mental health conditions, such as employment, income, housing, and exposure to criminality, are also more likely to affect Black African and Black Caribbean communities (Davenport et al., 2023).

### 2.7.6 Geographic Location

Meanwhile, Saar and Unit (2008) argue that certain groups, such as migrants and individuals with disabilities, are situated in geographically concentrated, disadvantaged, de-industrialized areas (Lindsay & Houston, 2011). [21]A report by OCSI titled Left Behind Areas 2020 that 31 wards in the West Midlands are classified as 'Left-behind,' representing 4.2% of the total wards in the region. These wards are primarily located in housing estates within the largest towns and cities, including Birmingham, Coventry, Stoke, the Black Country, Telford, and Worcester. The highest concentrations are in East Birmingham (Lea Hall/Shard End) and Southwest Birmingham (Longbridge). The report further reveals that a higher proportion of residents in 'Left-behind' areas identify as White British (88%) compared to the national average across England (80%). However, a significant number of individuals living in 'Left-behind' areas belong to Black and Minority Ethnic communities, totalling approximately 203,000.

[20] https://www.ifs.org.uk/inequality/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Are-some-ethnic-groups-more-vulnerable-to-COVID-19-than-others-V2-IFS-Briefing-Note.pdf. (2024)
[21]https://ocsi.uk/left-behind-neighbourhoods (2024)

Additionally, the report highlights that, while most ethnic groups are underrepresented in 'left-behind' areas, there is a higher proportion of individuals from mixed White and Black Caribbean backgrounds in these areas compared to the overall population of England. The [22]2021 census (GOV.UK) provides data indicating that among the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods, Black individuals were the most likely to reside in the 10% of neighbourhoods that were most deprived in terms of crime (16.3%) and barriers to housing and services (31.2%). These figures suggest that prompt government interventions aimed at alleviating deprivation are necessary.

### 2.8 Community Business (CB) and Policy

Despite the significant socioeconomic inequalities faced by many minority groups, policies aimed at promoting entrepreneurship to alleviate deprivation have been criticised for failing to consider the diverse backgrounds of those experiencing poverty and social exclusion, as well as those who engage in entrepreneurial activities (Mole et al., 2009). Westerling (2023) reports that since 2019, the UK government has committed to addressing regional inequality through its Levelling Up initiative, which includes several substantial funding programs administered by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities (DLUHC).

This initiative is further articulated in the Levelling Up White Paper published in 2022 and the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. The White Paper outlines the government's ambitions to promote equity across the UK and delineates twelve medium-term missions to be achieved by 2030, aimed at tackling the UK's most pressing economic and societal challenges. Westerling (2023) argues that since the phrase 'Levelling Up' appeared in the Conservative Party's general election manifesto in 2019, its agenda has attracted significant interest from the community sector. Since then, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill has progressed through Parliament, and the central government has awarded several rounds of various levelling-up funds.

[22] https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/demographics/people-living-in-deprived-neighbourhoods/latest/ (2023)

According to the Power to Change 2023 report – [23]*Levelling Up: A Perspective from Community to National Level (2023)*, the progress and commitments made by the current government and the Labour Party regarding the levelling-up agenda remain a prominent issue. Regardless of any criticism, it will likely persist in the political discourse for the foreseeable future. The report also reveals that the government's progress on this agenda has not significantly influenced public perception. Specifically, 56% of respondents believe that levelling up has no local impact, 14% perceive it as having a negative effect, and only 11% view it positively. Overall, 60% of the public feels that levelling up is not addressing the key issues in their local areas, with 50% reporting that they see no tangible impact.

The report on the Midlands further argues that funding delivery has been contentious within the levelling-up agenda. It is characterised by short-term and fragmented funding sources, complex and resource-intensive bidding processes, and delays in funding allocations. Furthermore, the Leveling Up Report indicates that public sentiment towards levelling up is overwhelmingly negative. The public perceives a lack of local and national impact and believes that the levelling-up initiative is not addressing the most pressing issues in their communities.

Alongside this, the public perceives a decline in the high street and harbours little hope for meaningful progress toward levelling up as we approach 2030. According to Power to Change, community-led regeneration cannot be achieved with a stop-and-start funding stream that instils hope only to undermine it, leaving individuals feeling increasingly pessimistic, distrustful, and disempowered. Unfortunately, little has been accomplished thus far to address these challenges. There is competition, and the current evaluation of existing government policy indicates that more needs to be done to ensure effective delivery that resonates with ordinary citizens. Notably, following the recent general election, the new Labour government abandoned the term 'Levelling Up' and replaced it with the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government. Nevertheless, for the time being, the policy and intentions remain unchanged.

[23] https://www.powertochange.org.uk/news/levelling-up-perspectives-march-2023-report/ (2024)

Furthermore, the agenda is contentious. From a socioeconomic perspective, Power to Change advocates for the government to recognise community businesses as essential to a radical devolution agenda. This approach aims to transfer power from Westminster, delegating authority and responsibilities to local areas. It emphasises explicitly community organisations' role in promoting equity and the importance of community spaces in fostering connections and resilience.

## 2.9 Chapter Two Summary

This chapter provides context for the research purpose, aiming to guide the theoretical direction from which the subsequent chapters will emerge. The section explains social entrepreneurship, its various forms, and social enterprises' impact on society. Sepulveda (2010) asserts that Social Enterprises (SE) are a viable path forward for disadvantaged communities, as they offer a "business-like" approach to running an organisation that is better aligned with social and economic development in terms of its mission, ownership, democratic governance, and socially responsible generation and distribution of profits compared to traditional private sector models. Further discussion on Community Businesses (CBs) as a subset of Social Enterprises (SEs) highlights their potential to contribute to local regeneration strategies, generate social capital, and promote civil society in general (Bailey, 2012). This study focuses on the Black community due to their higher levels of socioeconomic deprivation and the inequalities they face. Additionally, the intentions of the UK government to address socioeconomic deprivation through its Levelling-Up policy are briefly outlined. The research acknowledges that while evidence of deprivation and inequality is evident, there is a significant lack of understanding regarding the level and extent of social relations within and among the Black community, which is crucial for mobilising resources and capital for advancement.

For this reason, Postelnicu et al. (2018) suggest that communities, such as the Black community, may be characterised by environments marked by imperfect information, underdeveloped or non-existent formal institutions, and limited contract enforcement. While Chapter Two establishes the context for the study, Chapter Three presents a theoretical framework that draws on Bourdieu’s Theory of Practice (ToP). This framework guides the development of a conceptual model to determine how the Black community can form, operate, and sustain successful community businesses for socioeconomic development.

# CHAPTER THREE: A BOURDIEUSIAN THEORETICAL REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

## 3.1 Introduction

This chapter critically examines Pierre Bourdieu's Theory of Practice (ToP) and its associated concepts—habitus, field, capital, doxa, and hysteresis—along with the diverse perspectives of various authors who have either critiqued or supported Bourdieu's work. The chapter follows a coherent structure, defining the Theory of Practice and its relational concepts. It details Bourdieu's attempt to reconcile the dualities of subjectivism and objectivism through practice and explains the complex interplay of his central concepts (Walther, 2014). Next, the ToP concepts and their related variables are delineated and integrated into the structure-agency debate. Subsequently, three papers are presented that illustrate how scholars have applied the ToP framework in their research, highlighting its relevance and effectiveness. Finally, drawing on insights from previous scholars and their application of the ToP framework, a systematic translation of the ToP is employed to construct a Community Business Practice Framework, which guides the methodological process and data analysis to address the research question.

## 3.2 The Theory of Practice

Several authors have extensively employed and critiqued Bourdieu's Theory of Practice (see Grenfell, 2008, 2010, 2014; Robbins, 2014; Wacquant, 1987; Harker, 1984; and Taylor, 1993). Its distinctive epistemological contribution distinguishes Bourdieu's theory by seamlessly integrating subjectivism and objectivism, providing a comprehensive understanding of the social world (Strong, 2018). In this framework, Bourdieu asserts that all social structures, whether subjective or objective, are homologous and are constituted by the same socially defining principles (Bourdieu, 1977). In Bourdieu's own words:

*It is possible to analyse the way the same structural relations are actualised in both social and the individual through studying structures of organisation, thought and practice and how they mutually constitute each other" (Bourdieu 1977b: 3).*

Hence, Bourdieu warns against a narrow focus on either subjectivism or objectivism, as it results in a distorted interpretation of the social world. According to Bourdieu (1990), practice emerges from the interplay between evolving logics: agents' dispositions, referred to as and the positions they occupy, determined by their "capital") within an evolving system ("Field"). As illustrated by the following formula:
*"[(habitus)(capital)] + Field = Practice" (Bourdieu 1986c:101).*

Grenfell (2014) asserts that Bourdieu's theoretical concepts—habitus, capital, and field—were meticulously developed as practical analytical tools that facilitate the interpretation of relationships observed in empirical data. When applied, these concepts provide a robust framework for understanding and analysing social phenomena, establishing Bourdieu's Theory of Practice as a crucial and indispensable asset in sociological research. King (2000) concurs that Bourdieu's Theory of Practice has been extensively utilised across various institutional contexts. Additionally, other scholars, such as Wacquant (1987), Harker (1984), and Taylor (1993), who emphasise aspects of "practical theory" in Bourdieu's work, illustrate how he has advanced the discourse on overcoming the dualism of structure and agency, thereby enriching social theory. However, despite acknowledging the progressive and "practical" elements in Bourdieu's social theory, King argues that these authors overlook the implications of habitus.

### 3.2.1 Habitus

Habitus is a socialised subjectivity" and "the social embodied" – "It is how the personal comes to play a role in the social – the dispositions of the habitus underlie our actions that, in turn, contribute to social structures (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992a:127, 128). By this, Bourdieu (1964) defines habitus as:

*"a property of actors (whether individuals, groups, or institutions) that comprises a "structured and structuring structure" (ibid.: 170).*

He questions how behaviour can be regulated without being merely a product of obedience to rules. How can the "outer"- social self and the "inner"- self, help shape one another? Similar to Bourdieu, Maton (2018) argues that habitus must be examined from both experiential and sociological perspectives.

Maton explains that individuals often perceive themselves as free agents; however, they base their everyday decisions on assumptions regarding the predictable character, behaviour, and attitudes of others. From a sociological perspective, social practices are characterised by regularities. For instance, working-class children tend to secure working-class jobs, while middle-class readers often gravitate toward middlebrow literature. Despite these trends, no explicit rules govern such practices (Bourdieu, 1994). Bourdieu further argues that the structures constituting a particular type of environment produce habitus, defined as a system of durable, transposable dispositions—structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 53; also 1977, p. 72). Habitus is *"structured"* by one's past and present circumstances, including family background, upbringing, and educational experiences. It is *"structuring"* because one's habitus influences and shapes present and future practices. It is also a *"structure"* that is systematically ordered rather than random or unpatterned. This "structure" comprises a system of dispositions that generates perceptions, appreciations, and practices (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 53).

Contrasting this perspective, King (2000) argues that Bourdieu's definition of habitus succumbs to objectivism and fails to adequately consider the implications of his 'practical theory.' According to King, subsequent assumptions hinder any potential for social change; if every individual is constrained by their habitus, then the objective conditions will be perpetuated by that habitus, thereby limiting social transformation. In support of Bourdieu, Maton (2018) contends that habitus aims to transcend the structure-agency dichotomy. Consequently, it is insufficient to focus solely on narratives or interactive actions, but it is essential to examine the social space in which these interactions and events occur (Bourdieu, 2005b).

*"Scrutiny will not only locate the objects of investigation in their specific historical, local/national/international, and relational context but also interrogate how previous knowledge about the object under investigation had been generated, by whom, and whose interests were served by those knowledge-generation practices" Bourdieu 1993a:170.*

Next, the objective structure, which includes Field and Social Space, and its relationship to habitus are presented.

### 3.2.2 Field (and Social Space)

In *field* theory, Bourdieu (1984) employs the term Social Space more specifically denote all positions available for occupation at any given time or place. The concept of the field serves as a means of expressing these positions and their interrelations. It refers to a subset of open positions that are unified by the agents' shared interests, activities, and dispositions (Hardy, 2014). The term *field* combines three distinct meanings: the notion of a playing field (Bourdieu, 1977b, p. 12), the struggle of a battlefield, or what is at stake (Bourdieu, 1998c, p. 34), and the more neutral concept of a field as a geographical area—a bounded space that can be mapped (Bourdieu, 1984). According to Thomson (2012), Bourdieu metaphorically explains the concept of the field through these three forms. Firstly, the *field* is likened to a football field occupied by agents, individuals, and institutions, characterised by internal divisions and an external boundary where a game is played, with players occupying predetermined positions. The game has specific rules that novice players must learn, along with fundamental skills, as they begin participating. What players can do and where they can move during the game depends on their position within the field. The actual physical condition of the *field*—whether wet, dry, well-maintained, or filled with potholes—also influences players' actions and, consequently, how the game is played. Therefore, there are limits to what can be accomplished, and the *field* conditions shape these possibilities.

Secondly, the *field* is described as a science-fiction force field. In this context, Bourdieu (1998) suggests that fields are constructed by establishing a barrier that separates what occurs inside from what happens outside. Designed to protect insiders, these fields create self-contained worlds. The activities within them adhere to regular and orderly patterns, allowing for a degree of predictability; without this structure, the social environment inside the force field would devolve into chaos and cease to function effectively. The social order is hierarchically organised: not everyone is equal, and certain individuals hold dominant positions, possessing decision-making authority over how the little social world functions. Nevertheless, the rules governing self-contained starships are analogous to those that apply to vessels operating within the same fleet. While some local variation is both possible and necessary for survival, there exists a common operational pattern among spaceships.

Thirdly, the *field* is characterised as a force field. Bourdieu referred to this as the Field of Power, which encompasses multiple social fields further divided into subfields.

Collectives of individuals occupy multiple social fields simultaneously. However, the fields that constitute the field of power are not all equal; some are dominant, while the dynamics in subordinate fields often depend on activities occurring in other fields. This creates a space of positions from which power is exerted over various forms of capital (Thomson, 2012). In this context, a field composed of chiasmatic opposing forces, with cultural and economic capital functioning as two hierarchical poles, resembles a magnetic field, where positions are determined by their economic and cultural relationships, whether dominant or dominated. On one side, there are positions that are economically or temporally dominant yet culturally dominated, while on the other side, there are culturally dominant positions that are economically dominated (Bourdieu, 1988a).

*"One must indeed distinguish between the mere possession of (say, economic or cultural) capital and the possession of a capital conferring power over capital, meaning over the very structure of a field, and therefore, among other fields, over profit rates, and by extension, overall ordinary capital holders" Bourdieu 2020:34.*

Thomson (2012) argues that the structure of a field varies depending on the game being played. Each field has its own set of rules, histories, star players, legends, and lore. Although groups of individuals often occupy multiple social fields simultaneously, the same dispositions, strategies, and forms of capital may be valued differently across various field contexts. Furthermore, an agent may hold a prestigious dominant position in one field while occupying a less esteemed position in another (Hardy, 2014).

*"It is a structured social space, a field of forces, a force field containing people who dominate and people who are dominated. Constant, permanent relationships of inequality operate inside this space, which simultaneously becomes a space in which various actors struggle to transform or preserve the field. All of the individuals in this universe bring all of their (relative) power to the competition. It is this power that defines their position in the field and, as a result, their strategies" - Bourdieu 1998b: 40–41.*

Bourdieu argued that all subfields within the cultural field are influenced by the economic field (Bourdieu, 1994d), as the economic field confers greater status and power than cultural capital. Nevertheless, both forms of capital are highly advantageous in terms of power.

Nevertheless, there are no rigid boundaries in a physical force field; instead, there is a gradual diminishing of forces at the edges. In other words, a force field exists only to the extent of its effects. However, unlike physical force fields, one of the sites of struggle within a social field may occur at its borders and concerning the value of its capital (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a). It is important to note that the *Field of Power* does not dictate the events within each social field, as the fields that constitute the Field of Power are not all on an equal footing: some are dominant, while the dynamics in subordinate fields often depend on activities in others. For example, developments in the housing field are significantly influenced by events in the financial field. Rather, Bourdieu proposes a reciprocal process of influence and ongoing co-construction, meaning that what occurs in the Field of Power shapes the possibilities within a social field.

Similarly, the dynamics within a social field shape the *Field of Power* and may influence other social fields (Thomson, 2012). Bourdieu observes that the homology between the specialised fields and the overall social field means that many strategies function as double plays, operating in several fields simultaneously (2005b). The patterned, regular, and predictable practices within each field exhibit striking similarities, as do the types of agents who dominate each social field. Additionally, relationships between fields are exchanged, rendering them interdependent. For instance, the type of education individuals receive can significantly impact their positioning within the economic field.

#### *3.2.2.1 Critical Analysis of the Field*

Thomson (2012) continues to advocate for the application of field theory, asserting that the boundaries and margins of fields are “fuzzy” as their endpoints are often unclear. Consequently, it is advisable to reduce the number of fields considered in any given social space when too many fields are involved. Furthermore, there tends to be an excessive focus on the reproductive aspects of fields rather than on their capacity for change. It is important to note, however, that some of Bourdieu's key studies have addressed periods of change, particularly in areas such as art, literature, and housing. Nevertheless, his emphasis on historicity underscores the necessity of examining a field's development to comprehend its contemporary form. Finally, there is the issue of inter-field connections. Throughout his work, Bourdieu argued that different fields within the *field of power* are homologous due to the structuring influence of the overarching field of power (Alexander, 2017).

As Jenkins (1992: 86) stated, the homologies among fields, or resemblance that is bound up with difference, a consequence of the power of dominant fields—particularly the field of power (politics)—to influence weaker fields and shape their dynamics. Although Thomson (2012: 78) argues that Bourdieu is unequivocal in asserting that some fields are dominant while others are subordinate, they also note that it is not necessarily clear how this domination is materially enacted. Specifically, the quest for a universal theory of change within fields is part of the scholarly doxa. Agreeing with Bourdieu, Alexander (2017) contended that the interrelationships among fields are specific and not amenable to a universal theory. In summary, all individuals, practices, institutions, goods, and services within social fields have a physical manifestation and can be investigated.

*"A field is a game devoid of inventors and much more fluid and complex than any game one might ever design. To see fully everything that separates the concepts of field and system, one must put them to work and compare them with the empirical objects they produce. Nor was field intended to be a theory applied as a paint-by-numbers formula to any situation. It was to be developed case-by-case" Bourdieu & Wacquant (1992a: 104)*

### 3.2.3 Capital

The term *capital* is typically associated with the economic sphere and monetary exchange (Moore, 2014). However, Pierre Bourdieu broadened this concept by examining the dynamics of power within society, the nature of culture, its reproduction and transformation, its connection to social stratification, and its role in reproducing and exercising power. One of his key contributions was the exploration of the relationships between distinct types of *capital*, including economic, cultural, social, and symbolic (Claridge, 2018). Bourdieu's conceptualisation emphasises that capital is not solely economic and that social exchanges are not purely self-interested; rather, they encompass capital and profit in all forms, thereby extending the notion of *capital* into four distinct categories (Bourdieu, 1986). These categories include economic capital (money and assets), cultural capital (forms of knowledge, taste, aesthetic and cultural preferences, language, narrative, and voice), social capital (affiliations and networks, family, religious, and cultural heritage), and symbolic capital (elements that represent all other forms of capital and can be "exchanged" in different fields, such as credentials).

Bourdieu (2006: 93) argues that economic theory has imposed a definition of the economy of practices, a historical construct of capitalism. By reducing the universe of exchanges to mercantile transactions—specifically, those oriented both objectively and subjectively toward maximising profit (i.e., economically self-interested)—this perspective implicitly categorises other forms of exchange as non-economic and, therefore, disinterested. Disinterested forms of exchange are characterised as those that facilitate transubstantiation, allowing the most tangible types of capital—economic in the narrow sense—to manifest in the immaterial forms of cultural or social capital and vice versa (Bourdieu, 2006, pp. 105–106). This conceptual extension permits capital utilisation within a broader system of exchanges, where various types of assets are transformed and exchanged within intricate networks or circuits that span different fields (Moore, 2014).

*"Capital can then be understood as the "energy" that drives the development of a Field through time" (ibid: 99).*

In this context, the extended forms of capital are defined and analysed. First, economic capital is a fundamental concept in Bourdieu's theory of practice (1986), referring to an individual's wealth, physical resources, and means of production. It can undoubtedly be converted into money or institutionalised as property rights and other forms of capital under specific circumstances (Bourdieu, 1996). Marx's theory elucidates economic capital as both a prerequisite and a consequence of production. Money is on a direct path to becoming capital, and capital represents a specific unity of circulation and production—a relationship between capital and labour (Marx, 1973). Marx therefore defined capital as:

*"The increase in value (capital) provides money with the motivation of investment, thus transforming money into capital. With this element, capital is conceived as having "self-expanding value" (ibid., p. 152).*

Second, cultural capital, also referred to as 'informational capital', primarily encompasses legitimate knowledge of various kinds (Jenkins, 1992). According to Bourdieu (1986), cultural capital can manifest in three forms: the embodied state, which consists of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; the objectified state, represented by cultural goods such as paintings, books, dictionaries, instruments, and machines, which serve as traces or realisations of theories, critiques of these theories, and associated problematics; and the

institutionalised state, a form of objectification that must be distinguished because, as will be seen in the case of educational qualifications. It confers entirely original properties on the cultural capital it is presumed to guarantee (ibid: 242). Cultural capital can also be classified in terms of accomplishment and transposability, which provide an agent with distinction in a combined embodied form (Moore, 2014).

Third, regarding social capital, Field (2008) asserts that while Bourdieu was not the first to use the term, he was the first to develop a systematic conception of it. Notably, the growing interest in social capital over the last three decades can be attributed to the distinct contributions of three scholars: Pierre Bourdieu, Robert Putnam (2000), and James Coleman (1988). More recently, Claridge (2018) has sought to simplify and modernise the understanding of these three bodies of work, presenting social capital in its most accessible form for practical application. This study examines the perspectives of Bourdieu, Putnam, and Coleman through the lens of Claridge. On one hand, Bourdieu defines social capital as the aggregate of actual or virtual resources that accrue to an individual or group through a durable network of institutionalised relationships characterised by mutual acquaintance and recognition (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). These relationships may exist solely in a practical state, manifested through material and/or symbolic exchanges contributing to their maintenance. Alternatively, they may be socially established and upheld by applying a common identifier (such as the name of a family, class, tribe, school, or political party) and by a comprehensive set of instituting actions designed to shape and inform those who experience them simultaneously. In this context, these relationships are enacted, maintained, and reinforced through exchanges (Ibid:119).

Conversely, Putnam (2000) conceptualises social capital as encompassing both individual and collective dimensions. Individuals cultivate relationships that advance their interests. The connections between individuals give rise to social networks characterised by norms of reciprocity and trust. For instance, many individuals secure employment not solely due to their human capital but rather through networking (Putnam & Goss, 2001; Putnam, 2000). Furthermore, social capital also benefits the functioning of both the state and the market. Similar to physical and human capital, social connections significantly impact the productivity of individuals and groups (Putnam & Goss, 2001; Putnam, 1993).

Both individuals and collectives possess characteristics of social organisation, including trust, norms, and networks, which can enhance societal efficiency by facilitating coordinated actions (Putnam, 1993). An example is provided in Section 2.5, where the Power to Change (PtC) Research Institute (2015) reports on how individuals with lived experience utilise community organising to strengthen their communities and foster resilience. Additionally, the efforts of [24]Community Businesses (CBs), including both staff and volunteers, foster, cultivate, and maintain relationships within the community. This process builds social capital, trust, and reciprocity, enhancing employability and health, reducing isolation, and facilitating collective action. The Community Business Market Report (2022) also highlights how strategic partnerships between local governments and CBs rapidly developed to address local needs and support the most vulnerable populations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Leaning towards Putnam, Coleman (1988) argues that social capital is fundamentally a public good created by individuals and benefits not only those whose efforts are necessary for its realisation but also all members of a given structure. Consequently, social capital is not confined to the powerful; it can also provide significant advantages to impoverished and marginalised communities (Coleman, 1994). Like Marx, Claridge (2018) contends that individuals prioritise money and power, often neglecting other important factors and considerations. From an individual perspective, social capital consists of positive social relationships characterised by solidarity, which facilitates the mobilisation of resources. From a community perspective, Claridge (2020) asserts that social capital encompasses the social processes and structures that influence the quantity and quality of social interactions.

According to Claridge (2018), social capital encompasses the relationships and shared understandings that do not reside within individuals but exist in the interactions between them. Claridge argues that society, the economy, institutions, and political systems could not function without social capital. Suppose social capital is viewed as a public good. In that case, it can be measured by the levels of participatory potential, civic orientation, and trust in others available to cities, states, or nations, as suggested by Putnam (1993, 2000). Alternatively, if it relates to power and status, as posited by Bourdieu (1986), or serves both private and public interests, according to Coleman's (1994) perspective, Claridge (2018)

[24] https://www.powertochange.org.uk/evidence-and-ideas/market-report-2022/#:~:text=where%20they%20live.-,KEY%20FINDINGS,to%20local%20prosperity%20and%20wellbeing.

argues that the modern dominant paradigm has shifted from homo sapiens to homo economicus. In this new paradigm, rational and self-interested individuals strive to maximise their personal benefits. As such, the foundation of social capital lies in individual actors, their relationships, and the social structures within which they are embedded. The relationships among individuals have micro-level consequences for them and macro-level consequences for the collective (Lin & Erickson, 2010). Despite the varied perspectives in the literature, social capital encompasses both individual and collective dimensions (Claridge, 2018).

In this sense, Putnam's (2000) perspective on social capital—defined as the development of social networks and norms of reciprocity and trust—becomes crucial to this research, exploring how the Black community forms, operates and sustains community businesses to achieve socioeconomic development. To this end, evaluating the functions of social capital, namely bonding, linking, and bridging, offers insights into the relationships and associations necessary for cultivating networks, trust, and reciprocity.

Adopting the work of Mark Granovetter (1973, 1985, 2000), Claridge (2018) explains that bonding and bridging social capital pertain to the nature of relationships or associations within a social group or community. Bonding social capital exists within a group or community, while bridging social capital connects different social groups, classes, races, religions, or other significant sociodemographic and socioeconomic characteristics. Linking social capital is a subset of bridging social capital that addresses the power dynamics inherent in vertical associations.

Considering the three functions, the accumulation of trust and trustworthy relationships forms the foundation upon which networks and reciprocity can be assessed in the context of sustainable community businesses from the perspective of the Black community. This is particularly relevant given the lack of empirical data to serve as a benchmark for successful collaborative efforts in the West Midlands region. Coleman (1990) posits that trust is fundamental to the existence of social capital; however, Claridge (2020) acknowledges that trust is complex and multifaceted, shaped by personal experiences and contextual factors. He further asserts that trust is a socially situated calculation and predisposition rooted in subjective experiences and intersubjectivity. Trust is deemed essential for social capital, playing a pivotal role in social interactions, exchanges, and cooperative behaviour.

Still on trust, Cherti (2008) describes it as essential for any form of social interaction or exchange, asserting that trustworthiness 'lubricates social life and enables peaceful and stable social relations. To Claridge (2020), trustworthiness refers to an individual's reputation and track record in fulfilling promises and obligations, while the trustworthiness of others is linked to shared norms and understandings. Most importantly, Newton (2001) argues that effective collective action and productive cooperation necessitate high levels of trust and perceptions of trustworthiness.

Claridge (2020) continues that social interaction and exchange without trust would be virtually impossible, as all economic activity requires at least a minimal level of trust. In the absence of trust, individuals would lack the confidence to lead and participate in initiatives, and they would doubt whether others would fulfil their expectations and obligations. This scepticism would result in a reluctance to engage. Therefore, measuring the level of trust and trustworthiness across all three objectives of this research is essential to evaluate any accrued or potential social capital.

Finally, in examining the various types of capital, Bourdieu's (1977) concept of symbolic capital serves two primary purposes. First, he aims to illustrate the arbitrary and instrumental nature of symbolic capital as an asset that can confer social and cultural advantages or disadvantages. Second, he seeks to demonstrate that, through the process of transubstantiation, the domains of symbolic capital are homologous to the structure of the economic field (Moore, 2014). Economic capital transforms into symbolic capital. In turn, social and cultural capital can be regarded as subtypes of symbolic capital, which have been further expanded by discussions of other forms in various fields, such as linguistic capital and scientific or literary capital. Each domain of symbolic capital perpetuates the system of unequal relations present in the economic field (including relations of class and power) and, in doing so, reinforces the fundamental structure of social inequality (Moore, 2014). Thus, Bourdieu defines symbolic capital as:

*"Capital—in whatever form—insofar as it is represented, i.e., apprehended symbolically, in a relationship of knowledge or, more precisely, of misrecognition and recognition, presupposes the intervention of the habitus, as a socially constituted cognitive capacity." (Bourdieu, 2018:27).*

According to Moore (2013), it is only possible to fully understand the structure and functioning of the social world by reintroducing capital in all its forms rather than solely in the singular form recognised by economic theory. The following section reviews the structure and agency debate, explores their relationship to habitus, and examines the rules of engagement that manifest within habitus and the field, along with their connection to capital. Additionally, it assesses the changes that materialise within these frameworks.

### 3.3 Structure and Agency

To understand society as an objectively existing phenomenon, it is essential to recognise a specific form of organisation governing how individuals within it relate to one another, which shapes the nature of these relationships in distinct ways (Walsh, 1998). Both subjective and objective social structures are homologous and share the same socially defining principles. This allows for an analysis of how identical structural relations are actualised in both social and individual contexts by examining structures of organisation, thought, and practice and how these elements mutually constitute one another (Bourdieu, 1984). Bourdieu posits that power is culturally and symbolically constructed and continually re-legitimised through agency and structure.

Habitus refers to the way society becomes deposited in individuals in the form of lasting dispositions, or trained capacities and structured propensities to think, feel, and act in determined ways, which then guide them (Wacquant, 2005). According to Gibbs (2017), social structures operate at varying levels. At the highest level, society can be conceptualised as consisting of mass socioeconomic stratifications, such as distinct social classes. On a mid-range scale, institutions and social networks, such as religious organisations, may serve as the focal point of study. At the microscale, one might examine how community or professional norms constrain individual agency. As discussed in the habitus section, individuals often perceive themselves as free agents in their experiences; however, they base everyday decisions on assumptions regarding the predictable character, behaviour, and attitudes of others. Sociologically, social practices are characterised by regularities (Maton, 2018).
For this, Bourdieu explores how social structure and individual agency can be reconciled and, using Durkheim's terminology, how the "outer" social environment and the "inner" self influence one another (Grenfell, 2014, p. 49).

Habitus is formed through a social rather than an individual process, resulting in both enduring and transferable patterns across different contexts while also evolving in response to specific circumstances over time. Habitus is not fixed or permanent and can be altered under unexpected situations or over an extended historical period (Navarro, 2006, p. 16).

On the contrary, Archer (1982) advocates for the concept of morphogenesis, which refers to the complex interactions that lead to changes in a system's form, structure, or state, albeit with a fixed end product. Furthermore, Giddens's (1993) structuration theory seeks to understand human social behaviour by reconciling the competing perspectives of structure-agency and macro-micro dynamics. Giddens asserts that structural elaboration possesses properties that cannot be reduced solely to practices, even though these practices are what create both the structure and the agency. Archer contrasts morphogenesis with Giddens's social system, describing it as merely a 'visible pattern'. This distinction is made by examining the processes at the interface between the actor and the structure. Giddens contends that while an individual's autonomy is influenced by structure, structures are maintained and adapted through the exercise of agency. Both the morphogenesis and structuration approaches agree that action and structure are interdependent: structural patterns are inextricably rooted in practical interactions.

The central contours of the debate revolve around whether habitus and agency can function in tandem and whether field theory—emphasising the reproduction of fields through habitus—and morphogenesis—concentrating on the transformation (and reproduction) of structures by agents—can be reconciled (Rutzou, 2018). Both Archer (1982) and Giddens (1993) acknowledge that unrecognised conditions of action inevitably shape social practices and generate unintended consequences that influence subsequent interactions. Consequently, both perspectives endorse the idea that the divergence of human history from human intentions and the return of the consequences of that divergence as causal influences on human action is a persistent feature of social life (Archer, 1982). Archer argues against the assertion of agency as a standalone concept, suggesting instead that agency is an intrinsic component of every social activity, as it is ontologically distinct from structure, and this distinction must be maintained.

While Bourdieu has faced criticism for his emphasis on habitus, it is important to note that he also acknowledges the continuous nature of reflexive choices. These choices are made in response to the challenges of specific situations and during crises when disruptions in established behaviours occur. Such disruptions may arise when actions fail to produce the desired outcomes or when there is a misalignment between the habitus and its environment, prompting individuals to engage in conscious action (Rutzou, 2018). In contrast to Archer's perspective, Bourdieu posits that habitus is neither solely a product of free will nor entirely determined by social structures; rather, it emerges from a dynamic interplay between the two over time. Dispositions are shaped by past events and structures while simultaneously influencing current practices and structures and, importantly, conditioning perceptions of these elements (Bourdieu, 1984). In this regard, habitus is created and reproduced unconsciously - *"without any deliberate pursuit of coherence… without conscious concentration" (ibid: 170).*

### 3.3.1 Doxa

Every established order tends to produce the naturalisation of its arbitrariness to varying degrees and through different means (Bourdieu, 1977). In Bourdieu's work, doxa refers to a misrecognised shared allegiance to the "rules of the game" by agents with similar habitus (Bourdieu, 1996).

*In a game, the field is clearly seen for what it is: an arbitrary social construct, a construct whose arbitrariness and artificiality are underlined by everything that defines its autonomy: explicit and specific rules, strictly delimited and extra-ordinary time, and space* (Bourdieu, 1990:67).

According to Bourdieu (1990), the misrecognition of forms of social arbitrariness leads to an unformulated, non-discursive, internalised, and practical recognition of that same social arbitrariness. In a specific social formation, the more stable the objective structures are and the more completely they are reproduced in the agents' dispositions, the greater the extent of the field of doxa becomes, which is often taken for granted. As Bourdieu asserts:

*"What is essential goes without saying because it comes without saying," where "the tradition is silent, not least about itself as a tradition" (Ibid:165).*

Of all the mechanisms contributing to this effect, the most significant yet least apparent is undoubtedly the dialectic between objective circumstances and the aspirations of individuals. This interplay gives rise to a sense of limits, commonly referred to as the sense of reality, which denotes the correspondence between objective social classes and internalised perceptions of those classes, as well as between social structures and cognitive frameworks. This correspondence forms the foundation for the most deeply ingrained adherence to the established order (Bourdieu, 1977). Therefore, *Doxa* plays a crucial role in the reproduction of social institutions and structures - *field* - and influences the connections within minds and bodies, shaping expectations and behaviours - *habitus*- (Bourdieu, 1977b).

Agents occupying positions within a *field* understand how to navigate their environment, and this understanding not only feels natural but can also be explained using the commonly accepted truths, or *doxa*, prevalent in that *field* (Deer, 2014). This dynamic transforms the *field* into a competitive arena or a field of struggles, where actors strategically improvise to maximise their positions. According to Bourdieu (1996), it is also a battleground where each agent and group strives to impose their own rules of the game to advance their interests. He further argues that actors do not enter a *field* fully equipped with a God-like understanding of the current situation, including the positions, beliefs, and capabilities of other actors and the complete consequences of their actions. Instead, they possess a unique perspective on the proceedings based on their positions and develop an awareness of the game's tempo, rhythms, and unwritten rules through time and experience.

Contrary to Bourdieu, Giddens's structuration theory posits that agents' actions cannot be fully understood through structure or agency alone. Instead, it emphasises that actors operate within the context of rules produced by social structures – *field*- and that these structures are reinforced only when individuals act in accordance with them (Johnson, 2008). Bourdieu argues that these rules—referred to as *doxa*—constitute a set of fundamental beliefs that are intrinsically connected to the concepts of field and habitus and do not need to be articulated as an explicit, self-conscious dogma.

*"Assumptions of an epoch which are taken for granted and lies beyond ideologies (orthodoxies) yet can generate conscious struggles" (Bourdieu 2000a p. 16).*

In Giddens's thinking, structures (or *fields*) lack inherent stability outside human action, as they are socially constructed. Conversely, by exercising reflexivity, agents can modify social structures by acting beyond the constraints imposed by these structures (Johnson, 2008). Bourdieu argues that *doxa* serves as the cornerstone of any field, as it influences the stability of objective social structures through the ways in which these structures are reproduced and perpetuated in the perceptions and practices of agents; in other words, within their *habitus.* The reciprocal reinforcement between *field* and *habitus* enhances the prevailing power of *doxa*, which shapes the appropriate 'feel for the game' of those engaged in the *field* through presuppositions embedded within the *doxa* itself (see Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a: 66 and 74). Although a *field* is inherently hierarchical, with dominant agents and institutions wielding significant power to dictate its dynamics, there remains room for agency and change (Thomson, 2012).

### 3.4 Hysteresis

Bourdieu's scientific concept of *hysteresis* is examined through the lens of his Theory of Practice, which includes the thinking tools of *habitus, field, and capital*. He posits that the hysteresis of *habitus* is rooted in the social conditions that facilitate the reproduction of structures. This phenomenon contributes to the structural lag between available opportunities and the dispositions necessary to seize them. It accounts for missed opportunities and the often-observed inability to conceptualise historical crises using frameworks of perception and thought that differ from those of the past (Bourdieu, 1977).

Bourdieu recognised that hysteresis—the lag between input and output—was a necessary consequence of his definitions of habitus and field as mutually interrelated and interpenetrating. A change in one necessitates a change in the other (Hardy, 2008). For Bourdieu, field conditions vary over time, while individual histories continuously evolve (Bourdieu, 1977). For instance, during periods of personal and social stability, change occurs gradually along already anticipated pathways, making everyone feel like "a fish in water," so to speak, where habitus...and field are well matched; however, the habitus constantly evolves in response to new experiences (Bourdieu, 2000a). In different circumstances, particularly during times of crisis, the habitus must adapt to sudden and sometimes catastrophic changes in the field, but this adaptation always requires time. In situations where new and stable field structures have yet to emerge, novel and often transitory field opportunities arise.

Habitus evolves in response to these new opportunities, but in unpredictable ways, and the consequences for an individual's positioning within the field remain to be determined (Hardy, 2008).

*"Where change is indeterminate like this, hysteresis provides an invaluable technical term to highlight the disruption between habitus and field and the consequences over time" (Ibid, 2000a, p. 127).*

Here, a classic case of hysteresis occurs when dispositional habitus, rooted in a historical field, fails to align with contemporary field requirements. The essential features of hysteresis have been identified: the mismatch between habitus and field, the temporal dimension associated with it, and the dissonance between habitus and field (Bourdieu, 1990). In this context, King (2000) asserts that a time lag arises in practical situations, leading to differential responses from organisations and individuals. This results in the dislocation and disruption of habitus, which is inevitable with any change in the field. Furthermore, while ongoing contexts shape habitus, this process is gradual, and unconscious dispositions are not easily swayed by the currents of change in the social landscape. Consequently, in scenarios where the field evolves more rapidly or diverges from the habits of its members, the practices of the actors may appear anachronistic, stubbornly resistant, or ill-informed. This phenomenon is referred to as the hysteresis effect (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977a). Contrary to his earlier definition, Bourdieu states that:

*"Habitus, as a product of social conditioning, and thus of history (unlike character), is endlessly transformed" (Bourdieu, 1994d, p. 7).*

King (2000) argues that the hysteresis effect does not adequately address the issue of social change in relation to the habitus; rather, it merely circumvents it. The hysteresis effect suggests that the transformation of the objective social structure will occur in an unspecified manner, resulting in a disconnection between the habitus and these changes. Ultimately, according to the hysteresis effect, the habitus eventually adapts to the changes in these objective conditions. Meanwhile, in the field, even significant changes—such as the diffusion of practices previously reserved for the elite—can occur without any substantial transformation of the structure of the space, which remains unaffected by nominal changes.

When hysteresis occurs, the consequences of changes in the field can include a loss of position, power, and wealth due to the revaluation of symbolic capital and sources of legitimacy. Altered field structures create new opportunities.

However, a significant risk is associated with hysteresis, as challenges within the field may arise in an uncertain future (King, 2000). The wealthiest individuals, who possess economic, cultural, and social capital, are typically the first to seize new opportunities (Bourdieu, 1996a). According to Bourdieu, these participants in the field have developed the dispositions and practices that enable them to recognise the symbolic capital accrued from their early engagement in newly established positions. In contrast, it is often participants from marginalised groups—such as the working class, petit bourgeoisie, provincial residents, and foreigners—who gravitate toward dominant positions at a time when the profits they yield tend to diminish due to the very allure they exert (ibid).

The hysteresis effect, or inertia within the habitus, creates opportunities for those who are already successful to achieve further success. In contrast, individuals who are less successful often fail to recognise the strengths and weaknesses associated with their relative positions within the *field*. The ongoing accumulation of *symbolic and economic capital* that shapes the *habitus* is also continuous, resulting in a state of constant flux. This modified and adaptable habitus subsequently influences the structuring of the field in an ongoing process of change (Hardy, 2008). Bourdieu elaborates on this concept:

*"The presence of the past in this kind of false anticipation of the future performed by habitus is, paradoxically, most clearly seen when the sense of a probable future is belied and when dispositions ill-adjusted to the objective chances because of a hysteresis effect are negatively sanctioned because the environment they encounter is too different from the one to which they are objectively adjusted" (Bourdieu, 1990c, p. 62).*

King (2000) agrees that reactionary individuals and groups uphold ideas and values that are outdated and in conflict with emerging social realities, while progressive groups effectively articulate the direction of change. Consequently, at some point, to account for change, the objective status of the habitus must be reconsidered, acknowledging that the habitus does not impose itself on individuals indiscriminately; rather, individuals possess an intimate understanding of their culture.

The *habitus* requires a 'practical theory' of interacting with virtuosic individuals, which it effaces with its talk of objectivity and individuals' love of their social destinies (King, 2000).

The habitus requires a 'practical theory' for engaging with virtuosic individuals, a concept often obscured by discussions of objectivity and individuals' attachment to their social destinies (King, 2000). While Bourdieu's Theory of Practice (ToP) has served as a foundational framework for academic and empirical sociological research across various fields—including the arts, food, culture, education, agriculture, and health—there is currently limited evidence to suggest that the theory has been effectively applied within a community entrepreneurial context. Nevertheless, some scholars have utilised the ToP in specific entrepreneurial and community research, summarised in the following section.

## 3.5 The Theory of Practice (ToP) Application in Existing Literature

The three papers were strategically selected to represent the contexts of community, socioeconomic factors, and entrepreneurship, illustrating how scholars utilised the Theory of Change (ToP) framework to guide the methodological direction of their research.

### 3.5.1 Towards a 'Black Habitus'

Lofton and Davis (2015) move beyond a 'colourblind' critique of social class to provide an analysis highlighting how African Americans encounter race and racism in their homes, schools, and communities. This dynamic is instrumental in perpetuating an unequal distribution of power, resources, and opportunities within American social structures. For instance, several decades after the Civil Rights Movement, many African Americans have yet to fully realise the promises of Brown v. Board of Education (1954) and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Currently, three out of four African Americans reside in the poorest and most segregated areas of the United States, where they face significant economic inequalities that have led some to experience food insecurity and other financial stressors. Furthermore, they are often exposed to crime, violence, and homelessness from an early age. Consequently, given that racism has contributed to these economic and social constraints, African Americans frequently navigate separate and unequal paths compared to White Americans, thereby reproducing economic, political, and social inequalities (Johnson, 2014).

In a qualitative study, Lofton and Davis (2015) employed an ethnographic case study method to illuminate the logic and practices that highlight the racialised experiences producing the various struggles and dilemmas faced by African Americans in their homes, schools, and communities. They explored the lived experiences of African American students and parents in Covington, a predominantly White middle school whose district reflects the racial demographics of the United States. Special attention was given to the mediations, negotiations, and perceptions of African Americans concerning the daily systemic inequalities that create distinctly unequal paths compared to those of their White peers. Their findings reveal that, through their communal lived experiences, a diverse array of actions emerges from the cultural knowledge present in these Black spaces. While agency, cultural knowledge, and social networks developed organically within the researched community, the all-White power structure failed to acknowledge, value, or accept them.

At the same time, while Black churches and community centres produced social networks comprising pastors, community leaders, activists, and parents, they struggled to establish meaningful relationships with school board members, city council members, police officers, and influential business owners in Covington. African Americans perceived that members of other communities were able to form significant connections while their own community faced exclusion. Nevertheless, despite these systemic inequalities, African Americans remain dedicated to education and its potential, and consequently, they strive to enact transformative actions within their community.

In accordance with Bourdieu's theory of habitus, Lofton and Davis (2015) explain that African Americans acquire practices and habits through their cultural experiences. During this process, individuals within the habitus encounter external constraints that shape their understanding of the social world (Bourdieu, 1990; Young, 2004a). Coupled with their historical and current experiences, these constraints influence how they navigate their social environment (habitus), enabling them to make sense of their surroundings, perform actions accordingly, and develop dispositions that inform their tastes, perceptions, and behaviours. Since habitus pertains not only to how individuals conceptualise the world but also to how their social positions facilitate their thoughts and actions (Hovat & Davis, 2010; Young, 2004a), individuals with varying life experiences, shaped by different social structures cultivate distinct ways of thinking, feeling, and acting (Wacquant, 2011).

By exploring the concept of Black habitus, Lofton and Davis (2015) argue that there has been a shift in discourse from focusing on pathologies and static individuals to recognising dynamic social actors within the African American community. These individuals confront challenges such as negative perceptions of the Black body, neighbourhood inequalities, and intergenerational tracking. Consequently, habitus can be utilised to analyse the sense-making processes that contribute to African American performances, perceptions, and spaces, all of which acknowledge the significance of Blackness in navigating systemic inequalities. This analysis allows researchers to transcend a self-help ideology that attributes the root causes of racial disparities solely to Black neighbourhoods, fostering a more nuanced discussion of systemic inequalities, agency, and cultural knowledge within community and school districts.

### 3.5.2 Towards a Practice Perspective of Entrepreneurship

Clerg and Voronov (2009) assert that the growing recognition of entrepreneurship as a set of practices is intrinsically linked to the very fabric of contemporary society. Their research specifically examines the entrepreneurial process, focusing on the concepts of field, habitus, and capital, as well as the extent to which newcomers in a business field's daily practices relate to their ability to gain legitimacy to 'fit in and stand out.' How legitimacy building may emerge from a dialectical relationship between the practices of newcomers and the habitual expectations imposed by incumbents regarding conformity and change. They argue that achieving legitimacy necessitates skilful navigation of rules, norms, and objective conditions that facilitate certain actions while inhibiting others (Clegg, 1989b). In applying the Theory of Practice (ToP), the authors first define the field as any business or industry that a newcomer may attempt to enter, such as retail or consultancy. Secondly, newcomers are more likely to gain legitimacy in a business field by accessing two types of capital—cultural and symbolic—that influence their ability to be perceived as legitimate participants in the field, thereby enabling them to enact an 'entrepreneurial habitus.' This dual access allows them to navigate the conflicting demands of fitting in while also standing out. Thirdly, entrepreneurial legitimacy encompasses expectations regarding both conformity and rule-breaking, which are crucial for newcomers seeking to be recognised as entrepreneurs. Newcomers are likely to successfully enact entrepreneurial habits to the extent that they are perceived as employing processes and practices that align with existing rules and norms.

Clercq and Voronov (2009) argue that the social context in which entrepreneurial practices take place creates paradoxical demands for newcomers to both 'fit in' and 'stand out'. They reconceptualise entrepreneurial legitimacy as a representation of habitus that encapsulates these dual expectations, emphasising the significance of Bourdieu's work in helping shape individuals' positions within society and their capacity to achieve personal and business objectives through access to various types of capital (Calhoun, 2003; Mahar et al., 1990). Furthermore, Bourdieu's Theory of Practice (ToP) conceptualises legitimacy not as a unilateral process, where newcomers are legitimised or not, but as a reciprocal process that affects both newcomers and the structure of the field (Allan, 2006; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). From their perspective, the Theory of Practice (ToP) theorises the dialectical relationship between habitual expectations and newcomers' involvement in groundbreaking change and upheaval (Nicholson & Anderson, 2005; Schumpeter, 1934). Clercq and Voronov (2009) conclude that while initial attempts to outline a practice perspective of entrepreneurship focus on legitimacy, further research centred on practice is necessary to theorise other critical aspects in the early phases of the entrepreneurship process. These aspects include how institutional factors influence newcomers' approaches to business planning and their ability to gather resources from interested stakeholders.

### 3.5.3 A Bourdieuan Analysis of Qualitative Authorship in Entrepreneurial Scholarship

Entrepreneurship scholarship has long been characterised by a dominant positivist orthodoxy, typically enacted through quantitative methods (Dodd et al., 2014). However, a persistent minority voice in the field has adopted a heterodox and critical stance against the mainstream. Dodd et al.'s (2014) study builds on responses from leading qualitative entrepreneurship scholars, conducting a Bourdieuan analysis of the field—particularly focusing on heterodox qualitative writing—and examining how scholars learn to navigate this landscape (habitus). The study discusses unchallenged assumptions (doxa), commitment to shared stakes (illusio), the practices employed to achieve these stakes (practice), and the struggle for prestige and resources (capital). Leading qualitative entrepreneurship scholars were invited to share their insights into the field's processes and structures, as well as their textual responses to a survey that provided the data for analysis. From this, Dodd et al. (2014) compared a conservative, positivist "orthodox" ontology of entrepreneurship with the growing and persistent heterodox scholarship in the field, often articulated through qualitative fieldwork.

Dodd et al. (2014) aimed to enhance their understanding of the relationship between these two forms of entrepreneurship scholarship and, primarily, to offer a more comprehensive analysis of the minor critical voice. By employing the Theory of Practice (ToP) framework, Dodd et al. (2014) illuminate key processes, structures, and relationships within qualitative entrepreneurship authorship through a systematic approach to articulating and implementing their research objectives. The framework emphasises three main components: first, *Field* - This aspect amplifies the voices of subordinate elements within the domain of entrepreneurship scholarship, specifically focusing on qualitative authorship. Second, *Capital* - this component engages with colleagues who have attained significant symbolic capital in the field, such as publications in top-ranked journals, despite their unconventional practices and the various forms of capital acquired through qualitative authorship in entrepreneurship. Third, *Habitus* - refers to the generative grammar and logic underlying these practices, as well as the established rules of the game.

This leads to Doxa revealing the unexamined assumptions within the field, encompassing both orthodox and heterodox perspectives and giving voice to the unspoken and the unspeakable. Illusio subsequently investigates how qualitative entrepreneurship scholars either defer to, reject, or challenge the prevailing beliefs of the status quo. Finally, the concept of practice examines what successful colleagues do and the specific practices they employ in their authorship of qualitative entrepreneurship research. The literature reviewed offers a grounded theoretical account of the evolution of entrepreneurship's critical minority voice. The focus is on scholars elucidating what has been studied and how and why from a social constructionist perspective.

The findings provide guidance for best practices, including the implementation of various cognitive and physical strategies, active engagement with individuals and texts, and refining iterations through a focused approach. Additionally, there is a cautionary note for qualitative researchers regarding practices that may lead to dysfunction, such as a reluctance to acknowledge and discuss the inherent complexities of qualitative analysis and authorship, as well as a nascent tendency towards text-worship. Furthermore, a generative grammar of passionate engagement renders the complexities of entrepreneurship manageable and robust enough for this heterodox, slightly unconventional approach to merit increasing scholarly recognition.

Dodd et al. (2014) conclude that other findings offer less tangible support; however, they highlight that the emotional aspects of authorship are a regular component of the process, intertwining shared joys and passions with inherent frustrations and concerns.

The methods discussed in the literature inform the development of the Bourdieusian theoretical framework utilised in this study. For instance, Clercq and Voronov (2009) reconceptualise entrepreneurial legitimacy as a manifestation of habitus, reflecting individuals' capacity to conform and distinguish themselves within their environments. By employing the Theory of Practice (ToP), they emphasise the significance of power in shaping individuals' positions in society and their ability to achieve personal and business objectives through access to various forms of capital. Furthermore, in their exploration of habitus, Lofton and Davis (2015) seek to uncover systemic inequalities within social structures, highlighting the historical contexts that influence individuals' experiences. These contexts contribute to forming their tastes, perceptions, and actions. They utilise ToP, which provides a framework for analysing socioeconomic inequality and the challenges faced by individuals affected by such disparities, which may, in turn, influence their behaviours and actions. Their study serves as a guide for embedding equivalent strategies into research design.

While Clercq and Voronov (2009) and Lofton and Davis (2015) offer a structured Theory of Practice (ToP) guide, Dodd et al. (2014) present a practical and organised framework for ToP. They elucidate the relationships among various elements, including the field (entrepreneurship scholarship), capital (cultural and symbolic), practice (actions of individuals), habitus (behaviour), doxa (assumptions), and illusio (level of stake). Their work highlights key processes, structures, and the interconnections among these concepts in a systematic format that can be adopted and adapted within the conceptual framework.

### 3.6 Constructing a Community Business Practice Framework

So far, this research has identified several key factors. Firstly, it has delineated the research problem, which encompasses existing data on socioeconomic inequality, historical patterns of division within the Black community, the scarcity of diverse analyses regarding this community, the limited participation of the Black community in socioeconomic development policies, and, finally, the insufficient awareness of community-based approaches to socioeconomic development.

Secondly, the primary research participants have been identified as members of the Black community, with the West Midlands designated as the geographic focus of the study. Furthermore, from an entrepreneurial perspective, Community Business (CB) is chosen as the model for socioeconomic development, accompanied by a policy outline and its emerging contributions to community businesses (CB). The following section details a step-by-step process for constructing a Theory of Practice framework to guide the research methodology, strategy, and design.

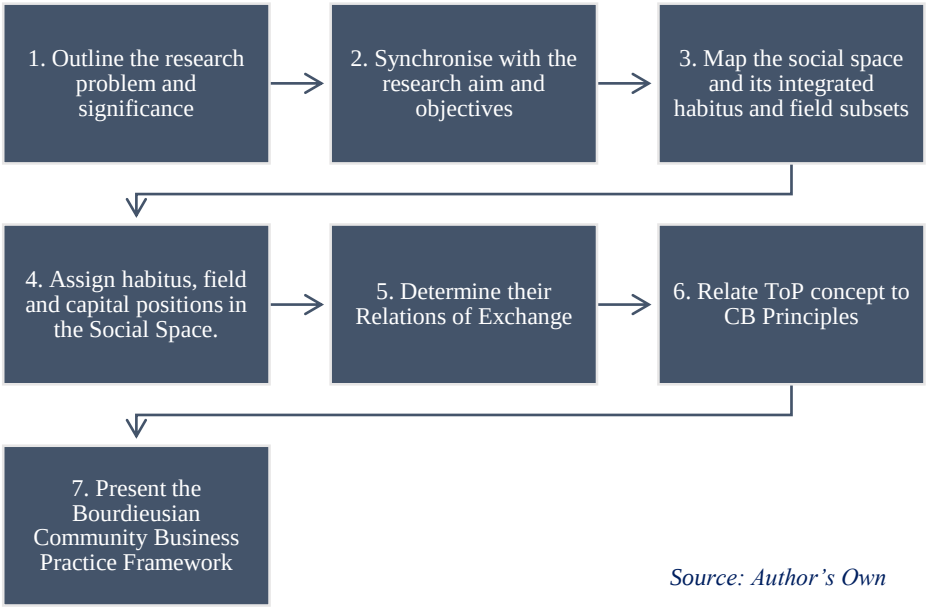
### 3.6.1 Process Framing

According to Bourdieu (1977), all social structures, whether subjective or objective, are homologous and are constituted by the same socially defining principles. Employing a Theory of Practice framework allows for assessing both objective and internalised structures, revealing a coincidental relationship - *"an individual connection with both the material and the social world" (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 140).* Hermann (2004) asserts that the Theory of Practice (ToP) does not constitute a cohesive theory in and of itself; rather, it represents a flexible theoretical framework whose main elements should never be separated: *"[(habitus)(capital)] + Field = Practice" (Bourdieu, 1986c, p. 101).* Similarly, Golsorkhi and Huault (2006) argue that utilising any single element of Bourdieu's theory is impossible without considering the others. To address this, Bourdieu recommends analysing these components to understand how their structural relationships manifest in both social and individual contexts. This involves examining the structures of organisation, thought, and practice and how they mutually constitute one another (Bourdieu, 1977b).

The Theory of Practice (ToP) framework has been effectively utilised across various sectoral contexts, demonstrating its adaptability for application in community entrepreneurship and socio-economic development environments. Furthermore, its flexible nature facilitated a comprehensive investigation of the relationships between habitus and field, as well as their inter- and intra-relationships with capital within a specific geographical scape. This versatility simplified the compatibility assessment for aligning the theory with Community Business (CB) principles. Additionally, the ToP concept provided a coherent framework that integrated the research problem, aims, and objectives, formulating logical solutions to the research question.

Both theory and practice complemented each other in developing a practical framework, which has the potential to be expanded into a usable tool beyond the research scope for tangible outcomes. Following this guide, a reflective process was implemented to ensure that the essential aspects of the Theory of Change (ToC) concept were not overlooked (Angeles et al., 2014). Figure 1 illustrates the systematic process of curating the Community Business Practice Framework.

***Figure 1: Developing a Community Business Practice Framework***

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### 3.6.2 Problems and Significance

Chapter Two discusses socioeconomic inequality within the Black community and its impact on health, education, employment, and income levels, as well as in specific geographic areas where many Black communities reside. Socioeconomic inequality inadvertently exacerbates poverty levels for those affected, leading to reduced participation in social structures such as education and wellness activities, which further compound these disadvantages (Bhalla & Lapeyre, 1997). Blackburn and Ram (2006) argue that socioeconomic inequality arises from skill deficits, low levels of social capital, and insufficient employment opportunities. For some individuals, their exclusion is further intensified by alienation from social structures that could alleviate their disadvantages (Smith et al., 2019). Furthermore, the historical experiences of people in the Black community have created internal divisions—such as African versus Caribbean identities, tribal conflicts, and diverse cultural disconnects—that hinder social cohesion and collective action for economic development.

More pressing issues, such as the competition for limited socioeconomic resources, stereotyping, and perceived disparities in socioeconomic success, have intensified tensions (Owusu-Kwarteng, 2017). Furthermore, despite evidence of significant socioeconomic inequality, policies aimed at promoting enterprise to alleviate deprivation have been criticised for failing to account for the diverse backgrounds of individuals experiencing poverty and social exclusion and those engaging in entrepreneurial activities (Mole et al., 2009). Finally, community businesses have the potential to contribute to local regeneration strategies, generate social capital, and enhance the overall promotion of civil society (Bailey, 2012). However, there remains a limited understanding of the participation of Black individuals in community enterprise activities and the related policy agenda.

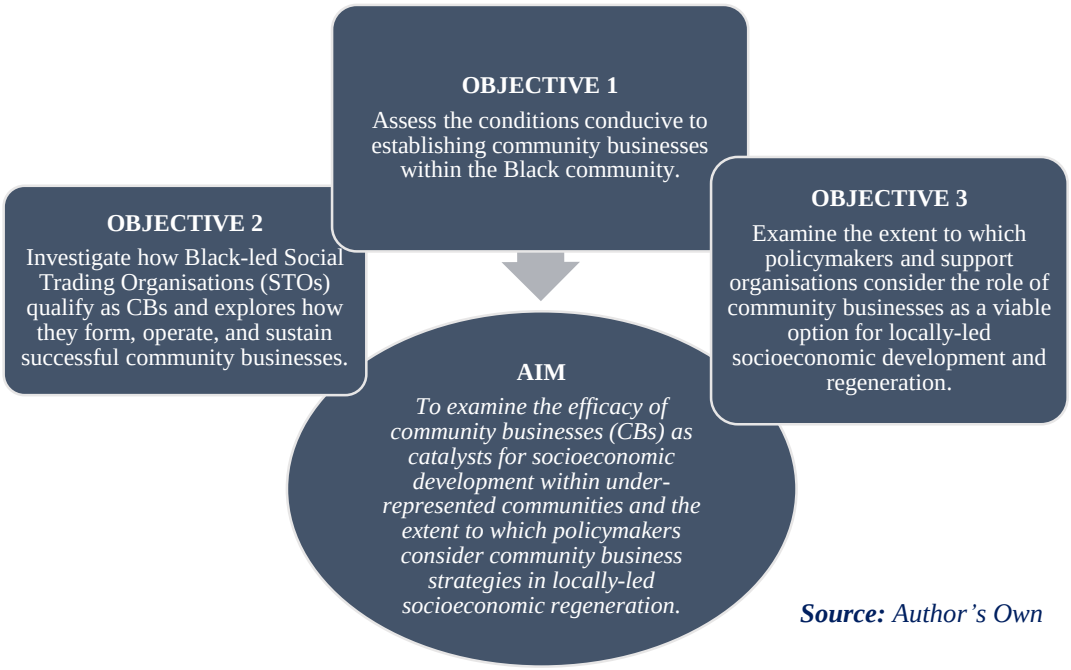
### 3.6.3 Synchronizing the aim and objectives

To examine the efficacy of Community Businesses (CBs) as catalysts for socioeconomic development within underrepresented communities and to assess the extent to which policymakers consider CB strategies in locally-led socioeconomic regeneration, one fundamental question arises: *How can the Black community establish, operate, and sustain community businesses to achieve socioeconomic development?*

Initially, an assessment needed to be conducted to determine the practices within the Black community that facilitate the formation, operation, and sustainability of community businesses. Understanding these practices is essential for grasping the dynamics and potential of community businesses as catalysts for socioeconomic development.

To identify the determinants, Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992a) propose an analysis of the *habitus*, which refers to the agents and the various systems of dispositions they have acquired by internalising a specific type of social and economic condition. This internalisation influences their trajectory within the *field*, giving them a more or less favourable opportunity for actualisation. Second, they suggest analysing the positions within the *field* concerning the *field of power*. Finally, it is essential to map out the objective structures of relationships between the positions occupied by the agents or institutions that compete for legitimate forms of specific authority through their *capital*. Based on this framework, three key objectives were derived (see Figure 2).

***Figure 2: Research Aim and Objectives***




***Source:*** *Author's Own*

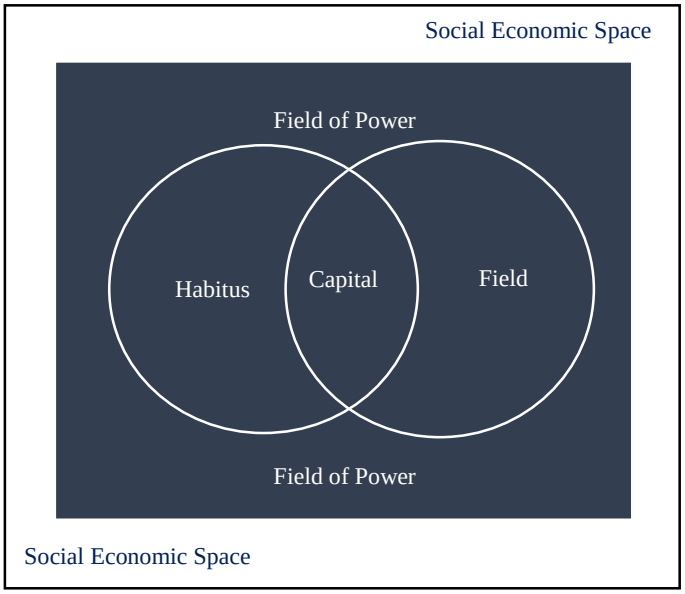
### 3.6.4 Map the Social Space and its integrated habitus and field subsets

For Bourdieu (1997), social space is an arena where multiple agents or actors coexist. This social space comprises three components: a bounded area (geographical space) that can be mapped (Bourdieu, 1984), fields of play (Bourdieu, 1977b), and the struggle of a battlefield, which refers to 'what is at stake' (Bourdieu, 1998c).

In this study, the generic social space is called the "Social Economic Space," which encompasses a broader scope that describes Social Enterprises (SEs) in all forms. This approach allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the sector, including voluntary and nonprofit organisations (Lars Hulgård, 2014). The defining characteristic of this sector is not the nonprofit constraint but rather whether an organisation is part of "a non-capitalist economy" (Hulgård, 2014). Empirically, a Social Economic Ecosystem will consist of various organisational types, including cooperatives, mutual societies, associations, foundations, and social enterprises, while excluding external subsets of the system, namely the communities that benefit from the services provided by these organisations.

In this Community Business Practice framework, the Social Economic Space represents a broader context in which various fields coexist, encompassing individuals (habitus agents) and institutions (fields and their agents). This space features internal divisions and an external boundary (Social Space), where the participants in the game occupy predetermined positions (capital positions). It aligns with Maton's (2018) caution that, for research to be grounded in a Bourdieusian approach, it must thoroughly evaluate all components—habitus, field, and capital—within a social space to provide a nuanced understanding of the social world. Figure 3 presents a diagrammatic representation of the Social Economic Space.

***Figure 3: The Social Economic Space***




*Source: Author's own*

*"It is, therefore, possible to analyse the way the same structural relations are actualised in both social and the individual through studying structures of organisation, thought and practice and the ways in which they mutually constitute each other"* (Bourdieu 1977b: 3).

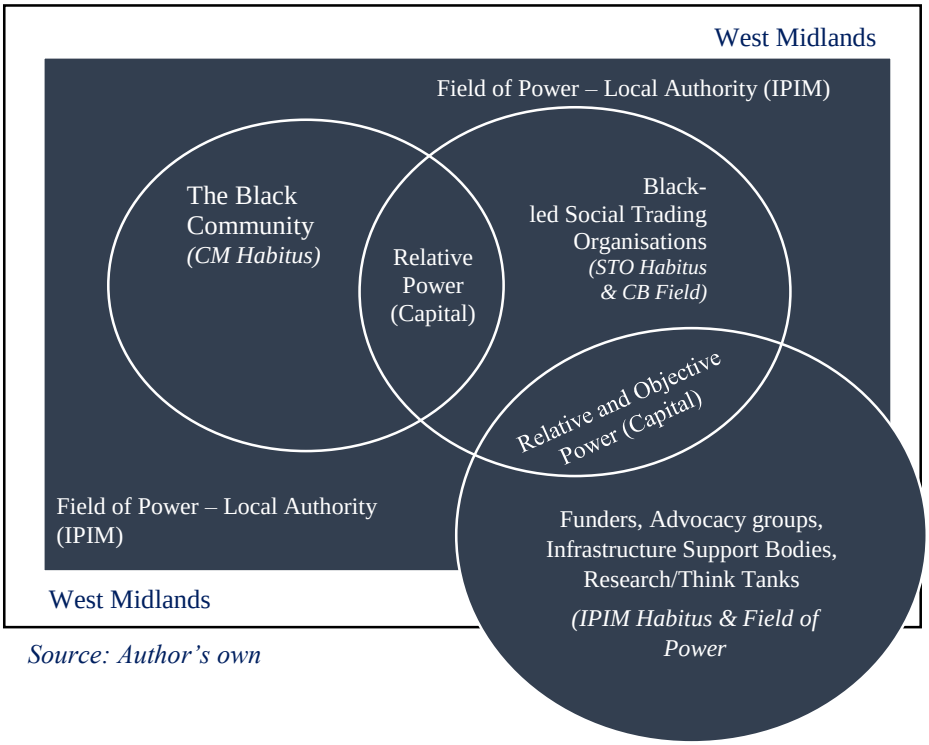
Considerations of the contextual component are incorporated into the mapping of an integrated social space where multiple agents coexist. In this context, the relationships between evolving logics—agents' dispositions (habitus) and the positions they occupy (determined by their capital) within an evolving system (field) is examined using the following formula: *(habitus)(capital)] + Field = Practice" (Bourdieu 1986c:101).*

### 3.6.5 Positioning Habitus, Field, and Capital Relations in the Social Economic Space

Bourdieu's (1984) definition of social space is designed to encompass all positions and relationships available for occupation at any given time or place. It refers to a subset of open positions that are unified by the shared interests, activities, and dispositions of agents (Hardy, 2014). He describes the structured social space as:

*"a field of forces, a force field containing people who dominate and people who are dominated. Constant, permanent relationships of inequality operate inside this space, which simultaneously becomes a space in which various actors struggle to transform or preserve the field. All of the individuals in this universe bring all of their (relative) power to the competition. It is this power that defines their position in the field and, as a result, their strategies" (Bourdieu 1998b: 40–41).*

***Figure 4: Habitus, Field, and Field of Power (and Capital) Positions in the Social Economic Space***




*Source: Author's own*

*One ought to be able to recall at every point the whole network of relationships found there" (Bourdieu 1984: 120).*

#### *3.6.5.1 Context to the Structured, Structuring, Structure*

In the preceding chapters, Bourdieu (1977) defined habitus as a property of actors—individuals, groups, or institutions—consisting of a structured and structuring structure (ibid.: 172). As illustrated in Figure 3, the mapping of social space indicates that three groups of participants are essential for addressing the research question. In these terms, the research identifies the first group as members of the Black community (CM) (see section 2.7) when evaluating the social factors that facilitate the establishment of Community Businesses (CBs). The second group comprises Social Trading Organisations (STOs) led by individuals from the Black community who serve as leaders in the CB field. The third group consists of Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIM), representing the field of power. Figure 4 provides a diagrammatic representation of how all the Theory of Practice (ToP) framework concepts are situated within the Social Economic Space. The following section explains how each position corresponds to its respective Community Business (CB) principle and objective.

#### *3.6.5.2 Habitus Position - Community Members (CM)*

In the Social Economic Space, the Black habitus is both a structured and structuring space. It is shaped by Community Members' (CMs) past and present circumstances, including family upbringing and educational experiences, which influence their current and future practices, creating a structuring practice. Within the Black habitus, CMs are individuals who do not lead or operate Community Businesses (CBs) but are current or potential initiators, participants, beneficiaries, staff members, or volunteers of these businesses. When coordinated, this group constitutes the new incumbents in the CB field. They also include members of the Black community who are leaders or founders of community organisations. As previously demonstrated in earlier sections, the Black community is characterised by environments marked by imperfect information, underdevelopment, and informal cohesion. Therefore, assessing the Black CM habitus is essential for understanding its historical and socially situated conditions, the extent of various forms of capital (social, cultural, symbolic, and economic), and other factors that facilitate the formation of CBs. According to the principles governing CBs, CMs must be locally rooted within a socio-economic space, specifically the West Midlands region in this context. In this context, evaluating the CM habitus addresses and fulfils the requirements of the first objective.

### *3.6.5.3 Field Position - STOs*

The field is referred to as a structuring structure, as one's habitus shapes both present and future practices and the dispositions carried into the systematically ordered structural field. Bourdieu (1997) metaphorically described fields as a football field, a science-fiction force field, and a field of power. Each of these fields is shaped differently according to the game being played. They possess rules, histories, star players, legends, and lore (Thomson, 2012). Collectives of institutions can occupy multiple social fields simultaneously. The same dispositions, strategies, and forms of capital may be valued differently across various field contexts. Furthermore, an agent may hold a desirable dominant position in one field while occupying a less valued position in another (Hardy, 2014). For Bourdieu (1997), these social fields represent a universe or microcosm in which agents and institutions are integrated and interact according to field-specific rules. In this context, the "football field" is occupied by Social Trading Organisations (STOs) led by individuals from the Black community who have established themselves in the Social Economic Space and possess experience navigating the field to maintain their positions. They are sub-players within the Field of Power, holding marked and predetermined positions. The STOs can take various forms of social enterprise (SE). They may adhere to community business (CBs) principles - being locally rooted, accountable to the local community, trading for profit, and having a broad impact. However, they do not necessarily have to meet all these criteria. In addressing the research aim, the position of the STOs within the field responds to and fulfils the requirements outlined in objective two.

### *3.6.5.4 Field of Power Position: IPIMs*

The field of power is structured as a system of dispositions that generates perceptions, appreciations, and practices upon which both the community and the field rely for resources, including capital. According to Bourdieu (1998), the field of power is distinct from other fields because it is exclusively occupied by the most dominant individuals within a social space. These agents possess substantial amounts of various forms of capital, enabling them to dominate the corresponding field. The struggles within this field intensify whenever the relative value of different types of capital is called into question (Bourdieu, 1998). In this study, the field of power is collectively referred to as Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIM).

In this study, the field of power is occupied by Local Authorities in the West Midlands area, grantmakers, funders, advocacy groups, infrastructure support organisations, and research institutions. Collectively, these groups are called Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIM). These institutions operate both within and beyond the West Midlands region and play a crucial role in determining how CMs and STOs advance or regress within the socio-economic landscape. This study examines the extent to which IPIMs support the formation, operation, and sustainability of community businesses, as well as how Local Authorities perceive the role of these businesses as a viable option for locally-led socio-economic regeneration. This analysis addresses the requirements of objective three.

### 3.6.6 Relations of Exchange: Habitus and Field Relations

Habitus and field (including the Field of Power) are relational structures, as illustrated in Figure 4, and their relationship provides insight into *Practice* (Bourdieu, 1977). While they are independent entities, the two concepts depend on each other to operationalise their strategies. In practical terms:

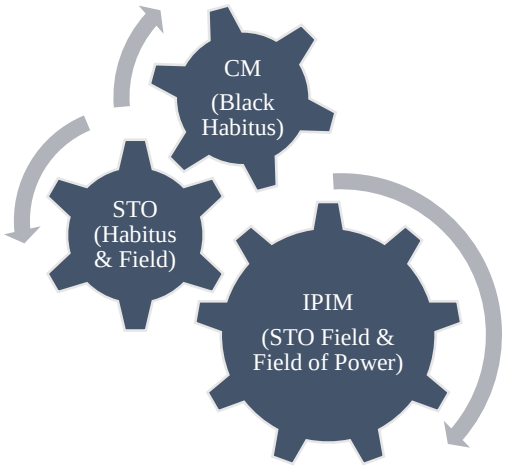
a) Community Members (CMs) interact with Social Trading Organisations (STOs) as service users, beneficiaries, or volunteers, and they are potential initiators of new community businesses (CBs).

b) Social Trading Organisations (STOs) rely on Community Members (CMs) as service users, beneficiaries, or volunteers. STOs depend on Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIM) for resources (economic capital) to operate legitimately within the field.

c) The IPIM requires both the CMs and the STOs to effectively implement their inclusive Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion (DEEI) strategies and policy outcomes.

Moreover, the leaders of STO are community members of the habitus and, therefore, bring dispositions inherited from their habitus into the field. Additionally, STOs, depending on their level of capital, may be positioned as a field of power if they possess sufficient financial resources to provide infrastructural support to other CBs. Finally, Local Authorities could also be positioned as grantmakers, funders, advocacy groups, infrastructure support bodies, and research or think tanks if they offer services that compete within these institutions.

***Figure 5: Sets of Evolving Logics***




*Source: Author's own*

*"**Relations between evolving logics**: agents' dispositions ("habitus") and the positions they occupy (by their "capital") within an evolving system ("Field")." Bourdieu 1986c:101.*

Figure 5 illustrates Bourdieu's (1982) assertion that there exists a dual relationship: on one side, the field conditions the habitus, while simultaneously, the habitus serves as the foundation for individuals' comprehension of their lives, including their understanding of the field. Conversely, there is an interplay between knowledge and cognitive construction. The habitus plays a crucial role in constituting the field as a meaningful world (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a, p. 127). This relationship is described as an "obscure and double relation" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a, p. 126) or an "unconscious relationship" between the habitus and the field (Bourdieu, 1993a, p. 76), where each element influences the other in the understanding of practice.

### 3.6.7 The Value of Capital

According to Bourdieu (1977), the game in social spaces or fields are competitive, with various agents employing different strategies to maintain or enhance their positions.

*All the individuals in this universe bring all of their (relative) power to the competition. This power defines their position in the field and, as a result, their strategies" (Bourdieu, 1998b, pp. 40–41).*

Bourdieu defines capital as encompassing all goods—both material and symbolic—that are perceived as rare and desirable within a specific social formation (Bourdieu, 1977). Because capital is inherently social, it cannot be divorced from the relevant field (Bourdieu, 1998; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Capital represents both the process and the product of a field (Thomson, 2012). It can be conceptualised as the "energy" that propels the development of a field over time (Moore, 2013). However, within the social space, there is no level playing field. Individuals who possess different forms of capital are at an advantage, as the field relies on and generates more of that capital (Bourdieu, 1986). These fortunate individuals can leverage their capital advantage to accumulate even more and achieve greater success than others (Thomson, 2012).

*"This inertia is entailed by the tendency of the structures of capital to reproduce themselves. Institutions or dispositions adapted to the structures in which they are the product are, of course, reinforced by a specific political action of concerted conservation, i.e., demobilisation and depoliticisation. The latter tends to keep the dominated agents in a practical group, united only by the orchestration of their dispositions and condemned to function as an aggregate repeatedly performing discrete, individual acts (Bourdieu, 2005, p. 26).*

In this vein, Bourdieu (1977) examines power dynamics and the nature of culture, focusing on how culture is reproduced and transformed, its connection to social stratification, and its role in reproducing and exercising power. Capital, therefore, influences the extent and nature of both subjective and objective relationships formed within the Habitus, the Field, and the Field of Power, as well as how agents' positions are sustained based on the capital they possess.

### 3.6.8 Doxa – The Structured Rules

The varying positions result in fields being shaped differently depending on the game played within them. However, the patterned, regular, and predictable practices in each field exhibit striking similarities, as do the types of agents who dominate each field (Bourdieu, 1977).The internalisation of field-specific rules allows the agent to anticipate future trends and opportunities. Bourdieu likens this ability to that of a skilled rugby player who predicts where the ball will land and positions themselves accordingly before it does (Bourdieu, 1983a).

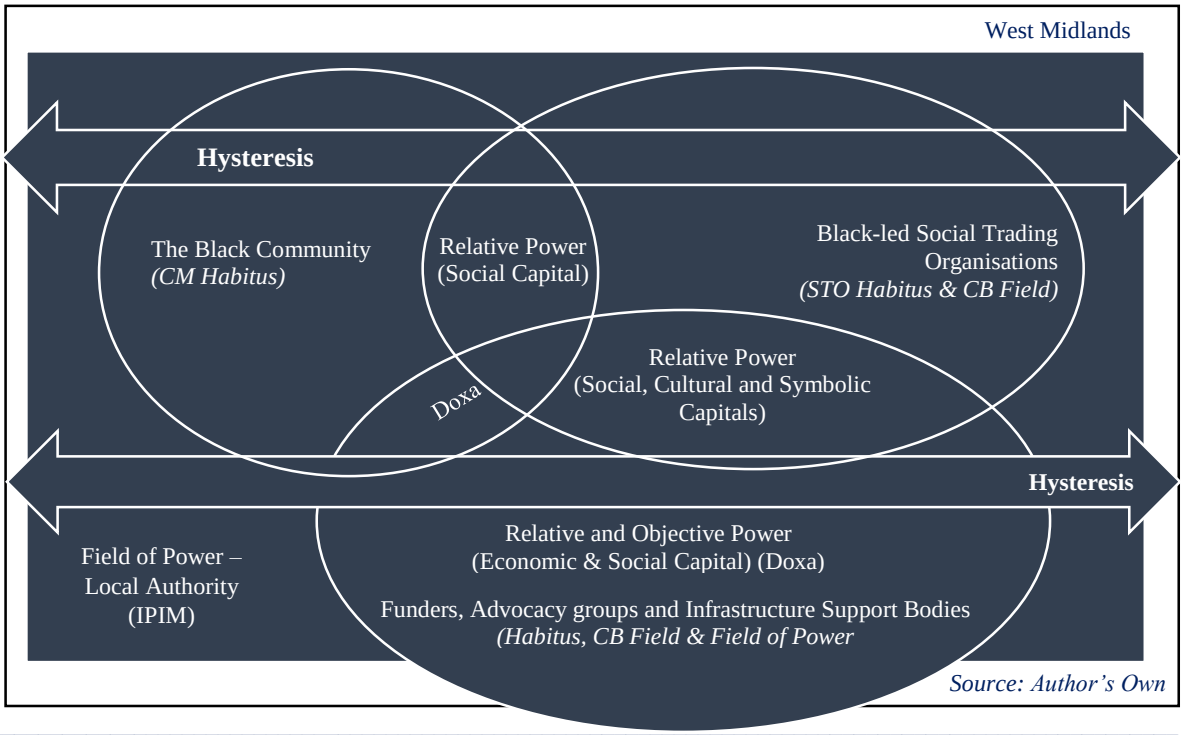
No universal rule applies to all fields; this is why Bourdieu (1966) argues that fields are autonomous due to their distinct regulations. However, this autonomy is only relative, as fields are situated within a broader social space. For example, politics, the economy, and religion can significantly influence the intellectual field. Consequently, empirical research must uncover the rules and conditions that govern a social field (Hillebrandt, 2013). This study will examine the Community Businesses (CB) field and the rules and structures that govern the establishment, development, growth, and sustainability of both new and existing incumbents. It will identify the rules within the field and assess their potential impact on the engagement and participation of both current and new incumbent agencies.

### 3.6.9 The Hysteresis Effect

By identifying these rules, change becomes a necessary consequence of habitus and field, as they are mutually interrelated and interpenetrating, as illustrated in Figure 6. A change in one necessitates a change in the other (Hardy, 2008). This includes changes in the field of power, where the effects of change compel the IPIMS to act in accordance with the needs of CM and STOs.

*"Where change is indeterminate like this, hysteresis provides an invaluable technical term to highlight the disruption between habitus and field and the consequences of this over time." (Ibid:127).*

***Figure 6: Relationship of Exchange Within the Social Economic Space***



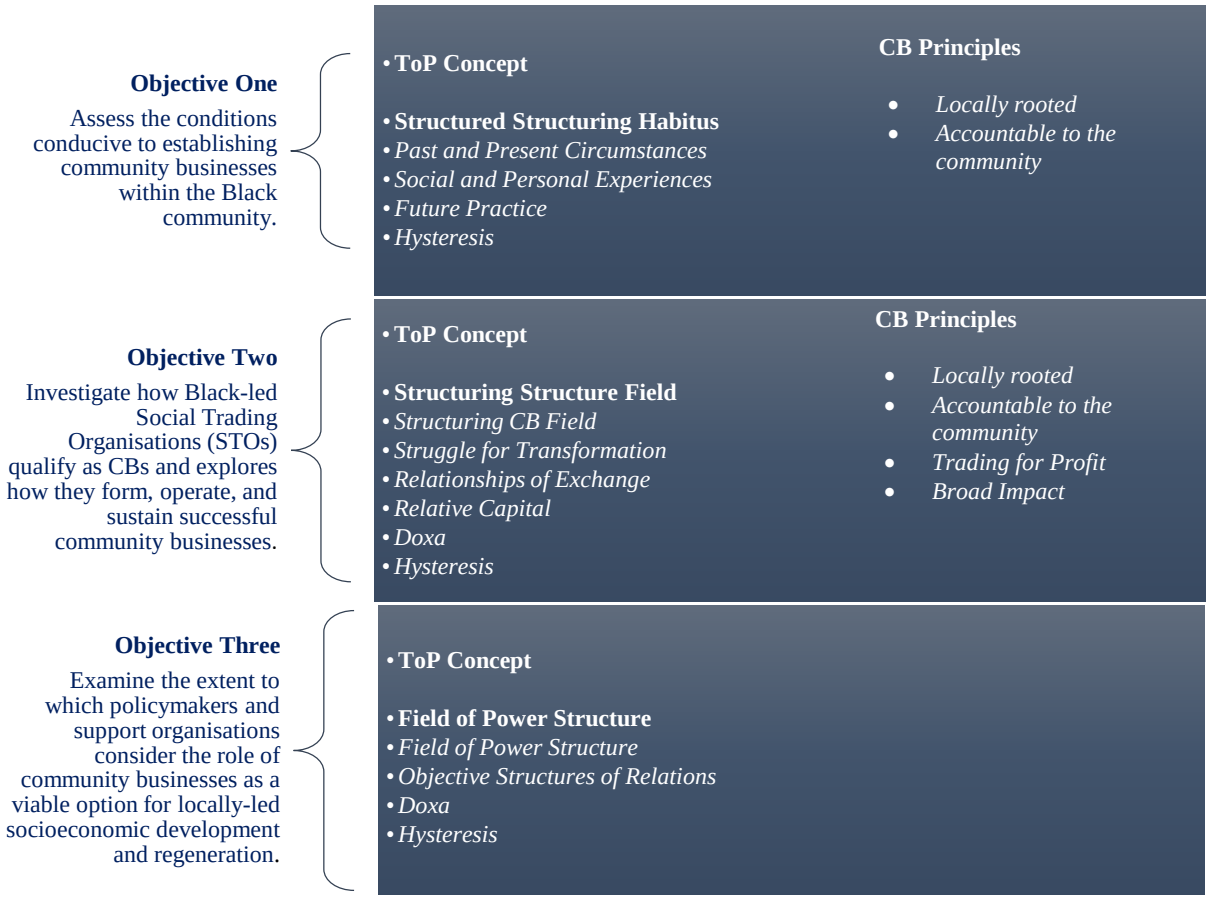
So far, the Theory of Practice (ToP) framework has provided a logical and coherent pattern that synchronously triangulates the relational assessment of Community Members (CMs), Social Trading Organisations (STOs) and Institutions with Power, Influence and Money (IPIMs), and their capital relations. Next, the working principles of Community Businesses (CBs)—specifically, being locally rooted, accountable to the local community, trading for profit, and having a broad impact—are aligned with their corresponding ToP concepts.

Here, the *structured and structuring* habitus connects the Community Business (CB) principle of Community Members' (CMs) geographical commitment to place—specifically, local rootedness—and their accountability to the community, which is a form of social capital through the activities in which they engage. As a *structuring structure*, the field pertains to Social Trading Organisations' (STOs) geographical commitment to place, emphasising local rootedness (habitus) and their accountability to both the habitus and other STOs (social capital) through subjective and objective relations (field relations). This includes trading for profit (economic capital), exerting a broad impact (field and habitus relations), and ultimately, their struggle for transformation by leveraging other forms of capital through established rules of engagement for advancement, such as cultural and symbolic capital, as well as doxa. Finally, the Field of Power pertains to the systematically ordered IPIM *structure*, comprising dispositional systems that shape perceptions, appreciations, and practices that either enable or hinder CMs and STOs from functioning within the habitus or field, reflecting both relative and objective power and doxa.

### 3.7. Linking Objectives, Theory of Practice Concepts and CB Principles

Figure 7 illustrates the connection between each research objective, a Theory of Practice concept, and the corresponding Community Business (CB) principles, ensuring that the framework adheres to a logical and systematic structure. According to Leshem and Trafford (2011), the application of existing theories in the form of a theoretical framework is not only necessary but essential for advancing knowledge based on established understanding in the field of study and determining subsequent steps. This highlights the significance of this study in building upon the foundational work established by Bourdieu.

*Figure 7: The Link between Objectives, ToP and CB Principles*




## 3.8 Presenting a Bourdieusian Community Business Practice Framework

Figure 8 consolidates all previous figures into a single framework to develop the Community Business Practice Framework. This framework encompasses the research problem, the aim, and the research question. It then delineates the predetermined themes, namely habitus, field, field of power, and capital, and maps these to their respective objectives. Subsequently, each predetermined theme is expanded into relevant variables, which serve as the basis for data analysis. These variables are aligned with the Community Business principles, culminating in the three outcomes achieved by the research.

***Figure 8: A Framework for a Bourdieusian Analysis of Community Business Practice***

**PROBLEM**

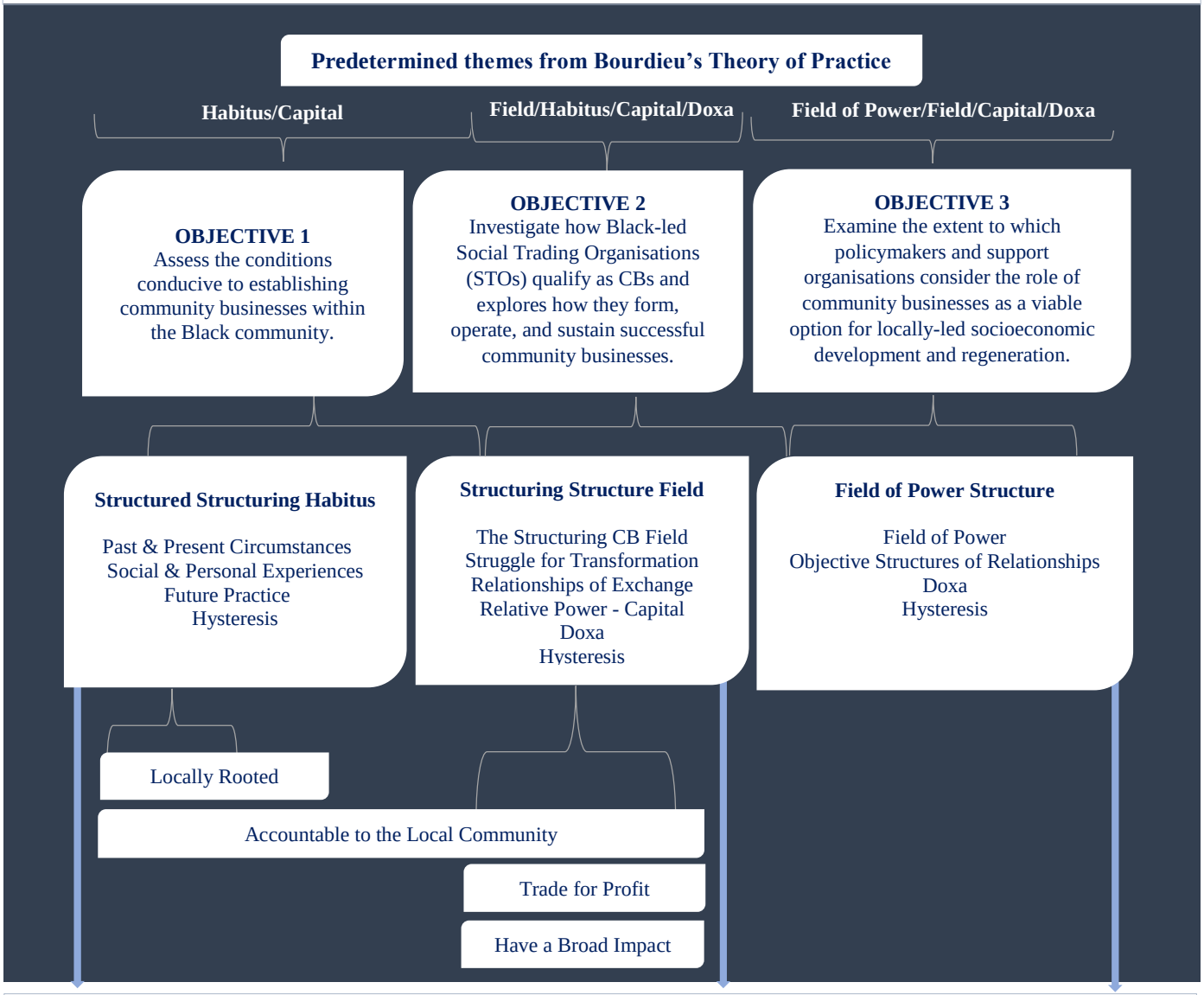
*Socio-economic inequality; Historical disposition of divisiveness within the Black community; Lack of heterogeneous analysis of the Black community; Limited policy involvement of the Black community in socio-economic development; Lack of knowledge on the Black community's involvement in CBs as an approach to socio-economic development.*

**AIM**

*To examine the To examine the efficacy of community businesses (CBs) as catalysts for socioeconomic development within under-represented communities and the extent to which policymakers consider community business strategies in locally-led socioeconomic regeneration.*

***QUESTION***

*How can the Black community establish, operate, and sustain community businesses to achieve socioeconomic development?*




**Practice Outcome 1**

Knowledge: Theoretical and Practical Perspectives.

**Practice Outcome 2**

A Conceptual Framework designed as a training tool for community entrepreneurial development, to drive community and systemic change.

**Practice Outcome 3**

A Community Business Practice Process Model to guide underrepresented communities and institutions, including policymakers in locally led socio-economic development and community regeneration initiatives.

## 3.9 Engineering the Conceptual Framework towards a Community Business Practice

According to Bourdieu, analysing social space involves not only situating the object of investigation within its specific historical, local, national, and international contexts but also examining how prior knowledge about the object was generated, by whom, and whose interests were served by those knowledge-generation practices (Bourdieu, 1993a). In reality, power and status create systemic inequalities, highlighting structural constraints and unequal access to institutional resources based on class, gender, and race (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 241). Giddens (1984) argues that structure is both enabling and constraining due to the inherent relationship between structure and agency, as well as between agency and power.

Per existing literature, academic and empirical knowledge regarding the Black community and their involvement in community businesses is limited. However, this community is characterised by environments marked by imperfect information, underdevelopment, and informal cohesion. As discussed in previous chapters, social capital may be crucial in facilitating economic transactions within such communities (Postelnicu et al., 2018). Nonetheless, communities experiencing socioeconomic inequality may find their resource options constrained by the nature of the resources accessible through their connections. Conversely, they may leverage their networks to overcome certain constraints and utilise their social capital to access the same resources as others (Giddens, 1984). Nevertheless, socioeconomic development is unlikely to occur through traditional, private-industry-led mechanisms. If redevelopment occurs, it will likely be through less conventional entrepreneurial approaches. This does not suggest that the typical entrepreneurial process is irrelevant. On the contrary, as Johnstone et al. (2006) argue, in areas where capitalistic relations are less robust, the entrepreneurial process will manifest differently, and communities facing socioeconomic inequality will serve as hosts for alternative forms of entrepreneurship.

Consequently, a case is being made to examine the efficacy of community businesses (CBs) as catalysts for socioeconomic development within underrepresented communities. Additionally, the study will assess the extent to which policymakers incorporate community business strategies in locally led socioeconomic regeneration efforts.

More specifically, in relation to the subject of the case study, the Bourdieusian conceptual framework facilitated a systematic investigation of community business practices within the West Midlands, from which both theoretical and practical outcomes were derived. This framework informed the overall research design and questions, enabled the selection of appropriate methodologies, and identified potential threats to the validity of the research conclusions (Maxwell, 2004). Furthermore, the framework itself has the potential to be enhanced by incorporating multiple relational variables, thereby presenting an opportunity to develop future models for socioeconomic development. The ultimate goal of this study is to utilise the framework as a guide to uncover the information necessary for developing a Community Business Practice Process Model. This model aims to assist underrepresented communities and institutions, including policymakers, in their locally led socioeconomic development and community regeneration initiatives.

The following chapter outlines the methodology and philosophical assumptions that underpin the research strategy and design. With predetermined themes identified in the conceptual framework, an abductive approach is employed, supplemented by inductive reasoning, to identify and explain the themes and patterns that emerge from the data. In conjunction with relevant Community Business principles, these explanations are integrated to assess their compatibility with the research objectives, as the Theory of Practice concepts are tested using both existing and new data evidence (Saunders et al., 2019).

# CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH FROM A BOURDIEUSIAN PERSPECTIVE

## 4.1 Introduction

Chapter Three introduces the Theory of Practice (ToP) and its relational concepts, detailing Bourdieu's attempt to transcend the dualities of subjectivism and objectivism through practice. It explains the complex interplay of his key concepts: field, habitus, and capital. Chapter Four uses the conceptual framework established in Chapter Three to develop a methodology that systematically investigates community business practices. This chapter focuses on the methods employed in the research, supported by theoretical underpinnings that provide a coherent and logical approach to strategy, design, and data analysis. To test the conceptual framework, relevant research questions are formulated to address the objectives and answer the overarching research question. The chapter concludes with the researcher's reflexive stance, which fosters ongoing internal dialogue and critical self-evaluation of positionality.

## 4.2 Philosophical Positioning

*"Different people of different backgrounds, under different circumstances and times, make different meanings, and so create and experience different social realities."- Jahankhani et al. 2020:227*

Gannon (2022) posits that research aims and objectives are often based on assumptions about how knowledge is generated. This typically dictates the methods and outcomes of scholarly inquiry (Creswell, 2017). Paradigms, philosophical assumptions, epistemology, and ontology significantly influence the most suitable methodological approach (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). While several paradigms or worldviews structure and organise contemporary business management research—such as positivism, critical realism, interpretivism, postmodernism, and pragmatism (Saunders et al., 2020)—they all share philosophical foundations and common elements (Kaushik, 2019). Therefore, determining one's philosophical position necessitates an understanding of the similarities and differences among various paradigmatic stances, as well as a reflective awareness of the researcher's inherent assumptions regarding knowledge acquisition and testing (Creswell, 2017).

## 4.3 Research Paradigm

As Gannon et al. (2022) explain, the 'paradigm' within which a study is situated is not merely shaped but co-created by the researcher and the audience's perspectives on how research should be conducted, both in general terms and in relation to the specific aims of the study. Therefore, this research cannot overlook the subjective-objective dimensions in the pursuit of understanding practice within a Community Business (CB) setting, where the current relationship between structure and agency remains ambiguous. In terms of co-creation, the researcher gained initial insights into the Black habitus through opportunistic voluntary involvement and engagement in the Coventry City of Culture 2021/2022 activities. This connection enhanced the researcher's credibility within the Black community and opened connections and networks with individuals and organisations, some of whom became research participants. The observations made during this engagement allowed for the collection of valuable knowledge from which the research aim, subsequent objectives, and research questions were derived. From the researcher's perspective, social realities are both internal and external, shaped by people's perceptions and their resulting actions (Saunders et al., 2019). On one hand, there is a belief in the underlying unity and cohesiveness of social systems and structures that regulate human behaviour (regulation perspective). On the other hand, there is a belief in fundamentally questioning the status quo and providing insights to help change the former (radical change perspective). Thus, this research's paradigm is – "*concerned with what is possible and the alternatives to the accepted current position"* (Burrell & Morgan, 2019; Saunders et al., 2019, p. 139).

## 4.4 Philosophical Assumptions

Following the aforementioned points, conducting robust research requires awareness of the major philosophical assumptions that underpin the research strategy and design, as well as their suitability for fulfilling the research objectives (Gannon et al., 2022). Essentially, philosophical assumptions dictate what constitutes 'valid research' and influence the selection of research methodologies. Therefore, a thorough understanding of fundamental philosophical concepts and principles is critical (Moon & Blackman, 2017). Furthermore, Ritchie and Lewis (2007) argue that different research paradigms yield varying types of understanding while emphasising that diversity in philosophical perspectives does not negate the existence of an external reality.

With these perspectives—positivism, critical realism, interpretivism, postmodernism, and pragmatism—Saunders et al. (2020) suggest that they need not be confusing for researchers embarking on their research journey. Instead, it is essential for researchers to understand the basic principles of these paradigms as a foundational starting point. While researchers are encouraged to remain committed to their chosen paradigm throughout their study (Kuhn, 2000), Lewis and Grimes (1999) contend that this commitment may depend on the nature of the inquiry. There may be opportunities to adapt the investigation's approach if a 'multiparadigm' and/or 'meta-triangulation' strategy aligns with the research objectives (Lewis & Grimes, 1999). Thus, based on the researcher's ontological position that social realities are both internal and external, a multiparadigm approach is employed. This approach integrates the philosophies of interpretivism and pragmatism, aiming to reconcile the dichotomy of subjectivism and objectivism, facts and values, and the pursuit of accurate and rigorous knowledge alongside diverse contextual experiences (Saunders et al., 2020). By adopting this approach, the researcher is positioned to consider all actors in their relative contexts—both internal (habitus) and external (field)—while maintaining objectivity to assess whether the Black community can establish, operate, and sustain community businesses towards achieving socio-economic development.

### 4.5 On Combining Interpretivism and Pragmatism

An interpretive philosophy of social science research accounts for diverse perspectives, recognising that individuals interpret events differently, which impacts knowledge generation (Gannon et al., 2022). This reality holds different meanings for various people, who perceive the world through the structured constructs of their habits. Therefore, employing research methods that allow the gathering, thematic analysis, and interpretation of narrative data is key (Myers, 2019). This research adopts an interpretive paradigm to gain an in-depth understanding of the 'Black Habitus' (the Black community's past and present circumstances and future practices), the Field (the struggles of community businesses for transformation and their relations of exchange), the Field of Power (institutions wielding power, influence, and financial resources, and the authority they exert over others and their relations of exchange), and Capital (social, economic, and symbolic capital—both accrued and potential within the Habitus and Field). These concepts explore historical, geographical, and sociocultural contexts to understand what is occurring and how realities are being experienced (Saunders et al., 2019).

Nonetheless, the researcher believes that philosophical concepts are relevant when they support action (Kelemen and Rumens, 2012). Pragmatists intrinsically view their relationship to the research process as intersubjective rather than subjective or objective (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2011), with knowledge capable of being generated through various methodological approaches (Morgan, 2013). Pragmatism is concerned with action and change and the interplay between knowledge and action, disrupting the assumptions of older approaches based on traditional epistemology while offering promising new directions for understanding the nature of social research (Goldkuhl, 2012). Wicks and Freeman (1998) introduced pragmatism as a third alternative alongside interpretivism and positivism in a paradigm analysis of business ethics. Here, the research focuses on practical problems and aims to contribute to solutions that inform future practice (Saunders et al., 2019). Therefore, Bourdieu's Theory of Practice is applied as an instrument of thought and action rather than merely an abstract or theoretical concept. The practical implications of ideas and knowledge are valued to enable action (Saunders et al., 2019).

In this sense, the researcher's epistemological position is conflicted between subjectivism and objectivism. They draw from empirical knowledge gained through their experience of belonging to the community being studied (subjectivism) and existing data that presents factual information about the socioeconomic status of Black individuals, documented both theoretically and empirically (objectivism). However, the researcher contends that a comprehensive understanding of the Black community—specifically, an account of individuals' experiences within a community business context, the underlying causes of those experiences, and the structures that either constrain or empower development—is currently lacking. The existing academic literature and empirical data are also insufficient, as they fail to reflect the heterogeneous nature of the Black community, which deserves thorough investigation. Often, this community is presented as part of a homogeneous "ethnic minority" group.

The researcher's ontological position aligns with their values regarding the assumptions made about structure and agency, positing that social realities are both internal and external, shaped by the perceptions and subsequent actions of individuals and structures.

Nevertheless, there remains a wealth of intelligence and knowledge to be uncovered in order to explore multiple subjectivities (such as the Black Habitus, STO Field, IPIM Field of Power, and their capital relations) to better understand the current state of affairs and potential avenues for change (Saunders et al., 2019). Axiologically, the researcher also believes that, with the appropriate resources, skills, and tools, individuals can have the freedom to transform their lives and the world around them (Saunders et al., 2019).

As previously stated, analysing social space involved not only situating the object of investigation within its specific historical, local, national, and international contexts but also examining how prior knowledge about the object was generated, by whom, and whose interests were served by those knowledge-generation practices (Bourdieu, 1993). In light of this, adopting a multi-paradigmatic approach enabled the researcher to utilise specific knowledge and methods that facilitated the collection of credible, well-founded, reliable, and relevant data to advance the research (Kelemen & Rumens, 2008) while ensuring reflexivity throughout the research process.

### 4.6 Strategy

The ideal methodological choice for this research is qualitative, based on the selected research paradigms, namely Radical Change (which assumes a boycott of philosophy and the pursuit of research that contributes to practical solutions for making a difference—an adaptation of Kelemen and Rumens, 2008) and the adopted philosophies of Interpretivism and Pragmatism. A classic qualitative study is characterised by findings that are ‘grounded’ in data rather than approaching the field of inquiry with a pre-existing theoretical framework that may bias the interpretation of the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Denzin and Lincoln (2018) posit that qualitative research is often aligned with an interpretive philosophy, as the researcher must interpret the subjective and socially constructed meanings related to the phenomenon under investigation. This approach seeks to go beyond mere snapshots of events, individuals, or behaviours (Bonoma, 1985) by generating detailed data on multiple subjects (Patton, 1991). This traditional perspective also posits that quantitative inquiry focuses on numerical data (Easterby-Smith et al., 1991). Hyde (2000) argues that this dichotomy reflects the belief that quantitative inquiry employs a deductive reasoning process, while qualitative inquiry utilises an inductive approach. However, because traditional qualitative inquiry is rooted in inductive reasoning, the results often remain untested.

For this research, an abductive approach—combining deductive reasoning with inductive references—is employed and interpreted within the framework of the Theory of Practice. This approach aims to provide a more robust theoretical analysis of the identified research problem, build upon existing theory, and develop a richer perspective (Yin, 2018). This dual purpose requires repeated associations between theory and data, consistently testing their relationship (Saunders et al., 2019).

According to Saunders et al. (2019), qualitative researchers aim to study behaviour within its context, allowing for exploratory and explanatory studies to be conducted using methods best suited to achieve research objectives. In this research, the strategy employs narrative inquiry, engaging in a recursive and reflexive process that transitions from the field—beginning with the telling or living of stories—to field texts (data) and ultimately to interim and final research texts (Clandinin, 2010). The depth of the inquiry yields rich descriptions of contextual details and social relations, providing access to deeper realities associated with the participants' experiences (Gabriel et al., 2004).

### 4.7 Scope

In Chapter Three, the West Midlands region is selected as the geographical scope for conducting the research. According to Power to Change's report (2021) on [25]*Supporting Community Business in the West Midlands*, the region faces significant challenges, with 34.5% of local areas classified among the most deprived in England and unemployment rates exceeding the UK average. Despite these obstacles, the report highlights that the West Midlands has demonstrated resilience and potential. Furthermore, the region is experiencing a resurgence in its pre-pandemic status, driven by growth in the business and professional services sector and substantial levels of business tourism, all supported by a young workforce. Nevertheless, significant issues persist beneath this growth, including poverty, youth unemployment, low skills, skill levels, health, and inadequate performance.

Additionally, the [26]2021 census data indicates that the West Midlands is England and Wales's second most ethnically diverse region, with 23.0% of the region's population identifying as ethnically diverse.

[25] https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/5282/growing-the-social-economy-in-the-wmca-area-report-1.pdf
[26] https://www.plumplot.co.uk/West-Midlands-census-2021.html#:~:text=77.0%25%20people%20are%20white%2C%2013.3,21.5%25%20households%20have%20no%20car.

Using broader ethnic group categories, 13.3% of the population identifies as Asian, 4.5% as Black, 3.0% as mixed or of multiple ethnicities, and 2.1% as belonging to other ethnic groups. Among the Local Authorities in the West Midlands, Birmingham, Sandwell, Wolverhampton, and Coventry are the most ethnically diverse. Therefore, it was essential to understand the population of individuals residing in the West Midlands who are classified as having African heritage. This approach ensured that a sufficient number of individuals from various African and Caribbean backgrounds were included. The [27]2023 Business in the Community *Regional Insights on Race* reported that of the 4.5% who identified as Black, 2.5% are African, 1.5% are Caribbean, 1.4% are of White and Black Caribbean descent, 0.6% reported as Black other, and 0.3% are of White and Black African descent.

## 4.8 Research Participants

Initially, the researcher carefully considered the most appropriate terminology to describe the research participants, avoiding commonly used generic labels such as Black Minority, Black Minority Ethnic (BME), or, more recently, Global Majority. For clarity, the researcher ultimately chose the terms ‘Black’ and ‘Black-led,’ which many individuals of African heritage, whether of African or Caribbean descent, found resonant. As Craig (2012) notes, the reader should view this debate as ongoing.

Saunders et al. (2019) suggest that a researcher's success depends on gaining physical access to participants, building rapport, and demonstrating sensitivity to achieve cognitive access to their data. As an external researcher, negotiating access to participants for data collection required establishing trust to facilitate more effective participation in the research. The engagement of this study in the City of Culture 2021/2022 activities fostered connections and networks among individuals and organisations that served as research participants. Consequently, non-probability sampling became the researcher’s preferred method for sample selection. Obilor (2023) posits that this sampling approach primarily relies on the researcher’s ability to access the study sample. Observations during the City of Culture 2021/2022 activities revealed that Black people are often perceived as a homogeneous group, defined by the social construct of race and the convenience of using the term 'Black', thus ignoring existing socio-cultural diversity among both Africans and Caribbeans.

[27] https://www.bitc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/bitc-factsheet-race-raw-regional-insight-west-midlands-march23.pdf

These systemic and stereotypical perceptions often hinder a critical examination of the community, particularly regarding its ethnic diversity, collective history, and current circumstances. Therefore, when selecting the Black community as a case study, it is essential to provide context about who this community is, how its collective history has shaped its present attitudes, and the implications for community development.

### 4.8.1 Spatial History in Brief

In Chapter Two, Maton (2018) emphasises that habitus encompasses individuals' ways of acting, feeling, thinking, and being. It reflects how history is embedded within people, influencing their present circumstances and the choices they make that cause them to act in specific ways rather than others. Therefore, the present can only be fully understood by considering essential elements of the past.

In a speech delivered in New York shortly after his release from prison, Nelson Mandela emphasised that despite the geographical dispersal caused by slavery, Black people are all sons and daughters of Africa (Owusu-Kwarteng, 2017).

Looking back, Morgan (2021) explains that the starting point for examining the connections between the Atlantic slave trade and the British economy from 1660 to 1900 lies in the broader reasons for English colonial settlement in the seventeenth century and the emergence of slavery as the principal form of large-scale labour organisation in the Atlantic colonies. Thousands of people from Africa were captured and transported through the Atlantic trade to North America and the Caribbean.

Meanwhile, years later, colonialism underwent decades of experimentation in Africa, assuming a significant role in late [28]19th-century imperialism (1884-1885) through the Berlin Conference. Craven (2015) asserts that the overt purpose of the Berlin Conference was to manage the ongoing process of colonialism in Africa, also known as the “Scramble”, to avoid the outbreak of armed conflict between rival colonial powers. The conference facilitated the division of the African continent into 54 small, disparate countries.

[28] https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/acref/9780195337709.001.0001/acref-9780195337709-e-0467 (2010)

Craven further argues that the General Act of the conference outlined the conditions under which territory could be acquired along the coast of Africa; it internationalised two rivers (the Congo and the Niger); and it initiated a new campaign to abolish the overland trade in slaves.

During this period, tribes, cultures, languages, identities, and religions were fragmented, leading to divisions among people across the African continent. According to Michalopoulos et al. (2011), within-country analyses indicate that partitioned ethnicities are significantly more likely (an increased likelihood of 11% to 14%) to engage in civil wars. Following the end of colonialism and the subsequent independence of most African countries from colonial rule, these divisions persisted, further undermining the livelihoods of individuals within each nation. Consequently, in many African countries today, a significant portion of the population belongs to ethnic groups divided among different states (Michalopoulos et al., 2011).

The passage of the [29]British Nationality Act of 1948 granted subjects of the British Empire the right to live and work in the United Kingdom. As Commonwealth citizens were not subject to immigration control, many African and Caribbean individuals migrated to the UK for employment opportunities. According to [30]Migration Watch UK (2014), the Home Office estimates that the net intake from January 1955 to June 1962 was approximately 472,000.

Empirical evidence indicates that divisions and fractures among African and Caribbean groups persist (Adeniyi, 2016). Black people, whether of African or Caribbean descent, have consciously or unconsciously carried their historical experiences with them, leading to the creation and experience of distinct social realities. They have internalised the historical experiences as norms of social conduct that shape their way of life. In the United Kingdom, these tensions have occasionally been quite pronounced. For instance, Owusu-Kwarteng (2017) notes that in late 2001, the Channel 4 documentary, *Black Britain*, highlighte the notably high levels of conflict in areas with large African and African Caribbean communities. More recent issues, such as competition for limited socioeconomic resources, stereotyping, and perceived disparities in socioeconomic success, have further exacerbated these tensions.

[29] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo6/11-12/56/enacted (1948)

[30] https://www.migrationwatchuk.org/briefing-paper/48/a-summary-history-of-immigration-to-britain (2014)

From this, one can argue that, on one hand, Black people in the UK have reflected on this history, mourned its negative aspects, recognised its positives, and seized opportunities for new beginnings to transform their lives by developing social capital both within the community and through external integration policies. On the other hand, it can also be argued that this history has provided a basis for objective structures that consistently oppress and suppress the progress of members of the Black community, perpetuating a state of subservience, with doxa embedded in systems that propagate persistent inequality, thereby hindering the community's social mobility.

### 4.8.2 Choosing the Sample Frame and Technique

In Chapter Three, the three groups of research participants were identified based on their positions within the Social Economic Space.

a) *Habitus* includes Community Members (CMs) who do not lead or operate Community Businesses (CBs) but are current or potential participants, beneficiaries, staff members, or volunteers. This group constitutes the new incumbents in the community business field when coordinated. Additionally, they are members of the Black community who serve as leaders or founders of community groups.

b) The *field* is occupied by Social Trading Organisations (STOs) led by individuals from the Black community who have established and operated Community Businesses (CBs) in the socio-economic sector for an extended period. They possess the experience necessary to navigate and maintain their positions effectively in the *field*.

c) The *Field of Power* refers collectively to Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIM). This includes Local Authorities in the West Midlands area, funders, advocacy groups, and infrastructure support bodies operating within or outside the West Midlands. These institutions play a crucial role in determining how Community Members (CMs) and Social Trading Organisations (STOs) progress or regress within the Social Economic Space.

Under the non-probability sampling method, several technical options are available to refine the research study and determine the nature of the selected samples. These options include volunteer, convenience, purposive, quota, snowball, matched, and genealogy-based sampling (Alvi et al., 2016). This study focused on convenience and purposive sampling. Obilor (2023) proposed that when the target population is small and easily accessible, convenience sampling should be employed for sample selection.

In contrast, purposive sampling techniques should be used when the study focuses on specific and sensitive skills, behaviors, attributes, or personalities.

Alvi et al. (2016) assert that in purposive sampling, the sample is selected with a specific purpose in mind; that is, the criteria for including elements in the study are predefined. Therefore, caution was exercised in comparing the three participant groups to avoid conflating them into a single sampling technique, instead examining each as an individual entity. CM participants are individuals interested in community engagement activities. STO participants possess a range of experience in operating STOs, from startups to long-established organisations. Consequently, purposive sampling was an appropriate choice for both CM and STO participants. For Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIM), convenience sampling, also known as opportunity sampling, was employed. In this case, consideration was given to whether IPIMs would be willing to engage in the research, taking into account factors such as capacity, interest, discomfort with the subject matter being too targeted, and other considerations. It is important to note that only those participants within the IPIM group whose strategies aligned with the research objectives and who were convenient to approach were invited to participate in the study.

Noting their limitations, Obilor (2023) argues that while convenience and purposive sampling techniques are more accessible and cost-effective, they carry a significant risk of sampling bias. Consequently, as the research employs a qualitative method, its generalisability is related to theory (qualitative) rather than a specific population. In this context, it is crucial to include a diverse range of cases and individuals in the research, facilitating a deeper understanding of the complexity of the phenomenon being studied. This approach provides a stronger foundation for comprehending what constitutes effective practice and for the subsequent development of a model for socioeconomic development.

Regarding the selection of participants, Saunders et al. (2016) suggest that in research involving multiple groups, the total number of participants should ideally range between 15 and 60. The research participants were meticulously chosen to create a sample frame that aimed for equal representation of African and Caribbean groups for both CBs and STOs. Specific variables guided the selection of Community Members (CM) participants, including their heritage orientation, gender, age, and geographic location.

For the study on STOs, the variables examined included heritage orientation, gender, and geographic location. A total of 43 participants were recruited from diverse areas across the West Midlands. As shown in Table 3, various methods were employed to source the participants. The recruitment process was aligned with the research objectives and the corresponding Theory of Practice concepts, namely habitus, field, and field of power.

***Table 3: Participant Selection Process***

| Objective | ToP Concept | Participant Group | Participant Group Defined | Source | Invitations | Responses |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***1*** | ***Habitus*** | Community Members (CM) | - Current or potential STO participants, beneficiaries, staff members, or volunteers.<br>-New incumbents in the Community Business field.<br>-Leaders or founders of community groups. | Coventry City of Culture 2021/2022.<br><br>Researcher personal and professional networks<br><br>Recommendations from other participants<br><br>Visitation to various towns and cities across the West Midlands | 48 | 20 |
| ***2*** | ***Field and Habitus*** | Social Trading Organisations (STOs) | Community members who lead and/or operate STOs. They have experience forming and operating CBs and navigating the field to sustain their positions. | Coventry City of Culture 2021/2022.<br><br>Researcher personal and professional networks<br><br>Recommendations from other participants<br>Internet searches<br><br>Visitation to various towns and cities across the West Midlands | 25 | 15 |
| ***3*** | ***Habitus & Field of Power*** | Institutions with Power, Influence and Money (IPIM) | Grantmaker/Funder, Infrastructure organisations, and Local Authorities. They determine how the CMs and the STO enter, progress, or grow within the Community Business field. | Internet searches<br><br>Cold calling or direct emails.<br><br>Visitation to Local Authorities in various cities and towns | 13 | 8 |

***Source:*** *Author's own*

### *4.8.2.1 Community Members (CM)*

Table 4 presents data from the CM sample, which included 20 participants. Gender representation was balanced, with ten males and ten females participating. The ages of the research participants ranged from 31 to 65 years. This data collection aims to establish a benchmark for relevant findings that will help determine generational experiences and the evolution of the community. The number of respondents from the Caribbean community regarding heritage orientation was low, with only three participants (two males and one female)—the remaining 17 participants (eight males and nine females) identified as Africans. Additionally, understanding how CMs were locally rooted in their geographic place was essential to uphold the principle that community businesses should be geographically situated. Respondents were drawn from six key areas across the West Midlands and Warwickshire: Coventry, Birmingham, Sandwell, Wolverhampton, Leamington, and Warwick.

***Table 4: CM Demographic Data and Geographical Placing***

| Participant | Gender | Age Brackets | | | Heritage Orientation | Geographic Positioning |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 31-45 | 46-60 | 61+ | | |
| CM1 | Male | Yes | | | Caribbean | Coventry |
| CM2 | Male | | Yes | | African | Coventry |
| CM3 | Male | | Yes | | Caribbean | Leamington |
| CM4 | Female | | Yes | | African | Coventry |
| CM5 | Female | | Yes | | African | Coventry |
| CM6 | Female | Yes | | | African | Coventry |
| CM7 | Female | | Yes | | African | Coventry |
| CM8 | Male | Yes | | | African | Coventry |
| CM9 | Male | | Yes | | African | Coventry |
| CM10 | Male | Yes | | | African | Sandwell |
| CM11 | Female | Yes | | | African | Coventry |
| CM12 | Female | Yes | | | African | Coventry |
| CM13 | Male | Yes | | | African | Coventry |
| CM14 | Female | | Yes | | African | Coventry |
| CM15 | Male | | Yes | | African | Wolverhampton |
| CM16 | Male | | | Yes | African | Wolverhampton |
| CM17 | Female | | | Yes | Caribbean | Birmingham |
| CM18 | Male | | Yes | | African | Birmingham |
| CM19 | Female | | Yes | | African | Warwick |
| CM20 | Female | | Yes | | African | Coventry |

***Source:*** *Author's own*

### *4.8.2.2 Social Trading Organisations (STOs)*

Like CMs, the 15 STOs were selected from a pool of diverse organisational leaders. Table 5 indicates that among the 15 leaders, their heritage orientations included African (5), Caribbean (8), and other backgrounds (2).

Of the two organisations labelled, one was founded by individuals from the Black community with Caribbean backgrounds; however, its current leader is of Caucasian descent. The other organisation identifies as supporting Black clients, but its founder and leader is of Asian descent. In terms of gender representation, a balanced distribution was achieved, with eight females and seven males. As shown in Table 5, the geographic distribution of the organisations spans eight locations: Coventry, Birmingham, Sandwell, Wolverhampton, Warwickshire, Telford and Wrekin, Walsall, and West Bromwich.

***Table 5: STO Geographic Position and STO Leaders' Demographic Data***

| *Participant* | *Heritage Orientation* | *Gender* | *Geographic Positioning* |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***STO 1*** | African | Female | Coventry |
| ***STO 2*** | African | Male | Birmingham |
| ***STO 3*** | African | Male | Birmingham |
| ***STO 4*** | African | Male | Sandwell |
| ***STO 5*** | Other | Male | Warwickshire |
| ***STO 6*** | Caribbean | Female | Wolverhampton |
| ***STO 7*** | Caribbean | Female | Coventry |
| ***STO 8*** | Caribbean | Female | Telford and Wrekin |
| ***STO 9*** | African | Male | Birmingham |
| ***STO 10*** | Caribbean | Male | Birmingham |
| ***STO 11*** | Caribbean | Female | Walsall |
| ***STO 12*** | Caribbean | Female | Birmingham |
| ***STO 13*** | Other | Female | West Bromwich |
| ***STO 14*** | Caribbean | Female | West Bromwich |
| ***STO 15*** | Caribbean | Male | Birmingham |

***Source:*** *Author's Own*

| *Demography 1* | *African No =* | *Caribbean No =* |
|---|---|---|
| ***Heritage Orientation*** | *5* | *8* |

| *Demography 2* | *Female No =* | *Male No =* |
|---|---|---|
| ***Gender*** | *8* | *7* |

| *Demography 3* | *Coventry No =* | *Birmingham No =* | *Sandwell No =* | *Warwickshire No =* | *Wolverhampton No =* | *Telford & Wrekin No =* | *Walsall No =* | *West Bromwich No =* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Geographic Positioning*** | *2* | *6* | *1* | *1* | *1* | *1* | *1* | *2* |

***Source:*** *Author's Own*

#### *4.8.2.3 Institutions with Power, Influence and Money (IPIM)*

As anticipated, this group proved to be the most challenging to engage for several reasons: time constraints, limited capacity, and a lack of interest in the subject matter. According to Table 6, eight IPIMs were selected and interviewed. Their mandated roles spanned various sectoral and support departments, including Local Authorities (3), Grantmakers/Funders (2), Advocacy and Infrastructure Support (3), and Research/Think Tanks (2).

***Table 6: – IPIM Type, Department, Location and Coverage***

| Participant Type | Department | Location | Coverage |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Local Authority*** | Economic Development | Coventry | Local |
| ***Local Authority*** | Business, Enterprise, and Innovation | Birmingham | Local |
| ***Local Authority*** | Regeneration & Growth | Sandwell | Local |
| ***Think Tank, Research*** | Director | London | National |
| ***Advocacy And Infrastructure Support*** | Director | London | Regional |
| ***Advocacy And Infrastructure Support*** | Strategic Partnerships | National | National |
| ***Grantmaker/Funder*** | Policy | National | National |
| ***Funder, Research, Advocacy, and Infrastructure Support*** | EEDI | National | National |

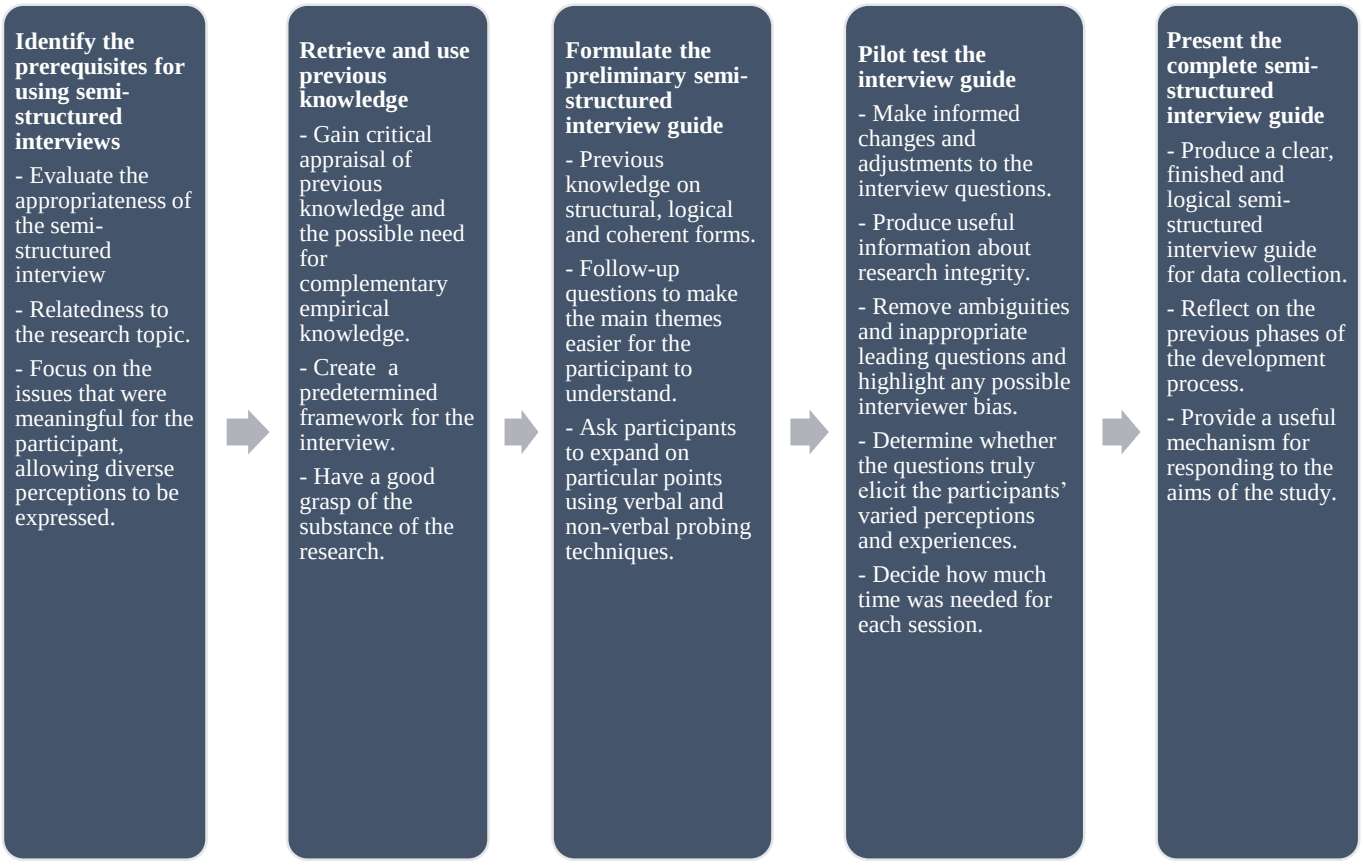
***Source:*** *Author's Own*

### 4.9 Data Collection

The Bourdieusian Community Business Practice Framework guided the methodological approach throughout the data collection and analysis. Qualitative research often gathers data through interviews and questionnaires (Dörnyei, 2007). Compared to questionnaires, interviews are more effective in eliciting narrative data, enabling researchers to explore individuals' perspectives in greater depth (Kvale, 1996; 2003). Interviews are particularly valuable for examining the construction and negotiation of meanings within a natural setting (Cohen et al., 2007). Therefore, when selecting the appropriate type of interview—standardised (structured) or non-standardized (unstructured)—Saunders et al. (2019) recommend considering the required level of standardisation, the number of participants, and the modes of interview. Consequently, a structured interview was not a viable option in this case. In this type of interview, questions must be read from a predetermined list documented on a standardised schedule.

The questions and processes remain consistent, necessitating meticulous attention to ensure that all procedures are identical. Furthermore, this approach primarily concerns quantifiable data (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 437). In contrast, semi-structured interviews are non-standardised, beginning with a predetermined list of themes and essential questions related to those themes to guide the conduct of each interview (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 437). This format is the most commonly employed interview technique in qualitative research (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Although semi-structured interviews are often perceived as a straightforward data collection method (Wengraf, 2001), Kallio et al. (2016) argue that despite the popularity of this method, which has demonstrated versatility and flexibility, there is a notable lack of uniformity. Kallio et al. (2016) advise researchers to consider several factors when preparing an interview guide and to be cautious about collecting ethically questionable data that may be unnecessary for the research (Gibbs et al., 2007). Consequently, this research adopted Kallio et al.'s (2016) systematic methodological framework for qualitative semi-structured interviews, focusing on five key phases to guide the data collection process and enhance the trustworthiness of qualitative research as presented in Figure 9.

***Figure 9: The five phases of developing a semi-structured interview guide***
*Source: Adopted from Kallio et al, 2016 - Developing a framework for a qualitative semi-structured interview guide*



Chase (2021) asserts that using semi-structured interviews involves the creation of predetermined guided questions that remain flexible and can be adjusted based on each participant's responses. This interview format allows for integrating events, actions, and consequences into a cohesive narrative (Chase, 2021). It aligns well with the narrative inquiry strategy and the interpretive philosophical assumptions that underpin it. Saunders et al. (2019) noted that semi-structured interviews provide a more adaptable approach to addressing predetermined themes, depending on the participants' responses. Consequently, employing the semi-structured interview fosters reciprocity between the interviewer and the participant (Galletta, 2012). The research problems, aims, and objectives were formulated from this process.

The concepts of the Theory of Practice—habitus, field, and capital—are integrated with the principles of Community Business (CB) to create a comprehensive conceptual framework for this research. The compatibility of this framework with the research objectives is evaluated as the theory is tested using both existing and newly revised data. This approach enables simultaneous theoretical and empirical contributions (Saunders et al., 2019). Thus, the framework has the potential to be enhanced by incorporating multiple relational variables during data analysis, thereby effectively addressing the research problems, aims, and objectives, and providing an opportunity to develop future models for socioeconomic development.

Table 7 presents a series of questions derived from predetermined themes while also allowing for the improvisation of follow-up questions based on participants' responses (Hardon et al., 2004). The exploratory nature of the research enabled the interview themes and questions to evolve in response to insights gained from data analysis. As a result, the theoretically deduced themes remained consistent throughout the interviews, integrating both established theories and emerging themes. It is important to note that the list of predetermined questions is organised according to participant groups, their corresponding objectives, and thematic variables. Only objectives one and two are associated with a community business variable. Objective three, however, focuses on the “Structured field of power” that is not guided by a community business principle, as these entities are not community businesses themselves. Nevertheless, their power, money, and influence empower community members and community businesses to operate on equal footing within the field.

***Table 7: List of pre-determined questions with theoretical variable and CB principle***

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ***Objective One*** | Assess the conditions conducive to establishing community businesses within the Black community. | |
| ***Participant Group*** | CM | |
| ***Theoretical Concept*** | Habitus and Capital | |
| **Interview Questions** | **Predetermined themes** | **Community Business Principle** |
| *What is your ethnic origin? African/Caribbean* | Past and Present Circumstances | Locally rooted |
| *How long have you lived in your local area?* | | |
| *What is your employment status?* | | |
| *Tell me about your family, contacts, relationships, and how you interact with them.* | | |
| *Tell me about the social groups you belong to, i.e. cultural or religious groups /associations.* | | |
| *Are you involved in any community activities? What do you do, and how does that benefit you?* | Social and Personal Experiences | Accountable to the community |
| *How connected are you in the Black community, specifically with those not from your country of origin?* | | |
| *How do you interact with people from the Black community?* | | |
| *How would you describe the relationships within and between Black people?* | | |
| *What are the internal and external challenges that will prevent collective action?* | Future Practice | |
| *How can Community Businesses resolve these challenges?* | | |
| *What positive opportunities exist for collective action?* | | |

***Source**: Author's Own*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ***Objective Two*** | Investigate whether Black-led Social Trading Organisations (STOs) qualify as CBs and how they form, operate, and sustain successful CBs. | |
| ***Participant Group*** | CB | |
| ***Theoretical Concept*** | Field/Habitus/Capital/Doxa | |
| **Interview Questions** | **Predetermined themes** | **Community Business Principle** |
| *Name of your organisation*<br>*What is your organisation's legal structure?*<br>*When was the organisation established?*<br>*What does your organisation do?*<br>*Who would you say your typical beneficiaries are?*<br><br>*Would you say your organisation is:*<br>▪ *Locally rooted in a particular geographical place and respond to its needs.*<br>▪ *Trade to benefit the local community, i.e. generating income from activities.*<br>▪ *Accountable to the local community.*<br>▪ *Having broad community benefit and impact.*<br><br>*Is the organisation a member of an infrastructure body or institution?* | A Structured CB Field | Locally rooted<br>Accountable to the community<br>Trade for Profit<br>Having a Broad Impact |
| *Describe the ease or challenge you experienced when setting up the organisation regarding the training, mentoring, guidance, or general support you received to set up and the information/knowledge you gained.*<br><br>*Did the organisation benefit from external support?*<br><br>*Describe the ease or challenge experienced in running the organisation in terms of development support, leadership, fundraising/funding, resilience, and ongoing general support. Does the organisation benefit from external support?*<br><br>*Please explain your opinion of equal access to opportunities compared with non-, Black-led organisations.*<br><br>*What barriers/challenges/difficulties do Black-led organisations face/experience in accessing funding, resources, and development support?* | Struggle for Transformation | Accountable to the community<br>Trade for Profit |
| *How connected is the organisation with the Black community?*<br><br>*Does your organisation partner with other Black-led organisations? If you do, how?*<br><br>*What is the nature of the relationships/partnerships, and how are they maintained?*<br><br>*Is there any interest in/for collective social action in community businesses amongst Black-led organisations? Please explain….*<br><br>*Are there barriers to collective working amongst Black-led organisations/the community? Please explain….* | Relationships of Exchange: *Subjective Structures of Relations*<br>Doxa | Accountable to the local community<br>Broad Impact |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Describe how your organisation work with other organisations that are not Black led.*<br><br>*What is the nature of the relationships, and how are they maintained?*<br><br>*Are there barriers to working with these organisations? Please explain…*<br><br>*Is the organisation a member of an infrastructure body or institution?*<br><br>*How does your organisation work with statutory or institutions with influence/power? This may include policymakers, funders, the justice system, etc…*<br><br>*What opportunities do they present to benefit your organisation?*<br><br>*How do you maintain these relationships?*<br><br>*What barriers exist to creating or forming relationships/connections with statutory organisations or institutions with influence and/or power?* | Relationships of Exchange: *Objective Structures of Relations*<br>Doxa | Broad Impact |
| *Are you the founder?*<br><br>*Tell me about your role and how long you have worked in it.*<br><br>*How long have you worked in the sector?*<br><br>*What expertise and skills do you bring to your work?*<br><br>*Describe any awards/credentials/ recognition you have received/achieved.*<br><br>*How important are these qualifications, skills, and credentials to delivering your work?*<br><br>*Please state any academic or professional qualification you have achieved.* | Relative Power: *Capital*<br>Doxa | N/A |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ***Objective Three*** | *Explore how funders, infrastructure support organisations and policymakers relate to CBs and their considerations as a viable option in locally led socioeconomic regeneration.* | |
| ***Participant Group*** | IPIM | |
| ***Theoretical Concept*** | Field of Power/Field/Capital/Doxa | |
| **Interview *Questions*** | ***Predetermined themes*** | ***Community Business Principle*** |
| ***All IPIMs***<br>*What type of organisation do you represent?* | Field of Power | N/A |
| *How does your organisation support community businesses in general?* | Relationships of Exchange: *Objective Structures of Relations*.<br>Doxa | |
| *How does the organisation actively engage/support minority-led community businesses/groups?*<br>*What percentage of your clients/groups are Black-led?* | | |
| ***LA Questions***<br>*Does the local authority have an economic regeneration agenda/strategic plan/policy outlining the regeneration plans? What are the strategies for economic regeneration?*<br>*To what extent does the plan include social inequalities and their mitigation?*<br>*How do you consult with groups facing social inequalities within your economic regeneration agenda and its implementation?*<br>*Is there scope to explore or create opportunities (if none exist), such as community businesses within deprived neighbourhoods, to resolve socioeconomic inequalities or challenges? Please explain…* | Relative and Objective Power: *Capital*<br>Doxa | |
| ***All IPIMs***<br>*Is there a Policy/Strategy for inclusion?*<br>*How is this strategy implemented?*<br>*How open is the organisation to working with minority-led organisations to provide development/infrastructure support that adds value to them and your organisation?*<br>*When is the policy due for review?*<br>*Would you be interested in a follow-up conversation to take this forward?* | | |

### 4.9.1 Pilot testing of the interview guide

According to Barriball and While (1994), conducting a field pilot in which the preliminary interview guide is tested with potential study participants is the most common method for developing a semi-structured interview process. Kallio et al. (2016) suggest that a pilot test confirms the coverage and relevance of the content in the formulated preliminary guide and identifies any potential need to reformulate questions and assess their implementation. Prior to the interviewing process, a pilot test was conducted with three participants: two community members and one community leader. The purpose of the pilot test was to determine:

a) The level of understanding of the research subject or focus.
b) If the interview process and questions are clear and comprehensible.
c) How any existing language barriers could be addressed.
d) If online video technology could effectively and efficiently collect and transcribe data.

Two face-to-face interviews and one online video interview revealed that:

a) Some questions included jargon specific to the social economy sector, which may be unfamiliar to individuals outside this field. These terms were either removed or revised into more accessible language everyone could understand. However, a decision was made to select participants who had experience in community work and demonstrated a clear understanding of community settings.
b) Community business is not a widely recognised model; therefore, providing a definition at the beginning of the interview would help participants better understand the topic before the questions are posed.
c) Although the participant information guidance document outlining the conditions for participating in the interview was sent several days prior to the pilot test, two participants either had not read it or had begun reading it but required assistance in understanding its content. Consequently, a simplified and more comprehensible version was necessary. To address this issue, a brief explanation was provided before each interview to clarify the information sheet and the ethical considerations involved in participating in the research. This approach enabled participants to provide informed consent for their involvement in the study.

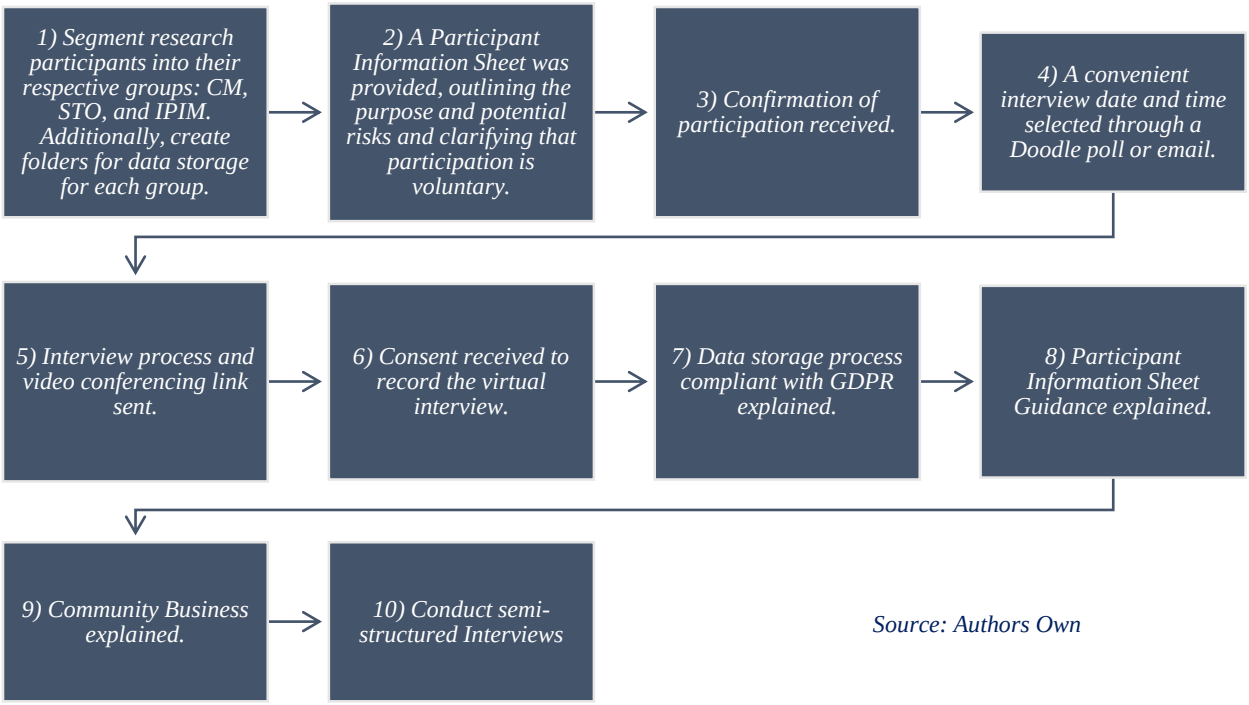
d) The STO participant expressed concern regarding capacity, suggesting a shorter duration for face-to-face interviews due to personal and organisational constraints. Participants were offered the choice between face-to-face and online interviews to address this issue. Additionally, some questions were revised or combined to reduce the overall length of the interview while also minimising the number of follow-up questions.
e) During face-to-face meetings, distractions such as telephone calls, visitors, family interruptions, or childcare issues prolonged the interviewing process, leading to confusion and inconsistencies in the responses received. As a result, flexible options for daytime and evening interviews, as well as the availability of online interviews, ensured participation from anywhere at times that accommodated both the participants and the researcher's schedules.
f) Data saturation may have been reached earlier in the data collection process. According to Saunders et al. (2020), the researcher should use discretion in determining when to conclude the interviews, particularly when no new concepts or ideas arise. Despite the early occurrence of data saturation, the researcher chose to continue the interviews, as nuanced responses to follow-up questions yielded valuable insights that might have otherwise been overlooked.

### 4.9.2 Presenting the complete semi-structured interview guide

The field testing simulated an actual interview situation and provided crucial insights into implementing the interview process (Kallio, 2016). Testing the preliminary guide with potential participants facilitated informed modifications to the interview questions, enhancing their practicality and improving the quality of data collection (Chenail, 2011). This process allowed participants to co-create the research design and data collection methodology. Furthermore, it ensured the accuracy and relevance of the interview questions. Additionally, it elicited diverse perceptions from participants, guided the time allocated for interviewing each participant group, and informed the decision to utilise a video or online conferencing platform for the interviews, with the participants' consent. This approach was particularly important, as it was anticipated that many research participants would face similar barriers.

Any ambiguities and inappropriate leading questions that highlighted interviewer bias were eliminated to generate valuable insights regarding research integrity and to enhance the pre-assessment of research ethics, as well as the researcher's capacity to conduct data collection (Chenail, 2011). In light of these constraints, a clear and logical semi-structured interview guide for data collection was developed, as illustrated in Figure 10.

***Figure 10: The Interview / Data Collection Process***




*Source: Authors Own*

Several successful and positive encounters related to the data collection process are noteworthy. Firstly, most individuals in the CM and STO groups were willing to participate in the research, although capacity constraints led to some withdrawals. Secondly, all participant groups demonstrated a strong interest in community businesses. However, many were unaware of this type of social economy development and often confused it with general social enterprises. Thirdly, rapport with participants was easily established due to their genuine interest in the research. Many expressed a desire to be involved in the research outcomes and indicated a willingness to engage in ongoing discussions beyond the scope of the study.

## 4.10 Data Analysis

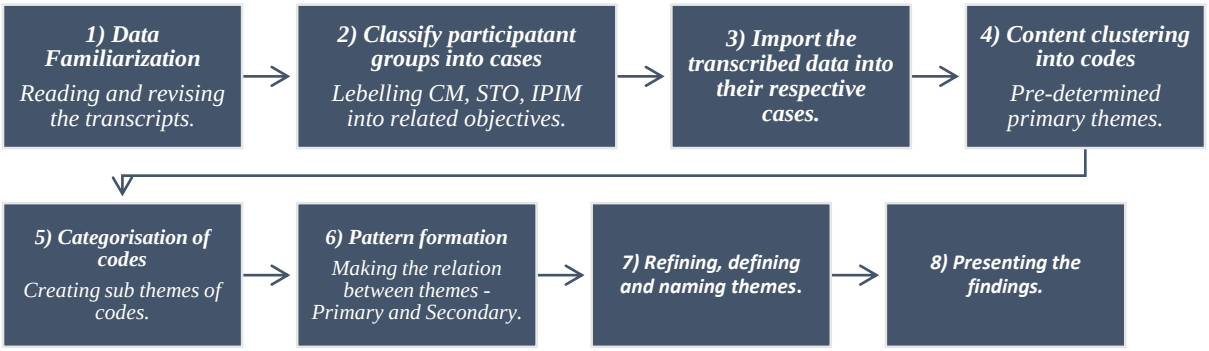
Like data collection, data analysis also aligns with the conceptual framework. Graun (2015) asserts that the phenomena under investigation must first be described accurately. The researcher must be able to interpret, explain, and classify the data in accordance with the conceptual framework, establishing connections between the data and the underlying concepts. Similarly, Flick (2013) argues that qualitative data analysis should aim to describe a phenomenon with varying degrees of detail and to compare multiple cases based on their commonalities and differences. This process involves seeking relationships among the various themes identified and relating behaviours or ideas to the biographical characteristics of respondents, such as age and gender. Ultimately, a theory regarding the phenomenon under investigation will be developed from the analysis of empirical material. In doing so, implications for policy or practice may be drawn from the data or from interpretations of puzzling findings in previous studies.

This systematic process required an approach driven by deductive data analysis for this research. In this context, a thematic approach to data analysis was employed. Terry et al. (2017) assert that thematic analysis, as a ‘named and claimed’ method, has gained significant popularity and has become a recognised and reputable analysis technique within the qualitative research canon. However, Braun and Clarke (2021) argue that thematic analysis is not a singular approach but rather a collection of sometimes conflicting methodologies, differing in both procedure and underlying philosophy, yet sharing a common interest in identifying patterns within data. This indicates that thematic analysis is utilised as a flexible and reflexive process rather than a fully established methodology guided by various theoretical frameworks (Braun and Clarke, 2021). Thus, thematic analysis offers theoretical flexibility and can be applied pragmatically through diverse theoretical, epistemological, and ontological approaches (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Within this framework of theoretical freedom, thematic analysis serves as a practical and adaptable data analysis tool that can yield an insightful, rich, comprehensive, and nuanced account of the data (Boyatzis, 1998).

Consequently, following data collection, the analysis employed a thematic approach that involved preparing and organising the collected data through transcription. This process included reviewing and exploring the data to comprehend its content (evaluating the data).

Subsequently, the data was coded to identify consistencies and connections (coding), which were then categorised into themes (categorization). Finally, the themes were cohesively presented in the research findings, as illustrated in Figure 11.

***Figure 11: NVivo Data Analysis Process***




*Source: Author's Own*

Atkinson and Heritage (1984) emphasised that the production and use of transcripts are integral to qualitative research and should not be regarded merely as a technical detail that precedes analysis. Transcription transforms digitally recorded interview data into written transcripts (Widodo, 2014). Methodologically speaking, transcription represents original spoken text (recorded verbal data) in written form and facilitates the analysis and interpretation of these data (Bird, 2005). As such, transcription guidelines should assist researchers in systematically organising and analysing textual data, regardless of the analytical techniques and tools employed (McLellan et al., 2003). These guidelines should not impose constraints on the data collected but rather support an iterative process. Furthermore, they should help ensure a high level of certainty that transcripts are generated systematically and consistently. According to McLellan et al. (2003), in both small- and large-scale qualitative research scenarios, a transcription protocol is beneficial for minimising the chances that a researcher will have incompatible transcript "products" to work with and for reducing the likelihood of data analysis being compromised or delayed.

Kvale (1996) argues that when a qualitative data set comprises text documents that are presented and organized in varying formats, it becomes challenging to conduct cross-comparisons within the transcripts, leading to data overload.

As Sadler (1981) stated:
*"An informational bottleneck which places severe limitations on the amount of data able to be received, processed, and remembered"* (ibid:27).

Following this guideline, the research developed a methodological transcription protocol to ensure that the transcription captures the general ideas of the explanation, maintains accuracy, provides depth of data, and conveys the actual meaning before the data is coded (Widodo, 2014). A set of guidelines was established to ensure the reliability and credibility of the data.

a) Layout and format choices, such as assigning a pseudonym and number to identify each participant, were implemented. This included documenting the data collection date, interview method, transcription date, and analysis dates. This process enabled the researcher to retrieve the data easily, facilitating well-organized data management.
b) The video-recorded interview was subsequently converted into an audio format.
c) The audio is uploaded to Coventry University's secure Microsoft 365 Word online transcription feature.
d) The audio file is transcribed into text, presenting a line-by-line interaction between participants and the researcher. According to Widodo (2014), transcribed data should be presented to assist researchers in analysing information more effectively and re-examining it for the identification of emerging themes. Supporting this view, McLellan et al. (2003) argue that all transcripts should be prepared in a standardised manner, which facilitates the creation of consistently prepared and comparable textual records.
e) Whereas data cleaning and recoding are conducted in a quantitative database prior to analysis, qualitative data processes occur simultaneously (McLellan et al., 2003).

Consequently, the video and audio files are securely stored for reference and anonymised using participants' pseudonyms as a continuous process of transcription and data interpretation unfolds (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

### 4.10.1 Limitations

Mclellan et al. (2003) assert that converting speech into written words presents significant challenges. Speech elisions—defined as the omission of sounds between two words, typically involving a vowel at the end of one word and the beginning of the next—incomplete sentences, overlapping speech, ambiguous endings, poor audio quality, and background noise are just a few of the obstacles that transcribers face. Therefore, researchers must carefully determine where and when to apply punctuation to avoid altering the intent or emphasis of an interviewee's response or comment. These limitations were evident in the data transcription process. For instance, the researcher noted that the transcribed data from participants with language barriers was often incoherent. A simultaneous review of the data alongside video recordings facilitated a better understanding of the material, which was essential for finalising the analysis. However, minor errors, such as spelling, punctuation, and grammatical omissions, were not fully cleared.

### 4.10.2 Coding and Categorisation

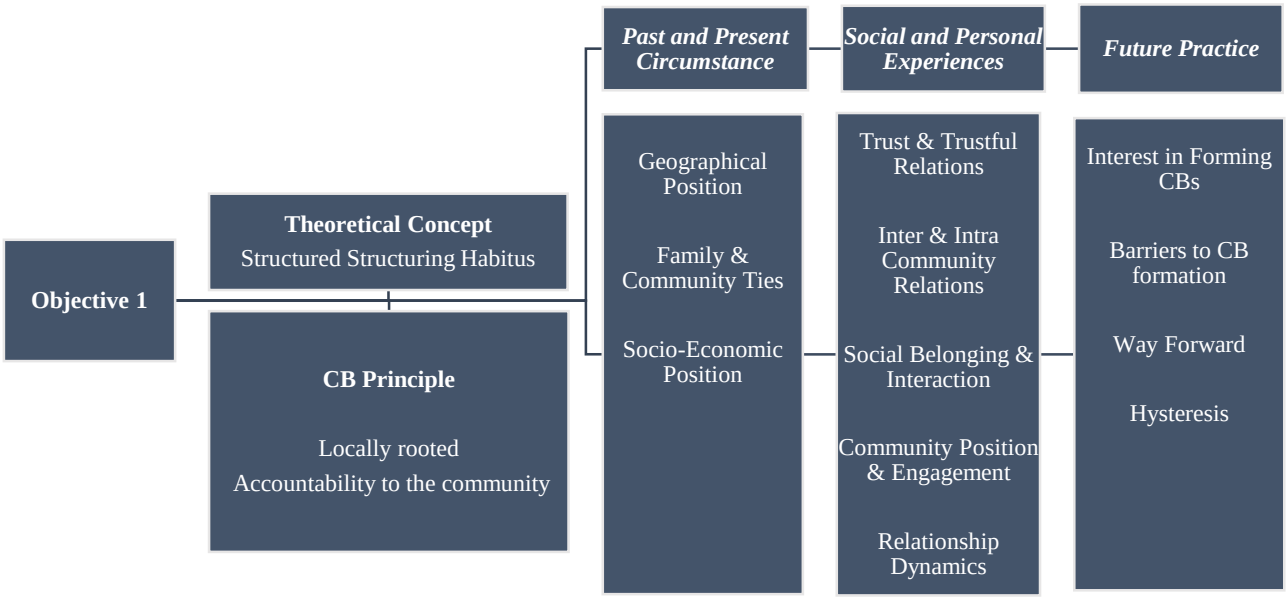
Saldana (2013) defined data coding as an intermediate process between data collection and analysis. The purpose of coding is to identify the 'evidence' for themes; however, the distinction between codes and themes is often unclear (Boyatzis, 1998). Therefore, data coding is not merely a process of data analysis and explanation; it also enables the researcher to establish a relationship between the data and its relevance to the research (Richards & Morse, 2007). The coding process was conducted using NVivo software (version 14) to facilitate this analysis. NVivo aids in analysing extensive texts used in qualitative research, allowing for deeper analysis and providing more advanced tools for visualising data (Patton, 2002). The eleven predefined themes derived from the Theory of Practice concepts and their corresponding Community Business (CB) principles were initially outlined. It is important to note that intersecting themes, such as Doxa and hysteresis, are counted only once. Through an abductive approach, both theoretical and empirical knowledge were utilised to explore the research problem. This process transitioned from theory to the identification of sub-themes and subsequently to evidence gathering. Themes and patterns related to the problem were identified and elucidated. A total of thirty-eight sub-themes were derived from similar responses, quotes, or open nodes, thereby providing opportunities for enhancing the Theory of Practice framework to incorporate multiple relational variables.

In certain instances, themes were adjusted to align with the progression of the questioning, enabling participants' voices and interpretations to surface throughout the process and revealing new themes. This approach facilitated a better understanding of the research problem, aims, and objectives while also providing an opportunity to develop future models. The process achieved a high level of standardisation for the transcripts across the collected data to meet each research objective and address the research question. Figures 12, 13, and 14 present a diagrammatic representation for each objective.

### *4.10.2.1 The Coding Process*

In Figure 12, Objective One pertains to the Structured Structuring Habitus. This involves examining the past and present circumstances, social and personal experiences, and potential future opportunities for practice of Community Members (CMs). Specifically, it reviews their geographical commitment to place, which includes their local rootedness through geographic location, family and community ties, as well as their social and economic status. Additionally, it evaluates their accountability to the community by exploring the extent of social capital necessary for establishing Community Businesses (CBs) based on their social and personal experiences. Finally, it considers the determination of future practices through potential opportunities to form CBs.

***Figure 12: Coding Process for Objective One***




*Source: Author's own*

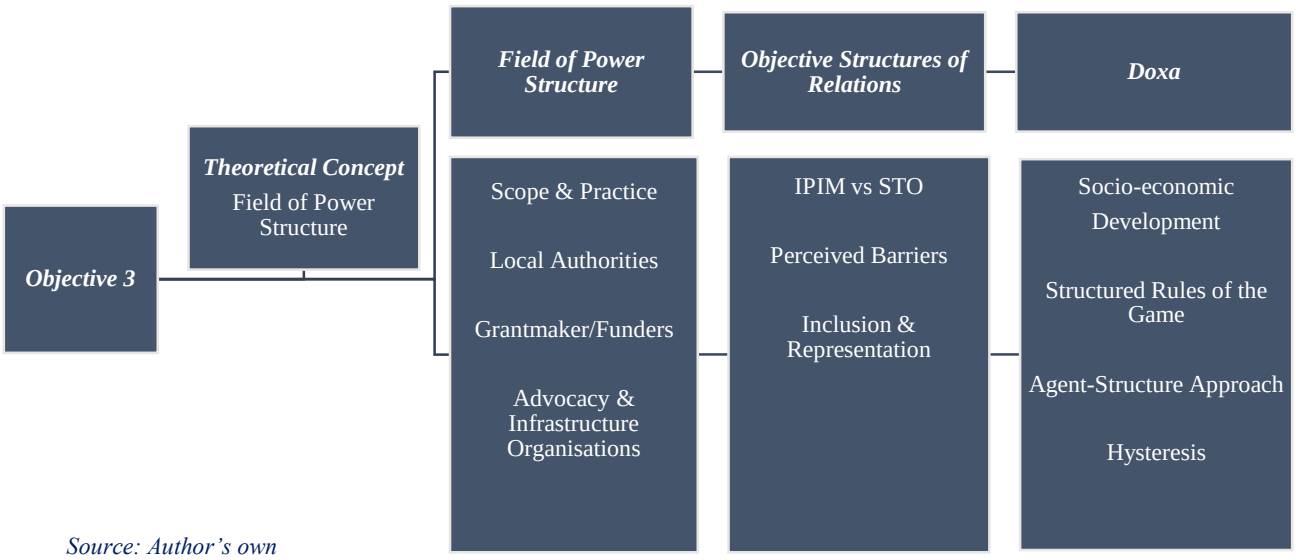
In Figure 13, Objective Two investigates the Structuring of the Structured Field by examining the Community Business (CB) field and the Social Trading Organisations (STOs) that operate within it. Similar to Objective One, the geographical commitment of STOs to their local communities is assessed. The accountability of STOs to their communities is explored to determine the extent of social capital necessary for the operation and sustainability of Community Businesses (CBs). This analysis reveals their struggles for transformation in forming, operating, and sustaining their organisations. Here, the structures of relationships that STOs establish with community members, as well as their external relations with Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIMs), are evaluated to understand their broader impact on stakeholder groups. Furthermore, an examination is conducted to understand how STOs trade for profit (economic capital) and how they cultivate and leverage other forms of capital (cultural and symbolic capital) for the advancement of their communities. These factors are benchmarked against their challenges to determine the rules (Doxa) that govern them and the agency they possess to operate and sustain their organisations within the field.

***Figure 13: Coding Process for Objective Two***


*Source: Author's own*

Figure 14 pertains to Objective Three, which investigates the Field of Power Structure. It explores the scope and practices within Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIM) structures. Similar to Objective Two, this objective examines the relational structures between the IPIM and the STOs to understand the strategies employed by the IPIM for inclusion, as well as the extent of power and the rules (Doxa) they exert over Community Members (CMs) and Social Trading Organisations (STOs). Finally, it investigates the degree to which policymakers and relevant support organisations consider the role of Community Businesses (CBs) in locally led socioeconomic regeneration.

***Figure 14: Coding Process for Objective Three***




*Source: Author's own*

## 4.11 Ethical Considerations/Data Collection and Storage

The research adhered to Coventry University's Research Data Management Policy for the collection, anonymisation, storage, retention, and deletion of participant data. The university's data security management and data protection policy stipulates that data management plans must ensure research data is accessible and reusable when appropriate and under suitable safeguards. When collecting sensitive or special category data, there was a risk of confusion during data collection, transcription, and analysis involving three participant groups. In accordance with the CU Policy guidelines, a data management plan was developed that explicitly addressed data capture, management, integrity, confidentiality, retention, sharing, and publication, and this plan was strictly followed. Consequently, the sourcing, selection, and interviewing of participants were conducted in an organised manner.

Invitations to participate were staggered and not sent to all groups simultaneously. CMs were approached first, followed by STOs, and then IPIMs. Once confirmation of participation was received, a Doodle poll with various time slots was created, allowing participants to select convenient dates and times. Participants were clearly informed that their involvement was voluntary, and they had the right to refuse, change their minds, or withdraw from participation at any point, whether at the beginning or later stages. The personal data collected included participants' first names, gender, age, heritage orientation, telephone numbers, and email addresses. All personal data is anonymised and shared only with supervisors; it is not disclosed to third parties or included in final publications.

According to the policy, data and records will be retained if they are deemed valuable to the researcher and the broader research community. To ensure data confidentiality, the researcher managed the personal data collected and maintained its confidentiality. The study did not utilise any confidential information, proprietary knowledge, or trade secrets for purposes other than the research project. However, with the intention of extending the research beyond its initial scope, some participants who have consented to be included in further studies may be contacted after the research concludes. In such cases, new consent will be obtained from the participants.

Regarding data storage, clear and accurate records of the research procedures were maintained. All collected data are securely stored on the researcher's university SharePoint account and can be accessed from the researcher's encrypted laptop and desktop computers, which are used exclusively for the project. Interview responses are stored in text files and spreadsheets. The published research results will be utilised to further the project beyond its research lifecycle. This will include publications, reports, presentations, web pages, and other research outputs, including those shared with organisations that influence policy. Data and records will be retained if they are deemed valuable to the project and the broader research community. A minimum retention period of three years will be observed for research data and records following publication or public release. However, retention may extend beyond this period if there is a need to continue research after the initial release. Participants will be informed in advance if their anonymised data will be utilised in publications, reports, presentations, web pages, and other research outputs, provided that appropriate consent has been obtained.

After the research, the anonymised data will be archived. Participants will be informed accordingly if there is a need to share this data with others for legitimate research purposes. Both hardcopy and electronic records will be destroyed in compliance with all legal, ethical, and collaborative requirements, with a particular emphasis on confidentiality and security. A detailed schedule will be established to ensure that this process is conducted appropriately. The schedule will specify a planned disposal date, the method of destruction, and the individuals responsible for carrying out the procedure.

### 4.12 Researcher Reflections and Reflexivity

According to Alvesson and Skoldberg (2017), researchers should develop reflexivity to become aware of and actively shape the relationship between their philosophical positions and their research methodologies. From the outset, I articulated my motivations for undertaking this study, which stems from both professional and personal experiences. Throughout my seventeen-year career as a business and social enterprise consultant and community development strategist, I have consistently sought to collaborate with others to address socioeconomic deprivation among underserved groups. Through practical development efforts, I observed that, unlike other communities, meaningful and sustainable partnerships could not be established to mobilise the Black community—both Africans and Caribbeans—in Coventry to collectively seek practical solutions to their socioeconomic challenges. Therefore, my journey aims to uncover the reasons for this phenomenon from an entrepreneurial perspective. Bourdieu (1994) asserts that the external perspective of scholarly inquiry, characterised by a detachment from the actions being studied, poses a risk of transforming logical, analytical terms into reality—concepts becoming reified phenomena. Consequently, I developed a threefold continuous process of reflexivity in my role: first, as a researcher (student); second, as a community development strategist (professional); and third, as a member of the Black community (individual).

The individual professional student positions provided me with an overarching view of the phenomenon under investigation and placed me at the centre of the debate regarding whether the research should be characterised as ethnographic from a partial/subjective perspective or an unbiased/objective viewpoint.

As previously mentioned, my shared ethnic background and lived experiences of the internal constraints and external structures or institutions that can sometimes impede growth and advancement made it impossible for me to detach myself from the reality of the study. Consequently, I chose to adopt a biased objective perspective, which allowed me to engage in the research process while remaining cognisant of any prior experiences, assumptions, and beliefs that could influence the process (Hammersley, 2006). These evaluations were suspended to allow for the credibility of the findings and to deepen the understanding of the case study. According to Hammersley (2006), this approach involves resisting the temptation to immediately categorise experiences into 'commonsense' frameworks; instead, it requires one to view what is seen and heard as if one were a "Martian," perceiving the familiar as strange and addressing it from an analytical standpoint. This process incorporated active reflection on and questioning of my values, thoughts, and actions into the research study, applying the same level of scrutiny to my beliefs as would be applied to those of others (Cunliffe, 2016).

From this perspective, I decided to widen the geographical scope of the research to include other areas of the Midlands. This approach aimed to determine whether the identified behaviour is unique to Black individuals residing in Coventry or prevalent across the community, irrespective of geographic boundaries. Initially, I considered conducting an ethnographic study or action research; however, both options presented significant cost and time constraints. Consequently, the most viable option was to leverage the opportunity presented by the 2021/2022 Coventry City of Culture as a context for observations while voluntarily assisting the community in planning and organising their events. In doing so, I established rapport and trust, which facilitated connections and networks within the Coventry community and other regions of the Midlands. This opportunity also enabled collaborations with Social Trading Organisations (STOs) and influential stakeholders. As a result, a framework for the study's direction was developed, and qualitative interviews were employed as the primary data collection method. This reflexive inquiry process, initiated by doubt and a sense that something was amiss, propelled my quest for answers with the hope of restoring belief once the underlying issues are addressed (Elkjaer & Simpson, 2011). Ultimately, the findings reveal deeply rooted reasons for the identified behaviour, and until these issues are resolved, addressing socioeconomic challenges within the Black community will remain unattainable.

As a result of this study, my worldview has transformed. As a researcher and student, I have developed a deeper appreciation for the importance of integrating theory with practice. From a philosophical perspective, my understanding of social realities remains unchanged; however, the significance of philosophy and its contributions to a researcher's insights into these social realities—and how they may evolve over time—suggest that, much like a habitual agent, my disposition toward social reality may adapt in response to shifts within the broader context of the field.

Professionally, the experience gained from this study has enhanced my skills, expertise, and knowledge, which can be applied to the next phase of the research, as well as to future participants, current colleagues, institutions, and especially the younger generation.

Personally, I currently feel disappointment and frustration; however, I remain hopeful that if early community-led entrepreneurship interventions are implemented, hope will transform from a mere feeling of expectation into a tangible reality. This journey is far from complete, as I believe there are better days ahead.

### 4.13 Chapter Four Summary

The research methodology is both robust and comprehensive. This chapter discussed the philosophical positioning as well as the ontological, epistemological, and axiological stances. The research strategy is outlined, detailing the sampling methods and the selection of research participants. The processes of data collection and analysis are also examined, along with ethical considerations. This methodology serves as the foundation for the fieldwork, the evidence of which is detailed and discussed in subsequent empirical chapters. Following Bourdieu’s (2005) suggestion, it is insufficient to focus solely on narratives or interactive actions; rather, it is essential to examine the Social Space in which these interactions and events occur.

# CHAPTER FIVE: A PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE STRUCTURED, STRUCTURING, STRUCTURE

*"A field is a game devoid of inventors and much more fluid and complex than any game that one might ever design… to see fully everything that separates the concepts of field and system, one must put them to work and compare them via the empirical objects they produce." (Ibid: 104).*

## 5.1 Introduction and Context

This chapter presents the findings from interviews conducted with 43 participants: 20 Community Members (CMs), 15 Social Trading Organisations (STOs), and 8 Institutions with Power, Influence and Money (IPIMs). The findings are organised into three parts. Part One addresses the *Structured Structuring Habitus*, detailing the current circumstances, social and subjective experiences, and future opportunities of the Black Community Members (CMs). Part Two focuses on the *Structuring Structure Field,* examining the challenges STOs face as they strive to transform their organisations and navigate the Community Business (CB) landscape, whether as new entrants or established players. Finally, Part Three explores the *Field of Power as a Structure,* discussing the operational and strategic priorities of IPIMs and their role in facilitating the formation, operation, and sustainability of CBs. This section also includes a presentation and discussion on the role of CBs in socioeconomic development and policy. This chapter presents participants' voices anonymously while the researcher maintains a subjective and reflexive stance during the analytical process.

In the preceding chapters, Bourdieu's (1977) concept of habitus was defined as the property of actors—whether individuals, groups, or institutions—that consists of a *"structured and structuring structure"* (ibid:172). It is *"structured"* by one's past and present circumstances, social and subjective experiences, and future practices, including family upbringing and educational experiences. It is *"structuring"* in that one's habitus helps shape present and future practices. Finally, it is a "*structure"* that is systematically ordered rather than random or unpatterned. Bourdieu (1977) explains that the structures constituting a particular type of environment produce a system of durable, transposable dispositions (Doxa)—*structured structures* that are predisposed to function as *structuring structures*.

As illustrated in Figure 4, the habitus serves as the intersectional thread that weaves through the three spaces –CM, STO and IPIM. It is embodied within the Social and Economic Space rather than as a sub-entity. Therefore, the variables associated with habitus—namely, *structured and structuring structures*—and their definitions have been carefully employed to guide the direction of this empirical analysis. This approach aims to elucidate the concept of Community Business Practice within the contexts of Structured and Structuring (Black Habitus), Structuring and Structure (STO Field), and Structure (IPIM Field of Power).

## 5.2 Chapter Five - Part One: The Structured Structuring Habitus

The *Structured Structuring Habitus,* a crucial tool in this research, comprehensively evaluates the past and present circumstances, social and subjective experiences, and future opportunities and practices of Community Members (CMs). The data collected is instrumental in understanding the behaviour of community members and their impact on the development and formation of sustainable community businesses. This assessment (objective one) juxtaposes the Theory of Practice (ToP) concepts—namely, *habitus and capital*—with two relevant Community Business (CB) principles: *being locally rooted in a specific geographical area and being accountable to the local community*. It also addresses whether factors enabling the establishment of community businesses, such as attachment to place, social capital, and accountability, exist from the perspective of community members. The responses are vital to the research, providing a solid foundation for developing a model that empowers policymakers in locally led socioeconomic regeneration. The potential impact of these findings on socioeconomic regeneration is shaping future policies and practices.

### 5.2.1 The Structured Habitus: Past and Present Circumstances

*"Habitus is "structured" by one's past and present circumstances, social and subjective experiences, such as family upbringing and educational experiences. – Bourdieu, 1977:172"*

Summarising the past, the historical overview, as outlined in the methodological chapter (see Chapter 4, Section 4.8), recounts past narratives and offers context for the disunity both within and among individuals of African heritage—commonly referred to as the *Black* community. This community comprises individuals of African descent, yet it is divided into Caribbean and African groups. Existing literature confirms that this disunity has persisted across generations into the present day.

In the present, the causal effects of the past have influenced community members' ways of acting, feeling, thinking, and being. This has created a predisposed habitus and a domino effect on socioeconomic development. Additionally, existing literature highlights the struggle for limited socioeconomic resources, stereotyping, and perceived differences due to the tensions between the two groups (see section 4.8). Furthermore, systemic inequalities in objective structures have consistently oppressed and hindered the progress of members of the Black community, thereby impeding socio-economic development. Given these facts, the researcher's axiological belief is that with the right resources, skills, and tools, individuals can be empowered to change their lives and the world around them (see section 4.5). Below are the findings regarding the current circumstances of Community Members (CMs) within the Structured Structuring Habitus.

#### 5.2.1.1 CM's Attachment to Place

In examining the factors enabling the establishment of community businesses, the attachment of Community Members (CMs) to their locality is initially assessed through their geographic location, familial and community connections, and social and economic status.

***a) Local rootedness through Place***

Table 8 indicates that the majority of community members (CMs) resided in Coventry (65%), while the remainder were distributed across Birmingham (10%), Wolverhampton (10%), Sandwell (5%), Leamington (5%), and Warwick (5%). The duration of residence among CMs varied significantly, ranging from a minimum of 2 years to a maximum of over 40 years. This data confirms that CMs are deeply rooted in their local communities, with only one CM (10) living in their locality for less than five years.

***Table 8: Attachment to Place - Geographic position and duration of residence***

| *Participant* | Location | Years of Residence | Participant | Location | Years of Residence |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***CM1*** | Coventry | 32 | ***CM11*** | Coventry | 10 |
| ***CM2*** | Coventry | 12 | ***CM12*** | Coventry | 9 |
| ***CM3*** | Leamington | 40+ | ***CM13*** | Coventry | 7 |
| ***CM4*** | Coventry | 7 | ***CM14*** | Coventry | 20 |
| ***CM5*** | Coventry | 21 | ***CM15*** | Wolverhampton | 13 |
| ***CM6*** | Coventry | 7 | ***CM16*** | Wolverhampton | 40 |
| ***CM7*** | Coventry | 18 | ***CM17*** | Birmingham | 20 |
| ***CM8*** | Coventry | 16 | ***CM18*** | Birmingham | 10 |
| ***CM9*** | Coventry | 16 | ***CM19*** | Warwick | 11 |
| ***CM10*** | Sandwell | 2 | ***CM20*** | Coventry | 11 |

*Source: Author's Own*

### *b) Local rootedness from ties to family and friends*

In addition to geographic positioning, assessing local rootedness evaluated CM's social belonging through families, friendships, and key contacts. Members provided multiple and intersecting responses.

***Table 9: Family Relations, Friendships, and Key Contacts***

| ***Responses*** | **No.=** | **%** | **Participant** |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Close family, supported networks with regular contact*** | 13 | 65 | CM 1,2,5,6,7,10,12,14,16,17,18,19,20 |
| ***Friendship Networks through Religious Affiliations*** | 7 | 35 | CM 4,7,11,12,14,18,20 |
| ***Friendship Networks through Businesses, Community groups and Country Associations*** | 4 | 20 | CM 2,3,5,18 |
| ***Friendship Networks through Work and Volunteering*** | 2 | 10 | CM 8,9 |
| ***No local Family Networks*** | 3 | 15 | CM 3,13,15 |

***Source****: Author's Own*

Table 9 indicates that thirteen (65%) of the CMs maintain a close circle of family and friends, encompassing both nuclear and extended relationships. They meet regularly and remain in constant communication. These family networks provide support, particularly in personal and professional decision-making.

*"I have quite a big family and am very close to them. We have Sunday dinner, where we always connect" - CM1.*

Religious fraternities are popular venues for social gatherings and fostering a sense of belonging. Seven members (35%) participate in their fraternities at least once a week and occasionally attend events such as birthdays, weddings, funerals, and Independence Day celebrations, where networking and socialising opportunities are encouraged.

*"I attend an African church which creates an environment for social gathering and belonging. Friendships are from church and other community organisations" (CM4).*

*"I belong to a church group, which I attend every Sunday; once in a while to events that happen in a church, but I am there every Sunday"- CM7.*

The entrepreneurial interests of four CMs (20%) have naturally fostered networks and connections that promote international trade, enabling aspiring entrepreneurs to seek support for developing their ideas and businesses. One member cited that:
*"I have trusted business friends, those with business minds. We meet occasionally to discuss business. I am part of this group because of the vision, cultural background, and markets we want to serve in the future—also, social media groups outside the UK with former school colleagues"- CM13.*

Two members develop friendships by engaging in community groups or country associations as leaders, volunteers, or service users.
*"I have an organisation that empowers women. I am also a member of various community groups and the chairperson of the T community in Coventry" (CM5).*

Additionally, two members (10%) established relationships through work and volunteer activities.
*"I form relationships through work contacts and volunteering. I volunteer on the board of trustees for the NS. I also sometimes volunteer for OinUK. Usually through work or volunteering. That is usually when I interact with people in the local Black community" (CM8).*

Finally, three members (15%) reported that they did not have family or friendships and preferred to remain alone.

### *c) Local rootedness through socioeconomic position*

Collecting data on participants' socioeconomic status was essential for demonstrating their commitment to their local communities. In this study, three types of data were gathered: employment status, years of experience, and the specific sector in which they were employed. Table 10 indicates that out of the twenty CMs interviewed, seventeen (85%) were employed, two (10%) were unemployed due to childcare commitments, and one (5%) was retired. The average collective work experience among the CMs is seventy-eight years across their current and previous roles. This includes thirteen years in the public sector, eleven years in academia, twenty-nine years in the voluntary sector, and twenty-five years in the business or private sector. The specific employment sectors listed in Table 10 highlight experiences in entrepreneurship, community engagement, and sector-specific roles.

| *Table 10: Socioeconomic Position by Employment Status, Sector and Experience* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Participant*** | **Employment status** | **Sector** | **Years of Experience *No.* =** |
| ***CM1*** | Employed | Public Sector | 2 |
| ***CM2*** | Employed | Academia | 11 |
| ***CM3*** | Employed & Self-Employed | Community | 20+ |
| ***CM4*** | Employed & Self-Employed | Food and Catering | 6 |
| ***CM5*** | Self-Employed | Social Care / Community | 7 |
| ***CM6*** | Self-Employed | Childcare | 3 |
| ***CM7*** | Self-Employed | Hair & Beauty | 17 |
| ***CM8*** | Employed | Community | 2months |
| ***CM9*** | Employed | Public sector / Community | 12 |
| ***CM10*** | Employed | Community | 2months |
| ***CM11*** | Long term Unemployed | Long term Unemployed | N/A |
| ***CM12*** | Currently Unemployed | Currently Unemployed | 4 |
| ***CM13*** | Employed | Asset Management | 2 |
| ***CM14*** | Self-Employed | Fostering/Childcare | 10 |
| ***CM15*** | Self-Employed | Private - Professional | 1.5 |
| ***CM16*** | Retired | N/A | 45+ |
| ***CM17*** | Self-Employed | Academia | 3months |
| ***CM18*** | Self-Employed | Private - Professional | 8 |
| ***CM19*** | Employed | Academia | 11 |
| ***CM20*** | Employed | Public sector - Health | 2 |
| ***Source:*** *Author's Own* | | | |

Summarising their *attachment to place*, the findings show that Community Members (CMs) are deeply rooted in their localities through geographic positioning, familial and friendship ties, and socio-economic status. CMs utilise various religious Organisations, business networks, community groups, country associations, and work environments to establish and sustain these connections. Employment data further reveals that most CMs are engaged in diverse sectors, demonstrating the wide range of skills and expertise within the community that are essential for community business development. According to Power to Change's four test requirements (see Chapter 2, section 2.6), the attachment of CMs to their place satisfies the locally rooted principle, which is *defined by its connection to a physical location - .Community Business Market Report 2015.*

### 5.2.2 The Structuring Habitus – Social and Personal Experiences

*"Habitus is "structuring" in that one's habitus helps to shape one's present and future practices."- Bourdieu, 1977:172"*

Following their attachment to place, community members' social and individual experiences are presented, revealing how the community holds each other accountable and the extent of the social capital that has been accrued.

Community Business (CB) development requires high levels of social capital and trustworthy relationships to uphold the principle of accountability to the local community. In this context, the responses reflect deep insights into accrued, current, and potential levels of social capital. For simplicity and clarity, the diverse responses were analysed and categorised into five themes during the data analysis process (see Figure 12).

*a) Trust and Trustworthy Relationships*

*b) Inter- and intra-community relations*

*c) Social Belonging and Interaction.*

*d) Community Position*

*e) Relationship Dynamics*

### 5.2.2.1 Trust and Trustworthy Relationships

CMs were initially tested on trust perceptions to identify inherent qualities, individual characteristics, and relationship patterns. The findings reveal a predisposed mindset toward trust and trustworthy relationships. Individual responses and justifications are presented below in Table 11.

***Table 11: Individual Responses for Trust and Trustful Relations***

| *Participant* | Responses | Complete Trust | Some Trust | No Trust |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***CM1*** | Inherently, there is a lack of trust in the Black community inherited through the colonial past, where we were taught to hate one another. | No | | Historical legacies, slavery, and colonial past. |
| ***CM2*** | There is trust amongst Africans, even though the circumstances we find ourselves in are less access to finance and less accessible resources; as a result, the little available over time, people's quest for money and wealth has destroyed trust between people. | No | Due to the lack of resources | Competing for limited resources has destroyed trust |
| ***CM3*** | From my point of view, what makes the Black community problematic is that we're very different to others. | No | | Differences in people |
| ***CM4*** | It is very difficult; you cannot trust anyone. Everyone is fighting for themselves. When people try to do things with the community, they try to bring you down. I can't trust anyone to do business with them. | No | | No trust due to individualistic thinking. |
| ***CM5*** | I don't think there is trust, or it is very limited based on past experiences. | No | | Past experience |
| ***CM6*** | To trust even you is hard, and you know having to adapt to people is very, very hard and difficult. | No | | Trusting oneself is difficult and is the same as adapting to trust someone else. |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***CM7*** | I cannot say I trust some people I have met if I do not know them personally; I trust those who melt into my path. | No | Trust based on personal encounters | |
| ***CM8*** | That is a difficult one. There is a certain amount of trust in the people I know and the people I am connected with. | No | Trust based on connections and relations | |
| ***CM9*** | It is like with this non-trustworthy, not trusting kind of people in the Black community. | No | | Endemic mistrust |
| ***CM10*** | There is not that much trust. | No | | No trust |
| ***CM11*** | It can be 50-50; in church, I find trust to be really strong, but in general, just in the involvement of social groups and everything, sometimes it's very hard to really trust. | No | Trust manifests in religious settings. | Not in social groups. |
| ***CM12*** | I don't think there's trust. They always backbiting that is not necessary. | No | | No trust |
| ***CM13*** | I thought we had a support system, but I've realised that's not so from experience, I have decided that we can't trust our people. | No | | No trust |
| ***CM14*** | Non-existent. It's difficult to qualify what we have; we are not a giving people, and if someone wants to give, you're weary because there's no trust. | No | | Endemic mistrust |
| ***CM15*** | We speak very different languages. We have very different traditions. So, there's always an issue of trust. | No | | Differences in people |
| ***CM16*** | The interaction between Africans and the Caribbean reveals the level of mistrust. On a personal level, there is less mistrust in working with organisations. Among Africans, trust is predominantly seen within tribal connections. | No | Less on a personal and professional level | Varying levels of trust. Mistrust between Africans and the Caribbean. Rampant in the African community. |
| ***CM17*** | There is an element of mistrust. It is not intentional because this is part of our history, which makes us think inward rather than outward. | No | | Historical legacies, slavery, and colonial past. |
| ***CM18*** | Trust is lacking | No | | No trust |
| ***CM19*** | There is trust, but it is very tribalistic; you have to be embedded in one community to get the trust. | No | Trust manifests in belonging to a specific community or tribe. | |
| ***CM20*** | We are individuals, and trust is based on an individual basis once relationships are built with people. | No | Trust based on relations | |

***Source:*** *Author's Own*

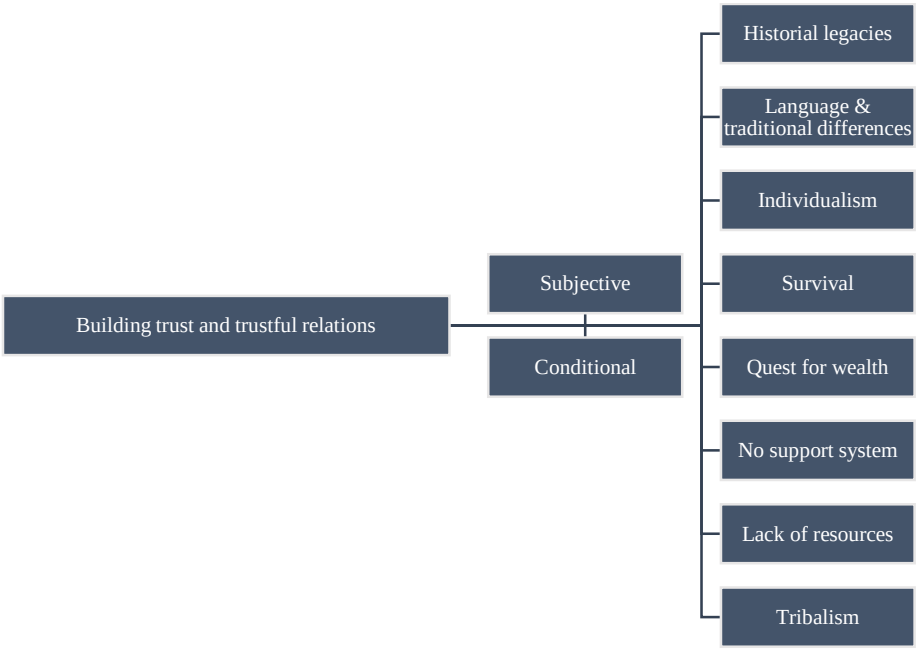
## *Summary of responses*

| ***Responses*** | ***No. =*** | ***%*** | ***Participant*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Trustful relations* | 0 | 0 | |
| *Some Trust* | 7 | 35 | CM 2,7,8,11,16,19,20 |
| *No Trust* | 16 | 80 | CM 1,2,3,4,5,6,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18 |
| ***Total*** | **20** | | |

According to the evidence, none of the members expressed complete and total trust in the community. Sixteen members (80%) believed that trust was non-existent, while seven members (35%) indicated that there was some subjective trust based on personal encounters, connections, professional relationships, and belonging to a specific community or tribe, but not with individuals they had not met personally.

Three of the seven members (CM 2, 11, and 16) perceive trust as conditional. They argue that the lack of trust is attributed to external factors, such as limited resources, which foster competitive behaviour among individuals. This competition, in turn, undermines relationships, a phenomenon that is more pronounced in African groups than in Caribbean ones or in social groups rather than religious fraternities. Figure 15 illustrates a summary of the subjective and conditional reasons diagrammatically.

***Figure 15: Subjective and Conditional Variables of Trust***




*Source: Author's Own*

Delving deeper into the subjective and conditional variables, four members (1, 3, 9, 17) assert that the lack of trust is inherent—a legacy passed down through historical programming that inevitably instills an inward-looking behaviour.

*"Inherently, there is a lack of trust amongst the Black community inherited through the colonial past where we were taught to hate one another, whether it is through tone of skin or through religion and imposed superiority based on those things, which are by design as a*

*way of controlling the community. With that as a preamble, it means there is a lack of trust and cohesion to those unaware of the history" (CM 1).*

*"We do not trust ourselves and are greedy, but that disposition stems from colonial masters' mental programming and the current wealth and resource imbalance"* (CM17).

Six members (1, 3, 18, 13, 17, 20) also indicated that micro-politics are at play within the habitus, as a lack of trust fosters a culture of dominance versus inferiority. For instance, one member noted that individuals from the Caribbean community perceive Africans as separate from British Blacks, as the prevailing perception is that Britishness is more closely associated with the Caribbean than with people from Africa. However, she acknowledged that there has been a recent shift toward including both groups.
*"African and the Caribbean issue has always been superiority where the Africans think they are educated, and the Caribbean are not. On the other hand, the Caribbean feel that Africans are not part of British Blacks as people associate Britishness with the Caribbean and not Africa" (CM1).*

Besides, among Africans, trust is often rooted in tribal connections, as individuals must belong to a specific subgroup to experience a certain level of trust. A community member who does not identify with a particular ethnic group may not feel welcome at events or meetings organised by another ethnic group. One Community Member (CM) who leads a local group asserts that the lack of trust stems from people's instinct for survival.
*"As there are fewer resources for under-represented communities, this creates an impression of a societal imbalance, where people tend to painfully colonise themselves into micro 'groups,' leading to inward thinking and destruction" (CM16).*

The following section presents an analysis of how relationships manifest within and among African and Caribbean groups. The objective is to assess the extent of social capital derived from existing relationships both within the community and between its members, as well as those connections that extend beyond individual cliques. Additionally, it explores how these relationships are formed and maintained.

### 5.2.2.2 Inter and Intra Community Relations

Table 12 below presents the responses regarding intra- and inter-community relations from four categorised perspectives: African relations with the Caribbean, Caribbean relations with Africans, Caribbean relations among fellow Caribbeans from different countries of origin, and African relations among fellow Africans from different countries of origin.

***Table 12: – CM Intra and Inter-Community Connections***

| ***Inter and Intra Relations*** | **No. =** | **Participant** |
|---|---|---|
| ***African Relations with the Caribbean*** | 14 | CM 2,4,5,6,9,10,12,13,14,15,16,18,19,20 |
| ***Caribbean relations with Africans*** | 3 | CM 1,3,17 |
| ***Caribbean relations with fellow Caribbeans but not from the same country of origin.*** | 3 | CM 1,3,17 |
| ***Africans' relations with fellow Africans but not from the same country of origin.*** | 10 | CM 2,6,7,8,11,12,13,16,19,20 |

***Source:*** *Author's Own*

The fourteen responses received revealed that Africans connected with the Caribbean through one-off events, work engagements, and professional networks. Examples include connections made through participation in the Commonwealth Games, membership in community associations, and work as caterers. These interactions enabled members to share cultural stories with their Caribbean friends. Additionally, members utilised specific community centres led by Caribbean individuals to host various events for their community, enabling relationships to be built. Sometimes, invitations are extended to the centre users to promote inclusivity. Two members are connected to Caribbean individuals through marriage, while three have no connections with the Caribbean community. One member stated:
*"Relations with the Caribbean are ad-hoc and selective with those whose values and motivations aligned with mine" - (CM13).*

Regarding the Caribbean's relations with Africans, the connections of three members of the Caribbean community with the African community are primarily work-related and virtual. One member joined a local community organisation led by an individual from the African community to gain insight into the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers. Additionally, they engage with individuals in the African diaspora to foster global connections, which serve as a foundation for developing a case study on collective action at a global level.

Another member engages with the African community through social media by joining an African-led membership group and disseminating information. Moreover, a university lecturer has students from Africa and maintains some friendships abroad, although these connections are primarily within professional contexts.

Concerning relations among Caribbean individuals from different countries of origin, all three members of the Caribbean community are well connected through various Caribbean community centres. These connections extend beyond immediate social groups, with regular meetups and social media groups serving as additional platforms for interaction. This underscores the strong social fabric within the Caribbean community, fostering a sense of unity and shared identity.

Finally, regarding the relationships among Africans from different countries of origin, the responses indicate that many Africans do not tend to establish personal connections with fellow Africans outside their home countries. Like the relationships between Africans and Caribbean individuals, most Africans primarily connect with others through professional avenues, such as work or business affiliations. One member suggests that this phenomenon may result from many Africans being economic migrants with limited formal education during their formative years, which has hindered their integration into UK society. Three members (5, 11, 14) note that the primary environment for connecting with fellow Africans is within multicultural religious institutions, where individuals from various parts of the diaspora congregate. Additionally, ad-hoc connections are formed with resident neighbours from different African countries.

#### 5.2.2.3 Social Belonging through environments that foster relationships and interactions

Similar to assessing social belonging through families, friendships, and key contacts, evaluating the social belonging and interactions of Community Members (CMs) revealed multiple intersecting responses, as shown in Table 13.

| *Table 13: Environments Fostering Intra and Inter-Community Relationships* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Environment*** | **No. =** | **%** | **Participant** |
| ***Religious Groups*** | 10 | 50 | CM 2,3,4,5,6,9,11,14,17,18 |
| ***Country Association*** | 7 | *35* | CM 1,2,5,9,12,14,16 |
| ***Community Groups*** | 5 | 25 | CM 1,2,3,6,17 |
| ***Other – Business, Political, Social Life, Gym, And Online*** | 7 | 35 | CM 1,7,13,14,17,19,20 |
| ***Limited/Undefined /No Social Group*** | 3 | 15 | CM 1,15,16 |

The responses reveal that religion plays a crucial role in the development of social capital. The data demonstrates that religious institutions foster an environment of togetherness, where individuals gather to support one another. Ten members (50%) identified religious groups as their primary source of social belonging. For some, these gatherings offer a sense of encouragement and serve as the only venues for worship and the formation of friendships. Additionally, they provide opportunities for social events such as parties, birthday celebrations, and, occasionally, business networking. However, two members (identified as 3 and 9) noted that their affiliations are not limited to a specific religious sect, such as Christianity, Islam, or Rastafarianism, due to their roles in community leadership. They attend multiple faith sects to support community members.

Interactions outside of religious meetings or congregations involve church members' responsibilities to regularly check on fellow congregants who cannot attend services for various reasons. These interactions are often reciprocal and can occur daily, weekly, biweekly, monthly, or annually. Furthermore, some interactions include ad hoc annual trips organised by religious groups.

*"I've been a leader of the R community for the past five years. Now, what that means is all the spectrum of the community I belong to, be it in a religious capacity, mostly Christian and Muslim. I'm also part of most of the organised events and will be part of the organisers. In so doing, I interact with them by socialising, organising community events of all kinds, like Christmas and New Year, and Independence Day" (CM9).*

However, two members (CM 10, 12) expressed that they view religious gatherings as serving a specific purpose: to worship rather than to socialise.

They argue that individuals who prioritise making friends tend to restrict their relationships to mere acquaintances. In their view, blended relationships—where religion and personal life intersect—can lead to potential issues, including the imposition of opinions and unwarranted interference in one another's lives.

*"With the church, I just go there to worship, and I do not really have friends over there. Because you know how these people are when you make friends and have many problems. I prefer we not mingle that much. The church is, you know, like a group, like an association. Some people go there, you know, to make friends and try to help you set up" (CM10).*

In terms of connections through country associations, seven members (35%) joined an association linked to their countries of origin that supports and empowers fellow nationals. Three members (CM 2, 5, 9) are founding members of local groups. They lead and organise events to commemorate significant occasions, such as national Independence Day, Christmas, and New Year celebrations. These events facilitate interaction and socialisation among participants. For two members (CM 1, 12), access to these associations as newly arrived migrants has been instrumental in their integration into British society. Additionally, two members (CM 14 and 16) joined for informational purposes but have remained inactive participants.

Five community members (25%) indicated that their social connections are primarily formed through their involvement in community groups, either as founders, participants, beneficiaries, or volunteers. Among these five members, three (CM 1, 2, and 3) dedicate their time to various activities and engage socially with fellow members, both local and regional, at least once a month. These connections span education, culture, community work, and media, facilitating interactions with others through the arts. One member (CM 6) volunteers to participate in exchange programs and local events, while another (CM 17) organises fundraising efforts for fellow community members in need, although this support is provided on a case-by-case basis.

Of the twenty participants interviewed, seven (35%) reported connections to various social groups, including business, politics, gyms, and online communities. These individuals maintain active social lives and prefer to cultivate multiple relationships beyond their religious groups, national associations, or community affiliations.

They establish social connections by participating in a variety of groups, such as political organisations, workplace teams, walking clubs, gyms, football teams, and business networks. These settings provide opportunities for like-minded individuals to gather and engage in discussions about business, vision, culture, and trading markets. Members interact several times a week, either in person or through social media platforms. However, for two members (CM 7,19), interactions were sporadic.

*"I socialise with everyone from different African countries and other cultures, including the Caribbean. I have quite a broad network because of my work, and I approach people on the street and say hello to them. Showing them your love is how you get to know people and associate yourself with the people around you. If not, you are just being in your little box" (CM7).*

Finally, three members (1, 15, 16) chose not to join groups due to time constraints or negative past experiences. Two of these individuals have limited or inactive social lives and, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, prefer to remain solely within the realm of social media. In summary, the findings reveal an understanding of and participation in community work. However, this engagement is characterised by individualistic approaches rather than coordinated actions or collective efforts. This area required further exploration of the relationship dynamics based on members' positions or involvement in community activities. The responses obtained are presented in the following section.

### 5.2.2.4 Community Position and Engagement

Previous sections explored the relationship dynamics within the Black community. This section examines Community Members' (CMs) roles within their respective communities or localities and their current levels of community engagement.

***Table 14 – Community Position and Engagement***

| ***Position & Engagement*** | **No. =** | **%** | **Participant** |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Founder/Leader of a community organisation*** | 5 | 25 | CM 1,2,3,5,9 |
| ***Volunteer*** | 10 | 50 | CM 4,7,8,12,13,14,16,17,18,19 |
| ***Employed in community organisations*** | 2 | 10 | CM 8,10 |
| ***Entrepreneur*** | 5 | 25 | CM 4,6,7,15,18 |
| ***Service Users*** | 5 | 25 | CM 4,6,11,12,20 |

In Table 14, of the 20 members surveyed, five (25%) are actively involved in community activities as founding members or leaders of a community organisation or country association. Their involvement aligns with the mandates under which their organisations or associations were established. For instance, they lead or manage projects and social activism initiatives, organise events to promote social cohesion and mobilise demonstrations against racial inequality. Ten members (50%), including two of the five leaders, volunteer in various capacities, undertaking specific tasks within religious fraternities and community organisations.

Their volunteer roles include supporting gardening initiatives, managing breakfast clubs for the elderly, preparing meals for rough sleepers and homeless individuals at shelters, coaching football, and participating in food clubs. Additionally, some members serve as trustees within Social Trading Organisations (STOs), acting as board members to further the organisation's objectives. Volunteering also encompasses activities that cater to specific sexual orientations, such as LGBTQ+ initiatives or health-related projects. Among the ten volunteers, three are former leaders of community associations who possess valuable expertise and experience and currently dedicate their time to mentoring new leaders. Furthermore, two members serve as leaders of community associations while also volunteering their time outside their respective groups.

Moreover, two members (10%) utilise their employment roles to engage in community activities. They manage projects, interact with participants and other beneficiaries, and assess and report on their impact.

Five members (25%) are self-employed and operate businesses in various sectors, including food and catering, hairdressing, childcare, marketing, and accounting. Additionally, two of these five individuals also dedicate time to volunteering.

An additional five members (25%) are participants, service users, beneficiaries, and clients of various community groups. Two of these members (CM 4, 6) are also entrepreneurs who volunteer their time for the organisations from which they benefit.

### 5.2.2.5 Relationship Dynamics Between Founder/Leaders, Entrepreneurs, Volunteers, and Service Users.

Next, the research aimed to explore the dynamics of relationships and interactions among members based on their positions within the community. The groups examined include Founders and Leaders of Community Organisations/Associations (CO/A), Entrepreneurs (presented as New Project Initiators - NPIs), Volunteers, and Service users. This section presents a synthesis of narratives from these four groups.

#### *a) New Project Initiators (NPIs) vs Volunteers*

Collated narratives from seven entrepreneurs (CM 4, 6, 7, 9, 15, 18, 20) revealed that New Project Initiators (NPIs) embark on ventures with the hope of changing mindsets, encouraging volunteering, and providing employment opportunities through their initiatives. In the initial stages, NPIs strive to generate interest through a volunteer-based approach. When recruited, the volunteers engage in these initiatives wholeheartedly, motivated and committed, without expecting financial compensation beyond standard travel and incidental expenses. However, negative sentiments often arise when NPIs receive grant funding for their projects. Consequently, volunteers begin to anticipate salary remuneration from the grant funding, assuming that a 'big pie' exists to be shared. One volunteer remarked, *"They do not want to share the pie"-(CM9).* They perceive a sense of deception when only travel and miscellaneous expenses are reimbursed. To the volunteers, the NPIs' sole intention appears to be exploiting the community to enrich themselves through the grant funding received. Some volunteers may abruptly withdraw from the project upon learning about the fund's intended purpose. This withdrawal often occurs during critical moments of project delivery and, in many cases, without prior notice, fully aware that their actions will adversely impact the project. The actions of their absconded colleagues influence the remaining volunteers, who may become internal disruptors, perpetuating negative rumours and misinformation. Ultimately, these dynamics lead to further departures from the projects.

NPIs report that their efforts are often met with negativity, leading them to engage in a cyclical game of confused behavioural chess with volunteers. Feeling trapped, they proceed cautiously when community support is limited or absent. To safeguard their projects, they tend to work independently, wary of whom to trust and collaborate with. One NPI stated, *"there is no unity or trust, and some are fearful" (CM20).*

This behavior further fuels rumors that NPIs operate alone out of greed and selfishness. NPIs lack confidence in the limited commitment of volunteers to engage or participate in projects. Similarly, volunteers do not trust NPIs to provide the long-term employment or financial security they anticipate. According to one member, a volunteer's connection and commitment to projects resemble a 'conveyor belt' process. A constant revolving loop where people hop on and off, discouraging the formulation of meaningful relationships.
*"Unfortunately, we are a group of people who, if it's good for the greater good, it's not good enough for me" (CM14).*

From the perspective of volunteers and service users, while they may initially be intrigued by the concept of 'doing good' for the community and participating in community activities, their fundamental needs must take precedence and be met without compromise. One volunteer said:
*"The Black community has little to offer me. There was nothing to take on when I got involved in the community. We do not have organisational qualities, and because there is no trust, people don't want to listen and look for whatever elsewhere from other communities." (CM14).*

***b) Community Organisations/Associations leaders' (CO/As) vs Service Users***

Similar to the experiences of NPIs, the five Community Organisations/Associations (CO/As) leaders (CM 1, 2, 3, 5, and 9) are presented below.

They perceive that mistrust also arises when grant funding is received from external funding bodies for specific projects. In these instances, service users view the grant funding received by the CO/As as money donated by external organisations on their behalf; consequently, they expect those funds to be distributed directly to them rather than being used to further the organisation's objectives. One CO/A lead narrated their experience below:
*"We worked on a holiday club meant to benefit kids. However, some parents refused to bring their kids, as they believed that charity organisations somehow get access to funds to be distributed to the parents of kids who attend the club. They don't understand that we are doing this for the children, not to get personal profit. So, we decided to be transparent and give the parents all the reports to prove where the money came from and how the fund was spent, but they still don't trust us. There is no trust.*

*We have now decided that for every project, we will produce an impact and financial report and publish everything so the public can access it. Because it is frustrating. You try to do something for the community, and children want to access it, but the parents do not trust that you're doing it for that kind of goodwill, like doing it for the children. Then, they pull their kids from activities and discourage others from bringing their children. Most of the time, they spread false rumours that affect the delivery and meeting of the project's targets." (CM10).*

The leaders emphasised that although service users often require the services provided by CO/As, they are hesitant to engage due to false rumours, misguided perceptions regarding the purpose of grant funding, and a sense of being "used" by the organisations for selfish motives.

*"Trust is not readily given; therefore, the value placed on Black-owned businesses is minimal" (CM17).*

In many instances, service users prefer to remain in their state of need rather than seek culturally appropriate and relevant support from their communities. This presents a significant challenge for CO/As, who often invest excessive time and effort attempting to change the mindsets of their target audiences. They proceed with caution, as misinterpreted conversations could further exacerbate the rumours that hinder service user engagement. This perception of mistrust persists, even when community organisations implement transparent processes regarding funding sources and subsequent disbursements.

### *c) New Project Initiators (NPIs) vs Community Organisations/Associations leaders' (CO/As)*

Compared to volunteers and service users who may engage in or participate in initiatives, the consideration for partnership work between NPIs and CO/As is often minimal. Both parties are guided by the same community members, who possess a predisposed mindset of mistrust and inward thinking, leading to scepticism about engaging volunteers and involving service users. The five NPIs view CO/As as integrating into the external community and structure to impress funders and other stakeholders. Meanwhile, the CO/As perceive NPIs as being primarily focused on financial gain and solely interested in owning their initiatives and projects rather than engaging in collaborative work.

This dynamic creates a significant challenge in forming relationships and fostering cooperation toward a common goal. As a result, relationships tend to be temporary, inconsistent, and characterised by mistrust.

*"Currently, trust is based on an individual basis, but the 'wall of mistrust' has to be broken (CM5), requiring relationships to be built with people committed to one another. Trust must be a consideration and a topic of education and discussion when collective action is being considered (CM20). One that is towards a common goal essential to community development, economics, well-being, nation-building, and family life" (CM1).*

CO/As provide examples of engaging with NPIs that aim to offer similar services for collaboration in order to share resources and best practices. However, their proposals for collaboration are often rejected by the NPIs, who cite concerns that such collaborations would diminish their share of grant funding. This behaviour also poses a challenge when considering community-based business strategies for socioeconomic development, according to the CO/As.

*"When people are only focused on financial gain, it poses a challenge for relationships and cohesion to be developed when a venture involves capital funds" (CM9 and 18).*

In summarising social and personal experiences, Putnam (1993) argues that individuals and groups possess characteristics of social organisation—such as trust, norms, and networks—that can enhance societal efficiency by facilitating coordinated actions. To some extent, the data contradicts the notion that, while there are embedded norms—such as social belonging fostered by religious institutions and other entities—the relationships among community members are characterised by a general lack of trust. Interactions are typically confined to specific groups where members feel comfortable associating with one another. Currently, social capital appears to be predominantly individualistic rather than collective.

However, Putnam (2000) later elucidates that individuals cultivate relationships that serve their interests, and these interpersonal connections give rise to social networks and norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness. This clarification aligns more closely with the findings, which indicate an understanding of and engagement in community work not through coordinated actions or collective efforts but rather through individualistic approaches.

Putnam further explains that these relationships may exist primarily in practical terms, manifested through material and/or symbolic exchanges that help sustain them.Similarly, the findings align more closely with Bourdieu's (1986) original perspective, in which he regarded social capital as an individual asset rather than a collective one. It is not uniformly accessible to all members of a social group; rather, it is available to those who actively strive to acquire it by attaining positions of power and status and fostering goodwill. The findings reveal the challenges associated with forming relationships and collaborating toward a common goal. The nature of relationships within the habitus appears to be temporal, inconsistent, and chaotic, often rooted in mistrust.

*"Unification for collective action, progression, and the plan of working towards or building 'something' will not be achieved because people think differently" (CM7).*

Like physical and human capital, social connections significantly influence the productivity of individuals and groups (Putnam, 1993). The four groups—New Project Initiators (NPIs), Community Organisations/Associations (CO/A), Volunteers, and Service users—are interdependent and must collaborate effectively for Community Businesses (CBs) to be established, operated, and sustained for the benefit of the community. However, due to a predisposed mindset, mistrust is ingrained in individual behaviours, creating a challenge that current and future community development programs must primarily address. In summary, the habitus is currently in a state of survival.

"*It is challenging to trust anyone as everyone is fighting for themselves." (CM1).*

### 5.2.3 Future Practice - Interest in Forming Community Businesses (CBs)

Despite these challenges, community members were asked whether there was potential to establish Community Businesses (CBs) despite the existing fractured relationships. As per Table 15, nineteen out of twenty members expressed overwhelming interest, while only one member responded negatively, stating that:

*"Every time the community starts something, it gains traction at some point. Events tend to be multicultural. Opportunities arise from that but people have been greedy, making initiatives unsustainable." CM9.*

| ***Table 15: Responses to CB Development*** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Interest in Forming CBs*** | ***No. =*** | ***%*** | ***Participant*** |
| ***Yes, there is scope*** | 19 | 95 | CM 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20 |
| ***Yes, but…*** | 4 | 20 | CM 2,4,10,16 |
| ***No*** | 1 | 5 | CM 9 |
| ***Source****: Author's Own* | | | |

Four members (CM 2, 4, 10, 16), as highlighted in Table 15, noted that while there is potential for developing community businesses (CBs), individuals require persuasion and that lack of skills and knowledge may pose challenges. They suggest that the success of community-led businesses will depend on NPIs ensuring that the individuals involved share the same values, as building such businesses will require hard work and must start from the grassroots level.

"*There is scope, but it has to be done from the ground up; otherwise, it will not work. We have to progress, but we must do things differently."- CM14.*

Two members (CM1 and CM5) expressed their regret that the community had not conceived of such an idea sooner and welcomed the community-based (CB) approach.

*"The idea of developing CBs should have been done earlier, and that support from the Local Authorities and other bodies would help propel such ventures."-CM1&5.*

They acknowledge that once initiated, mobilising members to participate may be challenging at first. However, evidence of progress will inspire others and unite the community toward a shared purpose.

*"Shared values and culture. identifying with ourselves is a positive where there is a common ground to come together for the greater good." CM13.*

Members also recognise the importance of the community uniting, setting aside all differences to foster development. As the community expands, more individuals will come together, increasing the number of people eager to collaborate. This effort will involve utilising existing community buildings and cultural and religious structures as vehicles to facilitate community development due to their potential to generate income.

*"Black people can have a successful business or be successful in life and not depend on others all the time on people." CM12.*

Members are also aware of the skills deficit and suggest that NPIs must possess the appropriate skills to develop a model for managing and operating CBs. With that, leaders will be compelled to adhere to this model for long-term planning.

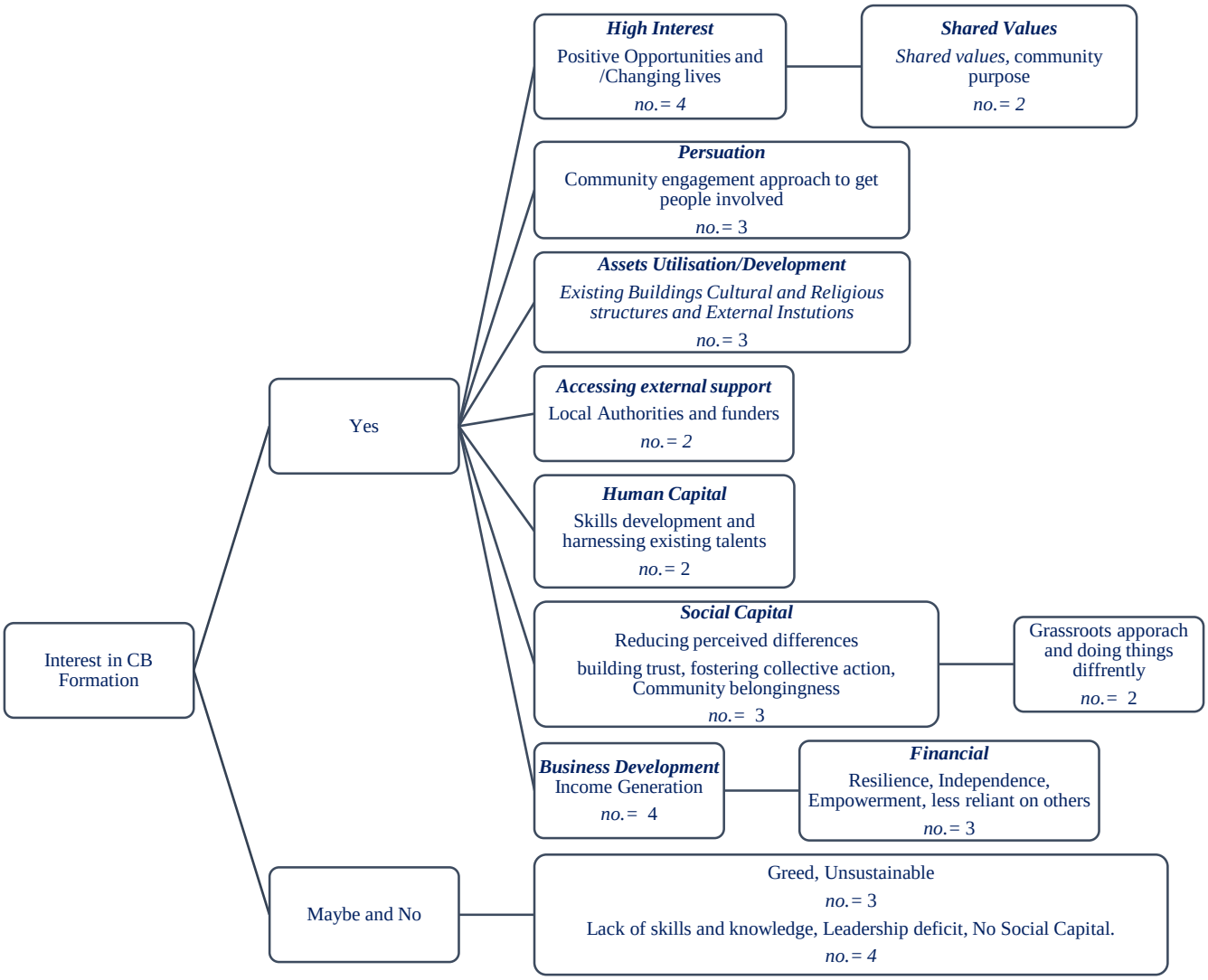
*"To talk about community businesses, you need to have the right skills to run it to do all this. Whoever is leading, there is a model in place; they still need to understand that model and have the right skills to lead." CM10.*

Finally, members suggested that by harnessing the diverse talents within the community, it can position itself for development while simultaneously becoming an asset to both itself and its host community.

*"I can see lots of positive opportunities, and I can see the change in the lives of people and the community and the source of income for the community." CM18*

As indicated above, members responded positively to the formation of Community Businesses (CBs). Figure 16 presents a diagrammatic summary of these responses, which supports the development of the future Community Business Practice framework (see Chapter 6, Section 6.6).

***Figure 16: Opportunities to form CB***




### 5.2.4 Future Practice - Barriers to forming CBs

Following identifying perceived opportunities, members were also asked about the barriers they perceive to forming Community Businesses (CBs). While members responded overwhelmingly positively about the formation of CBs, their identified barriers were also significant. For them, the primary challenge is the lack of trust necessary to mobilise for community action.

| *Table 16: Barriers to CB Formation* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Barriers*** | **No. =** | **%** | **Participant** |
| ***Lack of Trust*** | 8 | 40% | CM3,4,5,6,7,9,10,14 |
| ***Lack of Cohesion/Collaboration*** | 7 | 35% | CM 1,3,4,6,10,11,15 |
| ***Selfish interest*** | 7 | 35% | CM 8,9,10,13,14,18,20 |
| ***Lack of Resources*** | 7 | 35% | CM 3,4,5,8,9,17,20 |
| ***Poverty*** | 6 | 30% | CM 5,11,13,14,15,18 |
| ***Lack of Leadership, skills, and knowledge*** | 5 | 25% | CM 10,15,16,19,20 |
| ***No Community Buy-in*** | 3 | 15% | CM 3,7,8 |

In Table 16, eight members (40%) indicated that trust issues are related to concerns about openness, transparency, and the mistaken belief that New Project Initiators (NPIs) and Community Organisations/Associations (CO/As) leaders act solely out of self-interest.
*"It is our lack of understanding of what binds us together, our lack of understanding of who we may be in this current situation that prevents us from having that transparency" CM3.*

They assert that 'hearsay' thrives in the community, leading individuals to immerse themselves in rumours that hinder their development. Unsubstantiated rumours prevent Community Members (CMs) from accessing the support and services offered by New Project Initiators (NPIs) and Community Organisations/Associations (CO/As). Consequently, the NPIs and CO/As that genuinely aim to provide grassroots support often become disheartened and may ultimately cease their efforts to assist.
*"When somebody is genuinely doing good, the perception will always be that it is not for the benefit of the community; therefore, they will "bring you down." CM6.*

For two members (CM 10, 14), the lack of trust stems from a fear of the unknown, as past negative experiences instil apprehension in individuals when considering new ventures. Consequently, these members are reluctant to take risks when opportunities arise and tend to favour supporting initiatives outside their community.

Seven (35%) of members report that a lack of trust behaviour is prevalent among NPIs, who frequently reject advice to collaborate with established organisations that provide the same or similar services.

*"I do not see that cohesion with most Black people, that if I am successful, I will also help others succeed. To me, it is more than anything. It is greed, selfishness and wanting sole ownership This is behaviour that I have seen a lot." CM10.*

Furthermore, two members (CM 3 and 9) report that sustained collaborations are often linked to trauma resulting from adverse situations or encounters, which may include war, murder, or injustice. While grassroots mobilisation does exist, it remains largely unknown to many due to the absence of a central reference point for information dissemination that can effectively reach deep into the community.

"*The fractions result from the community being far removed from a central religious core, 'that faith group pillar.' Instead, religious leaders operate smaller religious groups than other communities, creating divisions among families and cultural groups." CM3.*

They are often compared to the Asian community, which typically has a central pillar that is faith-based, such as a mosque or temple. As a result, there is a significant level of understanding, cohesion, and community development fostered through these religious institutions.

"*Such systems unify community understanding of their way of life and how their community develops."- CM9.*

Moreover, seven (35%) of the Community Members (CMs) believed that the lack of trust and cooperation stemmed from individuals' selfish intentions. Whether they are New Project Initiators (NPIs), Community Organisations/Associations (CO/As), Volunteers, or Service users, all of these groups operate with inherent self-interest.

*"When people are only focused on financial gain, it poses a challenge for relationships and cohesion to be developed when a venture involves capital funds." CM 9 and 18.*

The seven further assert that selfish interests are deeply entrenched and prevalent across various cultures, tribes, and religious beliefs. As a result, while new community ventures may begin with promise, they can be undermined not only by selfish interests but also by poor management, which could ultimately derail their objectives.

*"Selfish interest and mistrust result from our environment and background; however, there is scope for change if the community persists and gets to the roots of why people behave the*

*way they do. The environment breeds the behaviours, and it is likely that the social setting will need to be changed. Still, if the root causes are not understood, it will be difficult to provide solutions" CM13.*

Another seven members (35%) believed that the lack of financial capital and infrastructure support would pose a significant challenge. Specifically, they expressed concerns about understanding the available funding opportunities and how to access them, along with the need for comprehensive support. Looking internally, community members indicated that some might be willing to lend money to initiate ventures through a community share option. However, the current level of knowledge regarding this option and its appeal needs to be explored further. Members acknowledged that if this were to happen, lenders would be cautious about the potential consequences of unmet repayments. Furthermore, due to existing trust issues, community share offers are not a viable option, as they would likely exacerbate divisions within the community.

*"Negativity and mistrust still hang in the balance and could cause people to give up and drag those positive ones with them without persevering."-CM9.*

Instead, community members recommend exploring mainstream support for communal development by researching the resources available from Local Authorities to assist the community in accessing the necessary support.

Chapter Two's empirical data on socioeconomic disadvantage revealed a significant prevalence of poverty within the Black community. In this context, six community members (30%) indicated that most individuals aspire to earn a living; therefore, participation in a community project that does not provide financial compensation poses a challenge despite the advantages of available volunteering opportunities. Members noted that many Black individuals find themselves at the lowest level of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (CM2), where their immediate concerns include food, clothing, and shelter. Consequently, their physiological circumstances deprioritise community work, collective action, and volunteering. Furthermore, members emphasised that employment, health, and resources are prioritised for those situated on the second tier of the pyramid.

*"We are plagued by the necessities of life. When a person is hungry and preoccupied with hunger, you cannot think apart from wanting to satisfy that hunger. Once this is done, people*

*can have the room to think in those little, basic ways. I think that has been a massive blocker" -CM13.*

Furthermore, financial hardship can make it difficult to travel for voluntary activities. The proximity of Community Business (CB) locations may be a critical factor in this regard. CBs that are not situated near service users may deter participation if they are located too far from the activities, as transportation and its related costs can present a significant barrier, especially for individuals with mobility challenges.
*"Many people are here for economic reasons; therefore, there will be no interest in social action if the venture has no reward. External factors propel poverty. Educating people and understanding the cause of the external factors will be something outside of your control. Therefore, people will choose to go and work to be paid rather than invest in something that they cannot really see." - CM 11 and 14.*

Community members (CMs) further assert that poverty heightens levels of mistrust. Consequently, if individuals remain in poverty, the intentions of New Project Initiators (NPIs) and leaders of Community Organisations/Associations (CO/As) will continually be questioned. Therefore, for community-based initiatives (CBs) to succeed, NPIs and CO/As must secure the support and trust of community members.
*"This is tough to combat. Engaging in community activities becomes a wishful thought rather than a reality, creating a disconnect between the person and their aspirations." -CM15.*

In addition to the previously mentioned barriers, community members (CMs) provided another example of a prevailing perception: *"nothing sold or made in the community is good enough" (CM12).* They report that some entrepreneurs take their communities for granted, compelling internal customers to seek goods and services elsewhere. According to two members (CM12, 14), some NPIs and CO/As struggle because CMs prefer to purchase goods and services from other communities, such as 'Asian shops,' rather than from their own. Justifications for this behaviour include poor customer service, ineffective time management, and a lack of reliability from local businesses.
"*If there is any activity in church like a Christmas party or Summer BBQ or anything, sometimes I will try and cook free of charge just to enjoy, but then it came to a point, I*

*decided to charge them and ever since they stopped giving me that order and paid someone else to cook. So how can I trust them again?" (CM4).*

This results in money 'cycling out' instead of 'recycling within' the community, which could have been used for the collective ventures.
*Mistrust is problematic for community and economic development, well-being, nation-building, and family life; in this case, social capital becomes a high commodity acquisition for collective action to work and be sustained (CM2).*

Five members (25%) believe that there is a deficiency of skills and knowledge within the community. They assert that selecting effective leadership and compensating individuals for their time are the two key factors that will determine the establishment, progression, or regression of community-based initiatives. Therefore, advocating for consistent leadership and education in service delivery is essential for the Black community in enhancing their capacity to develop the community.
"*Education and understanding of external factors to leadership, factors outside of the community's control must be identified. There should be enlightenment to create communal wealth rather than individualistic wealth and then sell that idea to educated people." CM14.*

Overall, there is a consensus among members that experienced professionals with a passion for social action should collaborate toward a collective goal. However, due to the barriers outlined, obtaining the necessary buy-in from the community may be limited. 15% of respondents indicated that identifying a shared purpose would be the primary challenge when evaluating barriers to Community Business (CB) formation.
*"There is a lack of the 'idea of collective belonging' and that commonality of purpose. When these are addressed, entities can start to exist, and CBs can be created" (CM8).*

Members conclude that misunderstandings may arise if individuals do not comprehend their purpose for being present. At this stage, the development of community buy-ins appears to be highly unattainable. The absence of community engagement and the necessity for transparent governance warrant careful consideration.
*"People are essentially looking after themselves because the terrain is quite treacherous, and they lack an understanding of what they buy into (CM7).*

### 5.2.5 Future Practice - Way Forward

*"The basis of social capital belongs to individual actors, their relationships, and the social structures within which they are embedded" Lin and Erickson (2010:4)*

The findings indicate that community members possess a sense of hope for a shared objective. All members of the community are eager to effect change and are prepared to invest the necessary effort to achieve it.

*"This community has been at the bottom for so long, and the fact that we want to change paths is a positive one"- CM13.*

*"The community has gone around with a begging bowl for too long; therefore, that has to change." -CM19.*

Four founders and leaders of Community Organisations/Associations (CO/As) (CM 1, 3, 5, 9), who are also employed in the public sector and possess extensive experience in public engagement, along with four entrepreneurs (CM 4, 6, 7, 15) and two volunteers and service users (CM 8, 14), were consulted for their insights on mitigating the risks associated with Community Business (CB) formation. They suggested that, although obstacles exist, they can be overcome, allowing for trust to be established on a broader scale. Consequently, addressing the issue of trust requires a strategic approach.

"*Seeking and uprooting disruptors who will unconstructively challenge the purpose of ventures will require careful navigation and coordination (CM14). Most community members fall into the category of disruptors; therefore, this group should not be taken for granted. They require more effort to engage than others, as they think they have nothing to lose (CM9) and could create competition within the market." (CM8).*

They suggest that, initially, the New Project Initiators (NPIs) must recognise that there will always be individuals who disrupt and distract from the intended course of action, often prioritising their own perspectives or personal benefits. To address this issue, they recommend employing a robust strategic approach that involves assessing and categorising community members into three distinct groups:

i. Group one comprises professionals and educated individuals who tend to ask constructive questions and easily adapt to trust.
ii.

iii. Group two consists of individuals who have experienced a disaster. These individuals tend to bond more effectively and support one another. They do not question intentions and are open to trusting others.

iv. Group three consists of individuals who question everything. They believe that everyone has an ulterior motive but offer no constructive solutions. These individuals do not easily build trust and often spread false rumours. A significant number of people from the Black community fall into this group.

The leaders further suggested that NPIs and CO/As must initially establish relationships with Group One to lay the foundations for Community Businesses (CBs) before engaging Groups Two and Three. Furthermore, to ensure the success of these relationships, NPIs leading the CB formation must actively listen to and learn from the broader community. NPIs and CO/As must present a united front to the community to foster a sense of togetherness and promote collective action. A coalition of several leaders presenting a unified stance will diminish the perception of a singular leader, which is often resented by many. A small, committed, and dedicated group of individuals can, through their actions, influence a larger majority. In doing so, feelings of jealousy, envy, backbiting, and deliberate attempts to undermine progress will become less pronounced and unnecessary.

The leaders provided recommendations for addressing the identified barriers and for how the community can collaboratively seek solutions to socioeconomic deprivation and inequality, as detailed in Section 6.6, paving the way for a productive and successful future.

## 5.3 Chapter Five-Part Two: The Structuring Structure of the Community Business Field

This section, primarily addressing objective two, investigates the role of fifteen Black-led Social Trading Organisations (STOs) as a structuring structure. It is considered 'Structuring' in that an individual's habitus influences their current and future practices, and it is a 'structure' because the field is systematically organised rather than random or unpatterned. According to Bourdieu, the actors in the field utilise their relative capital to compete and establish relationships with the authorities that shape the structured environment and its rules (Doxa).

This section is thematically divided into three sub-sections. The first sub-section examines how participating organisations are structured within the Community Business (CB) field, benchmarking their current positions against the four CB principles. The second sub-section explores the challenges faced by both new and existing incumbents in forming, operating, and sustaining their CBs. Finally, the third sub-section investigates the extent of social capital through both subjective and objective relationships. The rules (Doxa) within the structured field are established based on these relationships. Subsequently, the impact of these rules on Social Trading Organisations' (STOs) ability to operate equitably, as well as their use of cultural and symbolic capital to advance within the field, is discussed.

### 5.3.1 The Structuring Field

In the preceding chapters, the Social Economic Space was mapped with a broader scope encompassing Social Enterprises (SEs) in all forms, including voluntary and nonprofit organisations (Hulgård, 2014). The defining characteristic of the Social Space is not the nonprofit constraint but rather whether an organisation is part of “a non-capitalist economy” (Hulgård, 2014, p. 72). This section benchmarks the setup and structure of Black-led Social Trading Organisations (STOs) against the four Community Business (CB) principles: being locally rooted, accountability to the local community, trading for profit, and having a broad impact. These principles are essential for assessing the suitability and positioning of the organisations as community businesses. In this domain, the research employs the term Social Trading Organisations (STOs) to refer to the participating organisations, indicating that they operate within the socioeconomic space without being confined to a specific legal structure.

### 5.3.1.1 Locally Rooted STOs

The locally rooted principle pertains to Social Trading Organisations (STOs) that function within a specific locality or neighbourhood and are based on a community asset, such as a building designated for community use. Table 17 shows that fourteen participating STOs are locally rooted in eight towns, cities, and surrounding counties in the West Midlands. Although one of the organisations (8) is headquartered in London, it operates in various cities across the UK, including Birmingham.

***Table 17: The CB Field – Locally rooted in a West Midlands Locality***

| *Variable* | Yes no.= | No no.= | Locality | Participant |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Operating within the West Midlands Region*** | 4 | | Coventry | STO 1, 7 |
| | | | Birmingham | STO 2, 3, 9, 10, 12, 15 |
| | | | Sandwell | STO 4 |
| | | | Warwickshire | STO 5 |
| | | | Wolverhampton | STO 6 |
| | | | Telford and Wrekin | STO 8 |
| | | | West Bromwich | SO, 13, 14 |
| | | | Walsall | STO 11 |
| | | 1 | Based in London but works across the UK, including Birmingham. | STO 8 |
| ***Must operate within a community asset*** | 9 | | N/A | SO, 4,5,6,9,11,12,13,14,15 |
| | | 6 | | SO, 1,2,3,7,8,10 |

***Source:*** *Author's Own*

Of the fifteen STOs, nine met the criterion of operating within a community asset, while six did not have a physical base but operated from locally established community centres. Among the nine, two (STO 9 and STO 14) operate from satellite centres in the Black Country. Additionally, three organisations (STO 9, STO 12, and STO 15) operate in other parts of the UK, specifically in London, Leeds, and Manchester.

### 5.3.1.2 Accountable to the local community

This principle aligns with organisations led and operated by individuals residing within a specific locality or neighbourhood. All board members are from that area and, consequently, are accountable to the local community. The findings presented in Table 18 indicate that only six STOs met this criterion. While the majority of STOs are locally rooted, nine out of fifteen have directors or trustees from different regions.

*Table 18: The CB Field - Accountability to the Local Community*

| *Variable* | Yes no.= | No no.= | Participant |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Owned and operated by the local community. The leaders*** | 6 | | STO 4,5,9,11,14,15 |
| ***and board of trustees/directors are from the area.*** | | 9 | STO 1,2,3,6,7,8,10,12,13 |

***Source:*** *Author's Own*

Despite this, all fifteen STOs have board members who possess lived experience related to the issues their organisations address. This provides the STOs with a unique opportunity to engage with their service users from an informed, needs-based perspective.
*"We do definitely keep it like home, and we stay within the local area, and we operate within our community, and we try to support locally" - STO9.*

STOs whose board members are not based locally establish committees composed of local members who meet regularly to support the organisation and its objectives.
*"Even though our board members are not from the local area, they understand the whole notion of accountability and that we are here for the downtrodden, the marginalised, the vilified, and the disenfranchised—those labelled in inverted commas, i.e., the so-called problematic, hard-to-reach, and so on. So, we are rooted in a very person-centred, community-centred approach." – STO15.*

### 5.3.1.3 Trading for Profit

Organisations also qualify as community businesses if they provide services, generate revenue from them to make a profit, and then reinvest for social good. This principle evaluates the service provision of Social Trading Organisations (STOs) and their income sources to determine whether they trade for profit or rely on grant aid. Table 19 outlines twenty-five distinct services (excluding overlaps) offered by STOs.

***Table 19: The CB Field - Trading for Profit***

| *Participant* | *Services* | *Income sources* |
|---|---|---|
| ***STO 1*** | Food poverty, Well-being | Small contracts |
| ***STO 2*** | Welfare, social and economic development. | Grants, Small membership dues |
| ***STO 3*** | International Business Support | Grants |
| ***STO 4*** | Welfare, Information/advocacy and campaign, Education inc ESSOL, supplementary school, Youth services | Grants and Fees from music instrument hire |
| ***STO 5*** | Racial Justice, EDI | Grants and Private contracting |
| ***STO 6*** | Mental health, housing support, counselling services, well-being hub and career support. | Grants and CCG clinical commissioning |
| ***STO 7*** | Youth services | Donations |
| ***STO 8*** | Crowdfunding opportunities for small, under-resourced organisations | Grants and public donations |
| ***STO 9*** | Community Heritage and History | Grants |
| ***STO 10*** | Business Support, Access to Space and Marketplace events | Grants, Membership, Patrons, and Monthly Donations |
| ***STO 11*** | Supplementary school, Elderly Daycare services, and Employment & Training. | Grants, Commissions with local authority, fees from day centre services. |
| ***STO 12*** | Mental health issues, suicide prevention and general wellbeing. | Commissions with the probation service, police and Crime Commissioner's Office, and the Violence Reduction Partnership |
| ***STO 13*** | Childcare / Early years services | Grants and Fees from services |
| ***STO 14*** | Culturally responsive mental health services | Grants and fees are from students' placement and renting rooms. |
| ***STO 15*** | Criminal justice | Grants, Commissions with Local Authorities and the police |

***Source:*** *Author's Own*

The findings indicate that revenue is generated from various sources, including fees from direct service provision, contracting and/or commissioning, donations, membership dues, and funded grants. Only one STO (12) sustains itself solely through contracting or commissioning. Two others (1 and 7) are small entities that are still navigating the grant funding and fundraising landscape while generating income from subcontracting or donations.

*"We have tried to access funding from various sources, mainly supporting the Windrush project from the local authority and the police, but have not been successful yet" – STO7.*

The legal structure that allows these organisations to function as for-profit entities was also evaluated. Table 20 indicates that 13 of the 15 are incorporated entities registered with regulatory bodies such as Companies House, Charity Commissions, and/or the Community Interest Company (CIC) regulator.

Two organisations operate as unincorporated associations (STO 1 and STO 7) without a formal legal structure, noting that these two (STO 1 and STO 7) are micro-organisations that have been in operation for less than two years.

The data also reveals that while eight organisations engage in trading activities, their legal structure may not qualify them as profit-generating entities. Specifically, their status as registered charities and Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs) means they rely on grant funding from multiple sources for survival. It is important to note that there are exceptions where a charity may also be a limited company (Charitable Company) and can, therefore, generate profit.

***Table 20: The CB Field - Trading for Profit – Legal Structure***

| ***Legal Structure*** | **No =** | **Participant** |
|---|---|---|
| *Unincorporated association* | 2 | STO 1,7 |
| *Registered Charity* | 7 | STO 2,4,6,11,13,14,15 |
| *Limited by Guarantee* | 2 | STO 3,12 |
| *Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)* | 1 | STO 5 |
| *Community Interest Company (CIC)* | 3 | STO 8,9,10 |
| ***Total*** | **15** | |

***Source:*** *Author's Own*

Only five of the 15 organisations are established as trading entities, specifically Limited by Guarantee or Community Interest Companies (CIC). Among these five, four (STOs 3, 8, 9, and 12) are private limited companies by guarantee without share capital; therefore, their profits are reinvested to achieve social, economic, and environmental objectives. However, data regarding the percentage of profits reinvested was not collected. One STO (10) operates as a private limited company with shares under the Community Interest Company (CIC) umbrella. In terms of their operational duration, Table 21 provides a comprehensive overview of unincorporated and small organisations, medium-sized organisations established between 6 to 10 years, and long-established organisations that have been in operation for 11 years or more. It is important to note that the length of operations does not necessarily correlate with higher or lower income levels, as the study did not gather this data.

***Table 21: The CB Field - Trading for Profit- Length of Trading/Operation***

| ***Length of trading/operation*** | **No. =** | **Participant** |
|---|---|---|
| *< 5* | 5 | SO, 1,3,7,8,10 |
| *6-10* | 3 | SO, 2,5,9 |
| *11-20* | 2 | SO, 4,12 |
| *>20* | 5 | SO, 6,11,13,14,15 |
| ***Total*** | **15** | |

***Source:*** *Author's Own*

Benchmarking the above findings against those operating from a base, it was revealed that five STOs, which have been in operation for less than five years, have done so without a physical base or premises (see Table 15). The exception is STO 2, which has operated for ten years without a base.

### 5.3.1.4 Having a Broad Impact

A broad impact principle is a fundamental tenet of any social organisation, regardless of its legal structure. A Social Trading Organisation (STO) must adhere to this principle to fulfil its organisational objectives and mission. Table 19 presents the various services offered by STOs across eight localities. These services significantly affect the lives of their users and beneficiaries, as well as the broader community and locality. The diversity of this impact is detailed in Table 22.

***Table 22: The CB Field - Having a Broad Impact***

| *Participant* | *Impact areas* | *Service user groups* |
|---|---|---|
| ***SO 1*** | Eradicating food poverty. | Black Community |
| ***SO 2*** | Welfare, social and economic development of the Ghanaian community. | Ghanaian individuals, businesses, and groups. |
| ***SO 3*** | Growth support is available to businesses in the UK seeking to invest and operate in Africa. | African-led businesses |
| ***SO 4*** | Welfare, education, etc., and small business services. | Black people who are French speaking. |
| ***SO 5*** | Eliminating discrimination and hate, promoting equality of opportunity across all societies, and promoting good relationships between diverse groups. | Diverse communities, specifically those with protected characteristics |
| ***SO 6*** | Mental health, housing support, counselling services, well-being hub and career support. | Black Community |
| ***SO 7*** | Various youth services | Black Caribbean community but not exclusively |
| ***SO 8*** | Provide live crowdfunding opportunities for small, under-resourced nonprofit Black Black LED nonprofits. | Nonprofit Black, Black-led organisations |
| ***SO 9*** | Highlight the experiences of young people of colour within the heritage sector, providing creative support in tangible heritage, history, community heritage, and intangible heritage, including oral stories and experiences of community groups. | Young people from the Black community |
| ***SO 10*** | Access spaces like theatres and banks are typically hard for Black people to get into. | Black Community |
| ***SO 11*** | Address the underachievement of children in schools by empowering them to learn about history, English, and maths. Also, offers elderly daycare services, employment, and training that empower and enable communities to better themselves. | Diverse communities |
| ***SO 12*** | Mental health issues, suicide prevention and general wellbeing training to organisational leaders and statutory bodies. | Organisational leaders and staff of statutory bodies. |
| ***SO 13*** | Families with young children | Diverse communities |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ***SO 14*** | People with severe and enduring mental illness, their families and carers and the wider community. | Diverse communities |
| ***SO15*** | Family support and criminal justice include engaging with individuals, families, and communities associated with the criminal justice system. And those who are caught up in violence and associated social challenges. | Families and Young people from diverse communities |

***Source:*** *Author's Own*

Some of the impact extends beyond the immediate offerings of the STO. For instance, one STO (5) provides Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) initiatives in areas such as health, well-being, community safety, hate crime, domestic violence, sexual abuse and assault, forced marriages, female genital mutilation (FGM), and financial inclusion. These initiatives yield far more significant outcomes than those typically offered by most organisations, resulting in extensive and enduring impacts. Similarly, another organisation stated that: *"Families that we work with are more prolific. They are not like usual. It is a life-or-death situation at times, and if we do not get involved with this person, his mindset will not change; he or she will be killed. We are an organisation that gives a second chance to individuals and families associated with crime and criminality, and they may not have another chance from the statutory or business sectors." - STO15.*

During the interview process, it became evident that none of the STOs comprehended community business, its methodology, or its advantages. An assessment was conducted to benchmark each STO against the four community business principles to ascertain whether the STOs qualified as community businesses. Table 23 presents a detailed breakdown of the findings, indicating that out of the 15 participants, only five STOs operated in accordance with all four community business principles, albeit unconsciously.

***Table 23 – The CB Field – STO and their CB Position***

| *Participant* | *Locally rooted and* | *Operating from a community asset* | *Accountable to the local community* | *Trade for Profit* | *Broad impact* | *CB Qualification* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *STO 1* | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes | No |
| *STO 2* | Yes | No | No | No | Yes | No |
| *STO 3* | Yes | No | No | No | Yes | No |
| *STO 4* | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| *STO 5* | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| *STO 6* | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | No |
| *STO 7* | Yes | No | No | No | Yes | No |
| *STO 8* | No | No | No | No | Yes | No |
| *STO 9* | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| *STO 10* | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes | No |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *STO 11* | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| *STO 12* | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | No |
| *STO 13* | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | No |
| *STO 14* | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| STO15 | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |

| ***Variable*** | ***Yes no.=*** | ***No no.=*** | ***Participant*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| *CB Qualification* | 5 | | SO, 4,5,11,14,15 |
| | | 10 | SO, 1,2,3,6,7,8,9,10,12,13 |
| ***Source:*** *Author's Own* | | | |

According to the findings, 14 out of the 15 Social Trading Organisations (STOs), including the five qualifying Community Businesses (CBs), continued to depend on grant funding as their primary source of income. This is despite the fact that the five qualifying CBs generated revenue from trading services. Since the percentage of trading revenue was not collected during this research, it remains unclear whether the five STOs operate as profit-generating organisations. Additionally, the profit margin required for an organisation to be classified as a for-profit entity is also unknown. However, infrastructure support organisations, such as Social Enterprise UK, assert that:

"*Like all businesses, social enterprises seek to deliver profit by trading in goods or services, but they reinvest or donate at least half of those profits to their social or environmental mission."*

In summary, the Power to Change Research Institute's Community Business Market Report (2015) emphasises that an organisation failing to meet any of the four criteria and not making significant progress toward doing so is unlikely to achieve the sustainable community impact that is the hallmark of community business. Next, the research explores the experiences of STO leaders in establishing and managing their organisations within the field. Bourdieu proposes an analysis of the various systems of dispositions that these leaders have developed by internalising specific social and economic conditions, which are evident in a distinct trajectory within the field (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

### 5.3.2 Struggle for Transformation

The structure of a community business field can be compared to a football field, populated by various actors and institutions that have both internal divisions and external boundaries, where a game is played. The players occupy designated positions (see Chapter 3, Section 3.6.5 for context). The game has specific rules that novice players must learn, along with essential skills, as they begin to participate. The following section outlines the conditions and rules that establish the context for players to form and operate within the community business field.

#### 5.3.2.1 Forming a Social Trading Organisation (STO)

The research aimed to assess the experiences of STO leaders by examining the experiences of their founders during the inception phase. Participants were divided into two groups: those who founded their organisations and those who were recruited. Table 24 shows that seven of the 15 STOs are founded by their leaders, while the remaining eight are employees.

***Table 24: SO, Founder Position***

| ***Participant*** | **Founder** | | **Leader Employment Position** |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Yes no.=** | **No no.=** | |
| *STO 1* | 1 | | Trustee |
| *STO 2* | | 1 | Elected president |
| *STO 3* | | 1 | Chair |
| *STO 4* | 1 | | Chair |
| *STO 5* | | 1 | Chief Executive Officer |
| *STO 6* | | 1 | Operations Manager |
| *STO 7* | 1 | | Director |
| *STO 8* | 1 | | Director |
| *STO 9* | | 1 | Programmes Producer |
| *STO 10* | 1 | | Director |
| *STO 11* | | 1 | Chief Executive Officer |
| *STO 12* | 1 | | Director |
| *STO 13* | | 1 | Manager |
| *STO 14* | | 1 | Chief Executive Officer |
| STO15 | 1 | | Director |
| ***Total*** | **7** | **8** | |

***Source:*** *Author's Own*

In this section on formation, the research concentrates exclusively on the experiences of the seven founders. They articulate various reasons for establishing their organisations, including the initiation of passion projects or the response to needs, trauma, or frustration.

Bailey (2012) asserts that the emergence of these organisations from communities, their promotion of specific values, and their objectives to provide local benefits often reflect the origins and motivations of their founders. For instance, a group of individuals identified a rise in the number of Black men with mental health disorders entering the justice system and decided to establish an organisation to address this issue (STO 15). Another organisation was founded by a group of directors from a community club who, through their work, recognised the challenges faced by young people dealing with violence and crime, which has caused significant devastation within the community (STO 7). One leader from the STO initiated their organisation as an opportunistic venture following the COVID-19 pandemic, during a time when many Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIMs) were more receptive to the challenges faced by minority organisations (STO 10).

*"When I set up the organisation, it started as a campaign. I said, imagine if everybody from the Black community gave £2 and we have a pot of money, we would be able to create opportunities and resources. We would not necessarily have to rely on, you know, government funding and grants and so on. So, it was just a vision, really, and I did not necessarily know that it was going to become what it has become." – STO10.*

According to all seven founders, the formation and incorporation process was straightforward, thanks to their qualifications, experiences, and skills. One founder explained, *"All four founders are long-experienced businesswomen; each of us has a variety of professional experience that was the bedrock of our ability to get this off the ground." – STO 8.*

Nonetheless, while some leaders were self-starters, they also recognised the value of external advice and support, particularly in areas where their skill sets were lacking. They sought assistance from various IPIMs and other support organisations, including ISE, banks, BVSC, HLC, the Funding Network, and the Migrant Group.

*"I think it was quite easy because there was a social enterprise that would support other social enterprises in getting the structure in place, like in a memorandum of articles and all that kind of stuff. And they had some funding to help community organisations set up. So, I got that support from there and all the necessary training." – STO12.*

During the formative years, three STOs (10,12,15) of the seven also reported receiving small grants from the National Lottery Community Fund, the Heart of England Community Foundation, Children in Need, and their Local Authorities.

Despite the challenges above, three leaders (4, 7, 8, 15) reported difficulties, including a lack of general knowledge and information relevant to their areas of work, language barriers, and the absence of start-up grant funding. One STO (4) indicated that language barriers posed significant challenges for mentors, who ultimately withdrew their support due to communication difficulties. Another STO (8) expressed that their team's expertise was crucial at that time, as external assistance was minimal. Additionally, STO (7) noted that the limited visibility of resources for legally incorporating their organisations was problematic despite having already outlined their organisational objectives. They further stated that navigating a secular system of evidence-based approaches, as well as understanding the ideological and philosophical frameworks of the social and economic sector landscape, required extensive reading.

*"Until setting up as a charity, it took us about a year to talk to key individuals about legal structure to find out how we could not be straight-jacketed, but have the flexibility to be faith-based, to be community involved or community-led and to be a public health driven organisation. So, we had to work through several things because we have—connections in the different sectors, which helped us become robust. I'm not saying that we're fully there yet; we are still navigating through becoming more robust, stable, cutting edge and impactful. It was tough" STO 15.*

Two STOs (STO 4 and STO 8) reported that lacking experience in fundraising, they self-invested their start-up funds. They clarified that new STOs face a dilemma between relying on grant funding and adopting a more entrepreneurial approach. However, they found the prospect of grant funding more appealing due to their limited personal resources available for investment in business activities.

*"I think overall, when setting up, there can be a clash in establishing a sustainable business and aligning that with a safe community-benefiting structure focusing on the operation and focusing on the delivery."- STO8.*

With these experiences in mind, the founders of STO believed that additional support, particularly in the form of start-up funding, could have been offered at the outset of their journey to assist and facilitate the entry of new participants into the sector.

### 5.3.2.2 Operating a Social Trading Organisation (STO)

Regarding experiences operating within the socio-economic space, the research aimed to understand the extent of support and resources available to organisations and how Social Trading Organisations (STOs) use those resources to build resilience and sustainability. The responses were categorised into three main areas: access to resources, capacity and capability support, and resilience and sustainability development. The data reflects the responses of all fifteen social organisations.

Firstly, concerning **access to resources**, STOs raised concerns about obtaining funding, information, skills and training, and human resources. According to five STOs (1, 2, 5, 8, 9), there is a widespread lack of awareness regarding local, regional, and national opportunities for applying for and accessing resources. They report that the initial step for STOs is to seek grant funding for their activities from various grant-making bodies. However, most small organisations with limited or no track record struggle to secure project funds, regardless of their legal structure, whether established as for-profit social enterprises or not-for-profit organisations.

*"In the two years since we started operating, we have tried to access funding from various sources, such as the local authority and the police, but have not succeeded yet. Although we met all the criteria, feedback was not given." - STO7.*

Seven STOs (2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13) describe the fundraising process as laborious. They noted that while a few funders are generous enough to provide core funding to build reserves, most funders prioritise project-specific initiatives, which are short-term and unsustainable. Furthermore, many Black-led STOs tend to be smaller and, as a result, compete for grants against larger organisations that have more established relationships with funders. According to the STOs, larger and more established organisations are more likely to secure long-term funding and can sustain their operations more effectively. Additionally, unincorporated STOs face challenges when applying for funds or contract opportunities due to their legal structure not meeting the funders' requirements.

Moreover, STOs often struggle to articulate their needs on complex application forms because they lack the skills necessary to understand what information to include.
*"I feel that funding in early years is appalling regardless of whether it is an ethnic minority organisation or not. Staff are paid minimum wage for looking after and caring for the next generation of adults. We are the forgotten sector. If, however, we were based in an affluent area, then families would pay more for the service and fewer, if any, children would be ELT funded, and therefore, the nursery would be profitable. However, in my experience, ethnic minority children do not tend to frequent affluent nurseries. Getting funding for any project is increasingly difficult." –SO13.*

STOs (6, 8, 15) indicate that even when funding is secured, the expectations of the funders necessitate the provision of detailed information regarding the use of the funds and their intended outcomes, such as the impact report. For some organisations, this requirement can be challenging to meet due to the organisation's limited capacity and capability to provide comprehensive information.
*"When we get the funding, we must provide all information. They need twice the quality of work and information as other organisations. We deserve the funding. We are doing much work directly impacting the Community, and we often do not get the funds that other organisations get that are not Black-led because we are not doing the required due diligence" STO6.*

Furthermore, regarding information dissemination, three STOs (5, 6, 9) express concern that information about funding and other opportunities tends to circulate within specific networks and groups in the social and economic spheres.
*"Information is not readily available online or through a hard copy engagement with different groups and not even provided regularly." - STO5.*

However, they acknowledge that acquiring information often involves partnerships with non-Black-led organisations. They assert that these organisations have superior access to information and opportunities, more extensive social networks within their communities, and connections with individuals or organisations that possess influence, power, and financial resources.

To them, the information and opportunities acquired by non-Black-led organisations are shared within their community or among other organisations in their networks, ensuring that everyone can benefit. In contrast, this practice is not prevalent within the Black community, where information gained tends to remain with a single benefactor fortunate enough to access such opportunities rather than being disseminated to the broader community.
*"That lack of information is a barrier- if you have not had friends or family members when growing up who have previously set up their businesses and entered these spaces and have been able to lead by example, then it is not easy. So, when an opportunity presents itself, you feel lucky when you get some information, or it feels like magic, that something has just come to you, so you keep it." – STO9.*

Another challenge is the lack of skills and training—five STOs (1, 5, 7, 14, 15) report that this deficiency also affects opportunities for professional and personal development. For instance, smaller STOs often cannot access training opportunities due to their limited or nonexistent track record. For other STOs, the challenge manifests in two ways: a) recognising the importance of external input for personal and business development and being able to access it, and b) prioritising the generation of income to support organisational development and sustainability.
*"You are so busy doing the day-to-day work, supporting other groups and organisations, and delivering the services that you are commissioned to deliver that it is very difficult to find the time to step aside and look at how you need to develop yourselves. There may not be the capacity to chase the opportunities to access them" - STO5.*

Consequently, STOs (2, 3, 5) prioritise their organisational commitments over seizing available opportunities. They assert that any available time is dedicated to family obligations, leaving no additional time for training.
*"I have to balance the two; how much time am I going to put into this, and how would that affect my income levels?" - STO3.*

Five STOs (4, 5, 6, 8, 12) further indicated that larger organisations, often not led by Black individuals, have dedicated officers for various roles across different departments, including personnel for fundraising. In contrast, smaller organisations lack the resources to hire staff and primarily depend on volunteers.

This resource imbalance results in systemic inequality. Smaller Black-led STOs express concerns that they are expected to achieve the same reporting outcomes as their larger counterparts, all while managing their daily operations despite their limited capacity. This disparity in resources highlights the necessity for a more equitable distribution of resources.
*"If you look at organisations such as M, it is a big mental health charity, though the amount of finance that M gets to do the work and compared to others, we do not get anything much, yet we still have the same issues and our problems are getting greater and is going to get greater." STO6.*

Secondly, concerning **capacity and capability support**, all STOs stated that their time is primarily spent engaging with service users and conducting fundraising activities. Although some STOs have staff members in distinct roles, most are under-resourced, limiting their ability to concentrate on strategic initiatives that could elevate the organisation to the next level.
*"As a small charity, although I am the manager with a job description, it is not about sitting around the desk - day-to-day work. I also do other operational stuff, like cooking, cleaning, driving, etc. All that with very little money." I have no time to do the strategic stuff; it's about survival." - SO11.*

Five STOs (4, 5, 6, 8, 12) report that a lack of time prevents them from attending meetings and networking events, causing them to miss valuable opportunities. Furthermore, attending these meetings and events distracts them from their work, thereby increasing the demands and pressures on organisations and leaders.
*"It is hard because you only have a few people. You cannot get out and about, and you like crash and burn, and you don't seem to get any work coming through. You are not privy to opportunities because you can't attend those meetings. There is no time because we are always firefighting, so there's no time to do other things as well, and it's a consistent sort of information that I'm hearing from other organisation leaders." STO12.*

With limited financial resources, many STOs rely on volunteers to fill the capacity gap. However, utilising volunteers presents challenges, as they often lack the necessary skills to perform specific tasks effectively.*"I think it is important that we utilise people skills as best we can. Human capital is important but sometimes underestimated; we get a lot out of the*

*people working here. In turn, we actively support their personal growth and development with various forms of training, but how much can you expect from a volunteer? How many evenings during the week can you expect to volunteer to sacrifice their time away from their families?" STO4.*

Relating to capability support, another five STOs (6, 10, 11, 8, 13) that access assistance from infrastructure support organisations report that although the support is sometimes provided free of charge, the providers themselves must secure external funding to offer these services. They indicate that this support is also short-term and ceases when the infrastructure support organisations' funds are depleted.

*"Operationally, we had TFN to give us pro bono logistical support as a host and a partner, and they allowed us to use their infrastructure at no cost but stopped when all their funds were allocated."- SO8.*

*"I get support from the local early years team if I need it for advice or guidance regarding childcare policies and procedures and training for myself and staff. I can access paid advice from the SCVO for funding advice, although I tend to search for funding opportunities myself." SO13.*

Furthermore, STOs (6,10,11,8,13) report that support from private and public institutions, such as banks, growth hubs, and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), is insufficiently visible. Most opportunities these groups offer are often promoted within specific circles rather than reaching minority organisations, despite marketing and promotional materials featuring Black individuals. STOs perceive a lack of genuine commitment to assisting minority communities. While opportunities are advertised, they are not accessed or taken seriously because individuals do not feel a connection to the support provided.

*"So, people do not see programmes as genuine, just a tick box exercise. You see many Black faces on the cover of programmes, but how many of those people are talking about how great the programme was and how much it's helped them? So, either that isn't happening, or people are reluctant to wave them off."- STO10.*

Thirdly, regarding **resilience and sustainable development**, the STOs acknowledged that further efforts are necessary, particularly in enhancing the capabilities of Black-led STOs. To address this, they advocate for developing leadership roles among staff, volunteers, and service users to bolster the organisation's initiatives. In this regard, four STOs (2, 6, 8, 9) reported that if resilience and sustainability are not integrated from the outset, the viability of operations and development becomes nearly unattainable. To survive, Black-led STOs often adapt their services to align with available funding opportunities, even when the funders' priorities do not correspond with their organisational objectives. Consequently, some organisations lose their focus and become primarily grant seekers to maintain their operations. They invest time and resources to develop and implement strategic and sustainable plans; however, the necessary technical infrastructure, expertise, and skills for advancement, growth, sustainability, and survival are lacking. Their concerns were centred on three areas:

***a) The short-term competitive nature of mainstream grant funding***

Like capacity and capability support, STOs indicated that development support opportunities are often short-term and lack a plan for progression and growth once the support concludes. Black-led organisations struggle to grow due to limited development opportunities They primarily focus on grant funding schemes that prioritise racialised communities; however, such funding is scarce. In contrast, organisations that are not Black-led, particularly those led by White individuals, do not face these challenges, according to six STOs (2, 6, 8, 9, 10, 14).

*"The problem with this mainstream funding is when it finishes, we will have to worry again and always compete against non-Black organisations, and although we've got the track record, they can still decide that we no longer fit the bill" – STO8.*

***b) The lack of entrepreneurial skills to develop and implement trading activities that generate earned/unrestricted revenue.***

Three STOs (6, 8, 10) reported that, due to increased competition in the grant funding landscape, there is heightened pressure to develop innovative entrepreneurial practices to achieve financial resilience. However, this transition will initially require significant capital investment, which these organisations lack. Furthermore, as Black-led STOs often lack the skills to integrate business practices that generate revenue to sustain their operations, they frequently misallocate resources during the trial process when embarking on entrepreneurial

initiatives. Ultimately, they revert to relying on grant funding when their investments fail to yield tangible outcomes.

*"I think Black people have not been nurtured throughout society in the Western world to believe that we can contribute successfully to business, and when forced in that position, they struggle to make informed decisions."-STO9.*

### *c) Capacity to implement entrepreneurial practices*

Following this, STOs (2, 6, 8, 10, 14) report that meeting the needs of the growing ethnic community demands significant time and effort. Furthermore, time is also required to perform various strategic and operational duties. However, limited capacity remains a persistent challenge that threatens the survival of these organisations. Additionally, STOs emphasize the necessity of being well-networked and having representation at key decision-making tables to access opportunities for transformation. They assert that this journey requires individuals with determination to persevere, as these constraints make growth and sustainability increasingly difficult to achieve unless they are addressed from the outset.

"*We have more disadvantages, such as not being representative in decision-making areas. Even where there is support, representation is minimal. We must be seated at the right tables at the right time, not a second or an afterthought. We need to be at the table with the decision-makers and take this seriously." –STO14.*

In summary, Power to Change reports that the core principles of Community Businesses (CBs) are to revitalise local enterprises and community assets by developing innovative business models, operating at low costs with volunteer support, and generating revenue from loyal customers who embrace their vision. Consequently, CBs flourish in areas where other social enterprises struggle. The findings indicate that the factors enabling the formation and operation of CBs are plausible to some extent; however, they are currently hindered by the challenges faced by Social Trading Organisations (STOs) in navigating the field. To advance and propose effective solutions to these challenges, the research aimed to understand the extent of the human, cultural, and symbolic capital that STO leaders bring to the field as active participants and whether these assets could be leveraged to their advantage in overcoming the obstacles they encounter.

### 5.3.2.3 Assessing Legitimacy – Fitting in and Standing Out

The cultural, symbolic, and human capital of STO leaders were evaluated to ascertain the knowledge and expertise they possess to drive their organisations toward resilience. This assessment also considers their professional and strategic positioning, enabling them to compete and operate as equal partners in the field, as outlined in Table 25.

***Table 25: Assessing Cultural and Symbolic Capitals – STO Qualification Levels***

| ***Qualification*** | **No. =** | **Participant** |
|---|---|---|
| *Level 5 in IT – HnD* | 1 | STO 1, |
| *PhD* | 3 | STO 2,3,15 |
| *BA, BSE Undergraduate Degrees* | 5 | STO 4,5,10,12,13 |
| *Master's Degree* | 3 | STO 4,8,9 |
| *Teaching Qualification* | 2 | STO 6,14 |
| *Diploma* | 2 | STO 7,14 |
| *NVQ* | 1 | STO 11 |
| *Professional - SFEDI* | 1 | STO 10 |

***Source**: Author's Own*

In its institutionalised state, cultural capital represents a type of objectification that must be distinguished from other forms. As demonstrated in the case of educational qualifications, they impart unique attributes to the cultural capital they are believed to secure (Bourdieu, 1986). Table 26 demonstrates that STO leaders possess advanced qualifications (human capital) in their respective fields. Furthermore, they have accumulated a collective work experience of over 314 years, with individual tenures ranging from a minimum of four years to more than forty years at the maximum.

***Table 26 – Assessing Cultural and Symbolic Capital – Sector Experience.***

| ***Sector Experience*** | **No. =** | **Participant** |
|---|---|---|
| *< 5* | 1 | STO 4 |
| *6-19* | 3 | STO 8,9,10 |
| *>20 and over* | 11 | STO 1,2,3,4,5,7,11,12,13,14,15 |
| ***Total*** | **15** | |

***Source**: Author's Own*

Regarding expertise and skills, Table 27 illustrates that STO leaders possess eighteen distinct professional skills, six community development skills, and eleven creative and other intersectional skill sets relevant to their work.

***Table 27: Assessing Cultural and Symbolic Capital – Skills***

| ***Category*** | ***Skill*** | ***No.=*** | ***Participant*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Professional* | IT<br>Administrative<br>Programme evaluation<br>Systems review<br>Teaching/Lecturing<br>Research<br>Strategic planning<br>Project and Operations management<br>Business Development and management<br>Marketing, Communications and PR<br>Investment banking<br>Finance<br>EDI<br>Governance<br>Legal<br>HR<br>Social work<br>Academic | 12 | STO 1,2,3,4,5,6,8,11,12,13,14,15 |
| *Community* | Data collection, management, monitoring and evaluation<br>Regeneration specialist<br>Local Economic Development<br>Community engagement<br>Bid writing /Fundraising<br>Events Management | 7 | STO 4,6,7,8,11,14,15 |
| *Creative and Other* | Graphic design<br>People/Social<br>Performing artist<br>Writer<br>Facilitator<br>Actor<br>Dancer<br>Public speaking<br>Creative<br>Pastoral<br>Influencer and mediator | 7 | STO 1,6,9,10,12,14,15 |

***Source**: Author's Own*

According to Moore (2014), cultural capital can be classified in terms of accomplishment and transposability, which provide an agent with distinction in a combined embodied form. In addition to qualifications, skills, and experience, Black-led STOs have acquired various forms of recognition (symbolic capital). These include:

i. *Membership of the Royal Town Planning Institute*
   *Deputy chair of the Birmingham Commonwealth Association*
   *COVID Campaign Award*
ii. *Community-based awards for Black Lawyers Society*

iii. *City magistrate for 29 years*
iv. *Fellow of the Royal RSA*
v. *Museum and Heritage Awards*
vi. *Poet Laureate of a university*
vii. *Future Faces and Arts and Culture Award nominations*
*NBC Awards for Community Unsung Hero*
viii. *West Midlands. Representatives for the baton bearers Commonwealth,*
*Alfred Fagan Award for Champion of Theatre*
ix. *Charity of the Year in 2015*
x. *Contribution to Supporting Black Communities in Mental Health Award*
xi. *The Voice Award for outstanding community involvement work*
xii. *The Queen Platinum Award for outstanding work to the Caribbean Community*

When examining the various forms of symbolic capital, including cultural and human capital, Bourdieu's (1977) intention is twofold. First, he seeks to illustrate symbolic capital's arbitrary and instrumental nature as assets that confer social and cultural advantages or disadvantages. Second, as noted by Moore (2008), Bourdieu seeks to demonstrate that, through the process of transubstantiation, the domains of symbolic capital are homologous to the structure of the economic field. In the previous section, STOs emphasised the significance of their expertise and skills during their formation, particularly when external support was lacking. However, the findings suggest that the credentials of Black-led STO leaders have little to no impact or relevance in competitive contexts. STO leaders assert that Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIMs) often overlook their achievements when commissioning services or allocating resources. From the perspective of STO leaders, the arguments put forth by Bourdieu and Moore may apply to non-Black-led organisations, where qualifications, skills, expertise, and awards play a central role in the decision-making processes of IPIMs. These institutions tend to favour STOs that achieve exemplary organisational status and recognition for their professionalism. Conversely, STOs argue that this is not the case for Black-led organisations.

*"I think they are not important to delivering my work. I think my legitimacy does not come from me. That comes from my track record. My degree from Columbia University means nothing. Nobody ever talks about it. I believe that expertise is much more important than this academic knowledge" – STO8.*

Three STOs (10, 9, 11) acknowledge the shortfall in leveraging their achievements to enhance their visibility and attain equal legitimacy within the sector. Nevertheless, Black-led organisations view these accolades as motivating factors for progress, yet they recognise the need to elevate their efforts further. They ponder how these credentials and recognitions can help amplify and promote the significance of their work in influential circles, potentially granting them the legitimacy to both integrate and distinguish themselves.
*"The teams that we have and the skills that we bring have driven our organisations, but we do not shout about that because we feel like maybe it is unimportant." - STO11.*

For this, One STO (10) proposed creating an online platform to share these credentials and recognitions, aiming to reach community members, non-Black-led organisations, and IPIMs.

### 5.3.3 Relationships of Exchange

*"Social Capital may also be socially instituted and guaranteed by the application of a common name (the name of a family, a class, or a tribe of a school, a party, etc.) and by a whole set of instituting acts designed simultaneously to form and inform those who undergo them; in this case, they are more or less enacted and maintained and reinforced in exchanges" - Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992:119.*

This section focuses on determining the extent of network social capital—specifically bonding, bridging, and linking—by exploring both what has already been accrued and/or the potential for further development. Firstly, the assessment of bonding social capital examines subjective relationships, specifically the connections of Black-led Social Trading Organisations (STOs) with their community members (CM) and the existing relationships among various Black-led STOs. Secondly, the research investigates bridging and linking social capital to understand the objective relationships of Black-led STOs with non-Black-led organisations and with institutions that hold power, influence, and Money (IPIMs).

#### 5.3.3.1 Subjective Relations: STO connections with the CM habitus

The findings reveal the dynamics of intra- and inter-community relations that benefit both the STOs and Community Members (CMs). According to Table 28, at the community level, 13 of the 15 STOs reported having grassroots connections with CMs for the purpose of community engagement.

Of these, one STO connects exclusively with the African community, five connect solely with the Caribbean community, and seven connect with both African and Caribbean groups.

***Table 28 – STO Intra and Inter-community connections***

| ***Intra and Inter-Relations*** | **No. =** | **Participant** |
|---|---|---|
| *African groups only* | 1 | STO 4 |
| *Caribbean groups only* | 7 | STO 5,7,8,10,11,12,15 |
| *Both Caribbean and African groups* | 7 | STO 1,2,3,6,9,13,14 |

***Source**: Author's Own*

The data presented above was benchmarked against the heritage of STO leaders to determine whether their orientation influences the way they establish relationships or connections within their respective communities. Their responses are detailed in Table 29.

***Table 29 – STO Leader by Heritage Orientation***

| ***SO, Leader Heritage Orientation*** | ***No. =*** | ***Participant*** |
|---|---|---|
| *African* | 4 | STO 1,2,3,4 |
| *Caribbean* | 9 | STO 6,7,8,9,10,11,12,14,15 |
| *Other* | 2 | STO 5,13 |

***Source**: Author's Own*

Like the findings from CM data regarding intra- and inter-community relations (see section 5.2.2), some STOs established relationships beyond their heritage community; however, many also maintained connections within their immediate community. The data indicates that three STOs (1, 2, 3) of African heritage maintain connections with both Africans and Caribbeans, while only one STO (4) retains relationships within its immediate community. Six out of the nine leaders of Caribbean heritage (7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 15) have maintained relationships within their communities, with three leaders (6, 9, 14) also establishing connections in the African community. The remaining two leaders (5, 13) are of Asian and white backgrounds and do not have direct connections to the community (see Table 22 for context).

*"I'm connected with the Black community because that's where I grew up. I've lived in B all my life, and I belong to a very large family connected well within those communities."* - *STO12.*

These relationships are both personal and strategic, whether formed through religious fraternities or professional environments. The findings indicate that all STOs are connected to the CM habitus through their work activities. These activities involve community engagement, where projects are co-produced with community members who serve as users, participants, or volunteers. For example, three STOs (3, 5, and 9) collaborated with the Caribbean community on a Windrush project, resulting in an exhibition in which CMs participated and volunteered. Additionally, one STO leverages its position within the Commonwealth Association to cultivate relationships with African and Caribbean groups.
*"I have identified other structures beyond just the African committee. Those groups are made up of not just Africans but also Caribbeans. I operate at different levels to help me connect within the Black community. We collaborate with other community organisations, either by way of coming to support or by way of them delivering a particular cultural event."- STO3.*

Two STOs (2 and 4) are connected through hosting and attending events.
*"I have had experiences that have reminded me of how connected I am to the Black community. Fortunately, most of those have been positive when we have put on an exhibition, and the family members a couple of our young curators show up, I can talk to them, and I can relate to them." - STO9.*

Another five STOs (5, 8, 10, 12, 14) reported engaging with both African and Caribbean communities through their diverse staff teams.

Three STOs (1,6,9) connected through their service user groups. They have observed that the influx of individuals from the African continent has resulted in an increased number of people accessing their services. This has led to a diverse mix of African and Caribbean service users of all ages, occasionally resulting in intergenerational referrals.
*"We work across the ages. We have supported elders and their careers, but now the grandsons are coming—the whole family. They support our work whether it be them engaging with us at different stages or just recognising the work that we've done."- STO15.*

Besides professional connections, relationships are also established within religious fraternities or settings.

Four STOs (5, 6, 10, 11) developed ties to the community through their church, either for personal or work-related reasons. One STO who attends church for personal reasons stated: *"As a churchgoer, I have a good connection with the community. I've always been involved in church from an early age, but we also have Facebook groups to inform you of the different programmes we deliver." – STO6.*

Another two STOs (5, 11) participate in a religious fraternity as a means to engage in outreach and foster relationships with African communities in their area.
*"Because of our longevity, we are connected to the Black community, and one of the main connectors is the Black church because that is where many Black communities are. That's where you can reach them through the Black churches." – SO11.*

However, one STO (12) admitted to having difficulties forming connections. It is important to note that this STO support provision is aimed at statutory bodies (business-to-business offerings) and does not directly reach community members.
*Connection with the African community is one of the communities that is quite difficult for me to engage with because the African continent is so large. How many different languages are there?" - STO12.*

Nonetheless, along with another STO (10,12), they acknowledged that while there are some connections, further efforts are required to ensure that community members feel confident and comfortable accessing support from any organisation, regardless of the leader's heritage background.
*"I would not say we are well connected at this stage for those who would benefit from our services. I want to be a household name so that people know they can come to us for support. If they have any questions or need anything for their business, it's still growing, and we're still building our connections and relationships within the community" – STO10.*

#### 5.3.3.2 Subjective Relations (STO) Connections with other Black-led STOs

Besides connections with the CM habitus, internal relationships with other Black-led STO organisations were also evaluated.

Table 30 illustrates that 10 out of the 15 STOs established formal and/or informal relationships with other Black-led STOs, while 7 had no connections with other Black-led organisations. Among the 10 STOs, 6 (40%) engaged in informal relationships, and 4 (27%) formed formal relationships. Additionally, two STOs (5 and 9) developed both types of relationships.

***Table 30 – Connections with other Black-led SOs***

| ***Intra and Inter-Relations*** | **No. =** | **Participant** |
|---|---|---|
| *Informal* | 6 | STO 1,2,3,5,9,10 |
| *Formal* | 4 | STO 5,9,14,15 |
| *No relations* | 7 | STO 4,6,7,8,11,12,13 |

***Source**: Author's Own*

The six informal connections involve directing service users to other Black-led organisations for support they cannot provide, such as mental health services, education, and more. These referrals are often reciprocal. Furthermore, these connections are fostered through hosting or attending events that occasionally promote collaboration with and among other Black-led service delivery organisations (STOs) on various projects.
*"We liaise with communities at both the city, regional and national levels – ensuring people have access to the office of the Lord Lieutenant Councils and the Commonwealth Association." – STO2.*

Moreover, some STOs advocate for and support the activities of other Black-led organisations. Others offer mutually beneficial services, such as meeting or event spaces and catering, which enhance commercial awareness.
*"You know there may be an activity that we are holding in their location, so they provide the venue and catering."* - STO5.

Regarding formal relations, four STOs (5, 9, 14, 15) report carefully selecting other Black-led STOs whose values and purposes align with their own. These collaborations may involve accessing training, such as Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) programs, or engaging with young people of colour. Additionally, they have established relationships through formal networks and consortium partnerships to co-deliver funded projects.

*"We are part of a network of Black-led organisations led by two of our Black councillors in our local council and authorities. The membership comprises local Black leaders from S. We also partner on several services with ACRC." STO14.*

Seven STOs currently lack connections with other Black-led organisations, as they have found the process of building relationships to be challenging.
*"I tried to connect with established organisations and businesses initially on how we can add value and to have a mutual understanding of how we can build together by outsourcing services to other Black-led organisations, but that has been one of the hardest because people do not want to work together." - STO10.*

In assessing the extent of social capital, the research aimed to identify connections beyond the Black community and Black-led Social Trading Organisations (STOs). The goal was to gather data on the relationships formed with non-Black-led STOs and Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIMs). These relationships are essential for advancing cultural capital and the STO field. The responses are detailed below.

**5.3.3.3 Objective Relations - STO Connections with non-Black-led organisations**
According to the findings, all STOs collaborate with diverse groups and partners. These connections encompass various organisations and sectors, including Commonwealth and associations, advocacy groups, colleges, local health watch organisations, and several community networks and partnerships. Notably, two STOs (5, 14) reported collaborations with faith-based institutions led by individuals from different ethnic backgrounds, while three STOs (10, 12, 15) engaged with the Chinese, Polish, Asian, and South Asian communities. STOs were questioned about the nature and benefits of these relationships and how they sustain them for future advancement. These relationships are established and maintained through formal and informal symbiotic interactions, including mutual referrals to services, leveraging the expertise of individuals with sector knowledge, providing physical space and resources, and promoting services and programs.
*"Since the local authority closed the one-stop shop for residents, we work with other partners on projects addressing issues within localities. We've been asked to help residents in our area with Council services" – STO11.*

Black-led STOs (7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14) are often approached by non-Black-led organisations seeking collaboration, as they often struggle to engage service users from the Black community. These requests occur even when the STOs lack the necessary infrastructure to deliver projects effectively in areas such as human resources. In such cases, non-Black-led organisations utilise their own infrastructure and systems to support the STOs, highlighting the skills and expertise that Black-led STOs bring rather than focusing on their ethnicity or race.

*"A company approached me to create a proposal for schools. They do a lot of training in schools, and they have a big network, and they needed a programme that was tailored to support minority ethnic children because they're three times the risk of exclusion. They couldn't deliver the programme themselves, so they needed someone else. Now, I'd already created this programme just off my own back and would deliver it to the schools I had access to. But then I said, OK, what if we work together? And so, they already had funding to deliver this kind of programme, so they paid us to deliver it." - STO10.*

In such relationships, opportunities are created that benefit the organisations, service users, and volunteers. Sometimes, forums emerge from these connections, providing avenues to discuss challenges, sector updates, and additional opportunities. In most cases, STOs maintain regular contact with their partners as they exchange learning and build trust.

*"There is like a bit of trust there whereas someone who's working on the project and my counterpart in another organisation, and we can talk about what is difficult in terms of dealing with management etc." – STO9.*

*"I attend PVI meetings, which allow me to meet with other managers from the local area and discuss any concerns or issues we may have. I will signpost them to other agencies if need be." - STO13.*

These relationships help connect with organisations led by individuals outside of the Black community. Claridge (2018) defines this type of relationship as bridging social capital, which refers to connections that link people across divisions that typically separate society, such as race, class, or religion. This concept serves as a 'bridge' between communities, groups, or organisations.

It is also described as a social relationship of exchange, often involving associations between individuals with shared interests or goals but differing social identities (Pelling & High, 2005). Through these mutual relationships, leaders from diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds can learn from one another and share best practices within the sector, resulting in enhanced access to information and opportunities.

Next, the objective relationships of exchange between Black-led STOs and Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIMs) will be discussed.

### 5.3.3.4 Objective Relations: STO Connection with IPIMs

In this relationship, eleven STOs (2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15) establish and maintain connections with five groups collectively labelled Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIM). These groups include statutory bodies, funders and donors, advocacy and infrastructure support organisations, educational institutions, and private companies. As indicated in Table 31, the relationships with IPIMs are diverse and formal. The data demonstrate that STOs have formed more long-term connections with funders, donors, and statutory bodies, although these relationships are structured formally. In contrast, relationships with the other groups tend to be ad hoc and based on specific needs.

***Table 31 – IPIM by Group and Nature of Relations***

| ***IPIM*** | | ***No =*** | ***Participant*** | ***Nature of relationships*** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Statutory Bodies*** | Local Authority, Local Councillors and MPs | 10 | STO 2,3,4,5,6,7 12,13,14,15 | Dignitary guests at events<br>Training<br>Mutual referrals<br>Collaboration on project<br>Contracting & Commissioning<br>Grant making<br>Quality Assurance<br>Inspection |
| | Police and Crime Commission, Violence Reduction Partnership, Probation service and other Justice System | 4 | STO 1,5,7,15 | |
| | Fire Service | 3 | STO 5,11,12 | |
| | NHS and Clinical commissioning groups | 3 | STO 5,11,12 | |
| | OFSTED | 1 | STO13 | |
| ***Funders and Donors*** | The Funding Network for Social Change<br>Institute of Fundraising<br>SEUK<br>National Lottery Heritage Fund<br>National Lottery Community Fund<br>Louis Van Foundation<br>Lloyds Bank Foundation<br>Paul Hamlin Foundation<br>Faith Alliance<br>Tudor Trust<br>Jerusalem Trust | 13 | STO 2,3,4,5,6,8,9 10,11,12,13,14,15 | Some operational activities<br>Donations<br>Grant-making.<br>Spaces/Venues<br>Consultations |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | The Key Fund | | | |
| ***Advocacy and Infrastructure Support Organisations*** | VAC<br>SCVO<br>WCAVA<br>SEUK<br>Migrant voice<br>Refugee council<br>Together for change<br>multi-faith forum<br>The Chamber of Commerce<br>The National Suicide Prevention Alliance<br>National Association of Mental Health providers<br>Social Work Council<br>Triangle Trust<br>Racy Equality Foundation. | 7 | STO 4,5,7,8,10,12,14 | Capacity and Capability Strengthening Support<br><br>Small pots of funding<br>Advice<br>Advocacy services<br>Memberships |
| ***Educational bodies*** | Education bodies – Schools and universities | 1 | STO 15 | Programme/Project delivery |
| ***Private Companies*** | Banks | 1 | STO 10 | Access to resources – Money and Space |

***Source****: Author's Own*

STOs' relationships with grantmakers, funders, and donors precede all other interactions. Collaboration with statutory bodies primarily focuses on compliance and adherence to regulations within commissioning and sector requirements. Additionally, there are benefits related to training and funding. Generally, relationships with IPIMs are characterised as vertical and transactional; consequently, their power does not afford STOs the agency to operate independently. STOs report that they often have to align their legal structures and organisational objectives with the priorities of IPIMs. According to STOs (1, 4, 5, 14), IPIMs perceive them as "hard to reach" communities and shape their alliances based on the strategic or inclusion outcomes they aim to achieve.

*"We work with the REF, and the responsibility of commissioners and statutory organisations is how they commission and procure services.*

*They have equal duties that they should meet when providing commission services. That hasn't always been fully adhered to, and what that means for Black-led organisations is that we're not getting a slice of the pie that we should be getting."- STO14.*

Despite this, six STOs (7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15) report that their relationships with IPIMs—specifically grantmakers, financiers, donors, and statutory bodies—bring significant benefits to their organisations. These relationships not only create additional funding opportunities but also ensure that STOs operate within established guidelines, standards, or frameworks, which facilitate access to resources from various sources.
*"Their funding enables us to get added resources to do what we do rather than just scrimping and saving on a shoestring." STO11.*

The relationships established by STOs place them within influential networks, granting them access to corridors of power and a "seat at the table" where they can participate in high-level decision-making processes.
*"You need to know people, who know people, who know people. You need the people, you need the connections to get by, that's it! That is what helped us achieve what we have achieved over the years.- These connections put us in the corridors of power for conversations to be had and to raise the profile of how we deal with marginalised, disenfranchised, vilified, so-called hard-to-access, hard-to-reach individuals and families who, in the majority, are from the Black community. Their affiliations help us to be branded as a credible organisation." - STO15.*

The connections raise the STOs' visibility and bolster their publicity and credibility across broader platforms and discussion forums.
*"They support our work; we count on them to support the things we protest about - STO7.*

The presence of IPIMs at events hosted by the STOs enhances their significance in the eyes of service users and other partner organisations.
*"They have visited events and exhibition launches, and we have been able to talk quite honestly about what is going on with projects. They have been able to express an understanding. We just need one person, a couple of people, to come to our event, and then,*

*yeah, everyone is smiling. So, I think that has been good to get a different understanding of their power and power over us." - STO9.*

Furthermore, the IPIM's resources create the impression of being part of a larger vision. This effect is even more pronounced when the IPIM logos are included on both digital and traditional promotional materials for STO.

*"In terms of being able to access their spaces and put them on our profile of clients we have worked with, that has helped us massively." - STO10.*

STOs that use IPIM spaces and venues perceive this as a mutually beneficial arrangement. Whilst Black-led STOs assist IPIMs in achieving their inclusive strategic objectives.

*"They see it as helping us, but we are making them look very good and positive by being in there. Like they support businesses, so the next conversation is, OK, well, what financial support can you provide that will allow us to continue the work that we are doing? Opening a dialogue to move forward with sponsorship support." - STO10.*

For mutually beneficial opportunities, STOs provide IPIMs with temporary spaces to operate, allowing IPIMs to observe the activities of Black-led STOs and how they execute their work. According to the STOs' experiences, some have resulted in the acquisition of new contracts (10, 12).

*"We have this two-way relationship where if we have got something that can benefit the local authority or NHS, then we will say, why don't you utilise some of our resources to do that? So, I just think that is another missing thing that some people do not realise that you have gotta sometimes give." - STO12.*

Following the assessment of both subjective and objective relationships, the research gathered data to ascertain the level of interest in collective social action. Additionally, it explored whether Social Trading Organisations (STOs) would be open to collaborating with other Black-led organisations, non-Black-led organisations, and IPIMs towards socioeconomic development. A summary of their responses is provided below.

### 5.3.4 Interest in collective social action

According to Table 32, six (40%) of the STOs responded positively, indicating that it is time for the community to adopt a 'village' mentality. The common misconception is that only one organisation can succeed in the community at a time. However, having multiple organisations providing similar services is more beneficial for development than relying on a single entity to handle all the work.

***Table 32 – Interest in Collective Social Action***

| *Interest in collective social action* | No. = | Participant |
|---|---|---|
| *Yes* | 6 | STO 1,7,8,9,13,14 |
| *Yes, but…* | 4 | STO 2,4,10,12 |
| *No* | 3 | STO 3,5,6,11,15 |

***Source**: Author's Own*

They expressed a desire and a necessity for collective social action to foster economic power, growth, and sustainability.

*"I think it's only fairly recently, in the last five or so years, that we as Black people are starting to realise that there is no future for us if we don't work together while we're living and working in the UK, we must come together. "- STO14.*

Further, four Social Trading Organisations (STOs), representing 27%, indicated that the success of collective social action is contingent upon its structure, community commitment, and sense of belonging. They noted that efforts to establish connections with other STOs are lacking. While leaders may emerge, they often require the skills to champion such initiatives effectively. Consequently, despite the interest in community mobilisation, limited opportunities are available. The participants emphasised that the success of these endeavours would necessitate the collaboration of like-minded individuals to form a cohesive group capable of addressing the ongoing leadership challenges within the community.

*"With the leadership issues in the community, collective social action is only going to work if we accept that somebody has to take the lead, and we have to decide who is going to be that individual that is going to make that impact and who's going to be the one who's probably a little bit more articulate in certain spaces, knows how to operate and can be more strategic." STO10.*

Contrary to the aforementioned perspective, three STOs (20%) asserted emphatically that collective social action is unlikely to succeed, primarily due to tribal and cultural differences that will inevitably pose significant obstacles. They argued that interest in such initiatives has diminished compared to previous years and that any current collaboration will be challenging to navigate because of negative experiences from the past.

*"So, 30 years ago, we tried using the supermarket model, and people pocketed some of the money and went off. As a result, some people have said we should forget about collective action because it will never happen. You may also have this whole inter-country rivalry, e.g., Barbados and Jamaica. They call them small islands, and the bigger islands, that whole issue is at work." – STO11.*

In summary, similar to the CM habitus, the data reveals a struggle to form meaningful relationships and collaborate toward a common goal. This behaviour aligns with Bourdieu's (1986) initial assertion that social capital is an individual asset rather than a collective one. The findings indicate that while most STOs responded positively to the idea of collective action, some expressed scepticism and identified perceived barriers that could impede any potential for collaboration. There is clear evidence of mistrust both between and among Black-led STOs. Specifically, there is concern about reluctance to partner with or collaborate with other Black-led STOs. Relationships are approached cautiously to avoid damaging reputations.

### 5.3.5 Barriers to collective social action

14 of the 15 STOs cited eight barriers, as per Table 33. Only one (STO13) reported no barriers. To them, collective action is possible because most of their staff members are from minority backgrounds. Note that STO 13 is employed from a white British background.

***Table 33: Barriers to Collective Social Action***

| ***Variable*** | **No. =** | **%** | **Participant** |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Issues of Leadership* | 6 | 40 | STO 3,7,9,8,12,15 |
| *Lack of Trust* | 5 | 33 | STO 8,9,11,12,15 |
| *Limited or No Buy-in* | 5 | 33 | STO 2,3,7,4,11 |
| *Disinterest in Collaboration* | 4 | 27 | STO 1,9,10,12 |
| *Competition* | 4 | 27 | STO 8,12,14,15 |
| *Intergenerational issues* | 3 | 20 | STO 10,11,15 |
| *Capacity Issues* | 3 | 20 | STO 5,6,14 |
| *Selfish Interest* | 2 | 13 | STO 10,11 |

***Source**: Author's Own*

The other 14 STOs' responses are discussed according to the categories outlined in Table 33.

Six (40%) identified leadership as the primary issue. The main concern among the STOs was the egotism that fueled individuals' desire to be leaders, to be in charge, or to be the one who stands out. This inherent behaviour, characterised by a collective aspiration to lead or to have the organisation be the most prominent, raised significant concerns. Their perspectives were shaped by past negative experiences in which partnerships were established, only to be undermined later by disputes over leadership roles. Ultimately, when the group disbanded, some members would act on ideas that had been shared in confidence.
*"Black people have this bossy way about them. Everyone wants to be the pinnacle, i.e., to drive the biggest car. This is even typical in churches where the pastor, as the leader, has the biggest car, and all the money goes through them. This is just this kind of power struggle that goes on."- STO12.*

Like the CM habitus, STOs report an inherent lack of trust within the Black community. Five respondents (33%) expressed that trust, as a form of currency, represents an intentional commitment to love, care for, be humble, protect, and support one another. Nonetheless, these values are currently not reflected in the trust currency. They further noted that Black people, in general, tend to be critical and often anticipate the failure of others. Therefore, negative assumptions arise when failure does not occur. STOs explain that trust encompasses both reliability and integrity. When these qualities are present, the community supports one another even in each other's absence, and consistent actions foster reliance and protection among individuals. However, at present, no one is willing to invest the time necessary to cultivate relationships that would lead to trust. One STO provided the following example:
*"Most of the time out here, we're always looking over our shoulders and thinking, well, who will stab us in the back? When you go to a meeting, and someone starts slagging me, are you going to say, well, you don't know them, so why you're saying that... instead, you say yeah, tell me more – right there is the language of intent." STO15.*

Two STOs (4, 9) further indicate that destructive behaviours stemming from mistrust among Black people may contribute to the reluctance to engage when new ventures or collective actions are proposed. This behaviour hinders development and impedes organisational resilience and sustainability.

Additionally, the STOs observed that it is becoming increasingly challenging to mobilise a group of people who already feel disenfranchised and discriminated against. Five respondents (33%) indicated that the community feels marginalised and requires greater motivation to engage in such initiatives.

Collective action may often resemble a pursuit, where organisers feel compelled to chase after individuals to encourage attendance at meetings or training sessions. However, when people perceive this as coercive, they will likely withdraw. Additionally, the issue of timing poses a significant challenge; finding a suitable time that aligns with individuals' work schedules may inadvertently exclude many participants.
*"You're dealing with a group unfamiliar with some normal things. Because of what they do, making extra time and opportunities for themselves isn't easy. It requires some professionalism, but we don't have a lock screen for people to be able to sacrifice their time as it is financially less rewarding. If you've got that skill, you would want to be out there making more money."- STO2.*

Furthermore, four STOs (27%) reported a lack of interest in collaboration among their peers and indicated that they would prefer to avoid it if given the choice. One individual shares their experiences in the example below:
*"I can honestly say in all the years that I've been working, there hasn't been much collaboration, and where there has been, there's been bickering. I think sometimes we're our own worst enemies. I don't work with any Black organisations anymore because I recently had a collaboration with a Black organisation that was looking at bringing other Black organisations together, and probably for about a year or just under the year; all I heard was so much bickering. Over the years, I have gained a lot of experience working in diverse areas and at different levels, from grassroots to commissioning. I was trying to show people in that group that certain things need to be put down on paper, and they need to be able even to approach some of the commissioners in Local Authorities or the NHS. But some of the group couldn't agree, so I thought it was time for me to leave." STO12.*

Reiterating their struggle for transformation (see section 5.3.2), STO affirmed that capacity issues impact their operations and collective work.

Collaboration requires effort, and smaller organisations face significant challenges due to limited resources, which may leave them too stretched to engage in additional activities.
*"We recognise the work that we want to do in terms of working with the wider Black community, but we just don't have time to do it." - STO5.*

STOs also acknowledged the time required to adapt to collaborative work and the lack of understanding and awareness regarding the benefits of collective action.
*"We try where possible to collaborate, but it is more difficult to collaborate with Black-led organisations. I feel that there is sometimes a silo approach, or sometimes there is a struggle to understand what collaboration is. I do not want to speak on behalf of every organisation, but from the three years I have been doing this, I think I have mentioned that to so many people, but they do not come back to say, you know, that sounds like a really good idea. It is more like, oh, we can do this ourselves." – STO10.*

However, recently, IPIMs have increasingly expected organisations to form consortia within the social economy sector. Consequently, this topic is highly relevant and warrants discussion. They also suggest identifying areas where value can be added to one another's offerings, along with a concerted effort towards collaborative growth. Otherwise, individuals may continue to remain in their marginalised comfort zones.

Besides, STOs feel that the community is viewed as a joke externally due to a lack of collaboration. This siloed approach fosters competition for the same pool of funding. Furthermore, because IPIMs have limited resources to allocate, they prefer to contract with a single organisation that has a broad reach within the community. This preference exacerbates mistrust, as every organisation aspires to be selected as the leader. When one organisation is chosen, it is perceived as untrustworthy and is consequently rejected by the community.
*"Where we compete for the same pot of money, there is always a sense of caution, trepidation, and reluctance to connect. Territorialy, we think one will take my ideas if I collaborate, or will you get them a pot of money for themselves? That's real, and we can't pretend it's not there." - STO15.*

Additionally, STOs are concerned that they may be "swallowed up" by larger entities. In collaborative efforts, they risk losing their core values and unique identities.

*"There might also be organisations out there who just don't have that vision and are happy to work in a silo because they want to keep their identity."* - *STO14.*

There are also intergenerational considerations, as noted by three STOs (20%). For example, the Black African Caribbean community, the perspectives of the grandfather, father, children, and grandchildren differ significantly, shaped by their unique experiences that may or may not have been passed down through the years. The younger generations tend to have different interests and exhibit a more entrepreneurial spirit, though they can also be elitist. In forming clusters of private businesses, they risk losing the essence of the community, which grapples with socioeconomic deprivation, including poverty, anguish, and pain.

*"We have not passed the same mindset to the younger generation, and they are seeing what we are seeing and thinking what we are thinking in a much more selfish and individualised behaviour. This is a problem for me because the younger generation, which has developed this entrepreneurial, almost territorial stuff, negated our history and says they think they have got it all now. Therefore, they do not come to some of us to talk to us because they have set up their institutions and their philosophy." STO15.*

STOs report that all the above barriers, along with a lack of skills, resistance to new ideas, ignorance, and a diminished sense of belonging, foster selfish behaviours that ultimately culminate in greed.

*"If our mindset is constantly about money and not about what is going to make the most impact, then I think that will always be a challenge"* - *STO10.*

Two (13%) STOs assert that, ultimately, all matters revert to money and the individuals responsible for managing them. They contend that a lack of trust may lead to financial mismanagement and potential embarrassment for the community if collaborations are established.

*"I do not know. I've been involved in my local church. We've got a building with a restaurant, and I remember when it was flourishing, you'll get people to come there, buy stuff with their community, come in, eat, and then disappear without paying. I thought you wouldn't do that to a white organisation. So, it's that constant battle thinking, well, they don't treat their own the same as they would treat another white establishment. And that's one of the barriers or things I hate."* - *STO11.*

In summary, similar to the CM habitus, STOs expressed a strong interest in forming collaborations. However, while they identified significant internal barriers, they also emphasised structural and systemic obstacles that could hinder collaborative efforts. Their responses are detailed in the following section.

### 5.3.6 Field Disposition and Doxa – Realistic rules of the game

*In a game, the field is clearly seen for what it is: an arbitrary social construct, a construct whose arbitrariness and artificiality are underlined by everything that defines its autonomy: explicit and specific rules, strictly delimited and extra-ordinary time, and space* (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 67).

Despite STOs reporting positive relationships with non-Black-led organisations and IPIMs, the findings indicate that these relationships are complex and do not develop easily. Often, they are constrained by unspoken systemic rules embedded within the structure and are perceived as the norm in the IPIM field of power. These rules influence how STOs are established, function, and endure, with three key examples provided in the following section. The findings underscore the nature of the relationships between Social Trading Organisations (STOs) and Institutions with Power, Influence and Money (IPIMs) across various levels of the societal power hierarchy. This type of relationship is known as linking social capital. It is inherently objective and promotes norms of respect and networks of trust between STOs and IPIMs that interact across formal lines, institutionalised power, or authority gradients within society (Szreter & Woolcock, 2004).

In this context, one party assumes a subordinate role while the other takes on a superior role. These relationships are characterised as 'vertical' (see Figure 16), with a key feature being the differences in social position or power. The findings indicate that the impact of the connections between STOs and IPIMs extends beyond the reported benefits. They reveal the structural dispositions that either restrict or empower STOs to function as equal partners within the socioeconomic space. Below is a summary of the state of Doxa—the rules of the game—from the perspective of the STOs.

### *a) Structural/Systemic Inequalities*

According to the four STOs (11, 13, 14, 15), extreme structural and systemic racism persists within statutory organisations. They assert that governmental and funding agencies demonstrate a disregard for ethnic communities by claiming that institutional racism is nonexistent. They explain that if those who wield the most economic power deny the existence of institutional racism, then a significant problem arises that must be addressed.
*"If you believe that it does not exist, then it's hard to break down the barriers that exist in statutory organisations." – STO14.*

STOs further argue that this deniability undermines accountability for inequality and exacerbates systemic biases among those who possess significant power over others due to their high levels of economic capital. This is evidenced by the unequal distribution and allocation of funds in the socio-economic sector.

Additionally, six STOs (7, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15) indicate that non-Black-led organisations and IPIMs appear to be unaware of the historical context of the community, acting in ways that perpetuate systemic racism and inequalities. From the perspective of the STOs, non-Black-led organisations treat Black-led STOs as if conditions have always been equal and unchanged.
*– "Like you should know what I know, and you should do what I do, and there should not be any problem." – (STO9).*

This dismissive behaviour silences Black-led STOs from addressing issues such as unconscious bias when they occur. Besides, seven STOs (7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15) assert that entering the established grantmaker space is challenging. The needs of Black people —due to their expansive and complex nature—render existing structures and power dynamics uncomfortable, creating a divide between STOs and IPIMs, who tend to avoid discussions on this topic. Consequently, many Black-led STOs concentrate on grant funding initiatives for racialised communities. Notwithstanding, funders often lack a comprehensive understanding of the ecosystem of Black-led organisations and the specific needs of their communities.

Therefore, they develop applications, guidelines, and criteria that inadvertently exclude the needs of Black communities. Four STOs (8, 9, 11, 13) noted that IPIMs may not have the lived experience relevant to address these needs.

*"Everything is designed without our community in mind. Either they change that torturous process and make it more community-friendly or support investing in the organisations to develop and have the resources to do the torturous aspects right?" – STO8.*

Three additional STOs (4, 5, 6) stated that even when they gain access to the IPIM space of power, the high turnover of IPIM staff complicates relationship management. They assert that staff members frequently transition between roles or leave the organisation, making it challenging to maintain consistent connections:

*"forming relationships is practically unrealistic" –STO13.*

Contacts and connections are based on individuals rather than departments. Consequently, when a contact departs from the department, the relationship frequently ends, and the cycle begins anew when a replacement is appointed. This turnover can occur as frequently as every six months in certain statutory organisations and grant-funding environments, hindering the development of meaningful relationships. Each staff change introduces a new management style, personality, or biases.

### *b) Exploitation*

Apart from structural and systemic inequalities, there is also the issue of exploitation. Four STOs (STO 8, 10, 11, and 14) allege that, in general, non-Black-led organisations—specifically those led by White individuals—are more successful in securing bids to deliver local authority projects, even when the contracts are intended for minority communities. This favouritism appears to stem from their relationships with IPIMs, their track records of delivery, or their cash flow positions (economic capital).

Six STOs (7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14) indicate that non-Black-led organisations frequently seek collaboration with them due to difficulties in attracting Black service users. Non-Black-led organisations enhance their grant funding applications by including Black-led STOs, thereby demonstrating their commitment to inclusion and diversity outcomes in these applications.

*"Many organisations are trying to connect with the Black and minority businesses, so it is about realising our value. They use us to generate funding if they cannot or struggle to attract business owners from our community. We can then access that funding because they now see that we are somehow valuable to them. And so, it is playing them at their own game here."- STO10.*

STOs feel exploited when contracts are awarded to provide services or consultations aimed at supporting or soliciting the perspectives of Black communities. STOs assert that successful organisations often lack genuine connections to these communities, leading them to seek partnerships with Black-led STOs to fulfil project objectives. In such instances, if one Black-led STO declines the offer, the White-led organisations will continue to approach various Black-led STOs until they find one willing to undertake the work.
*"For certain white-led organisations, this is sometimes only a tick-box process; there is no benefit to us, and we constantly feel used by this process, now we are saying no." –STO11,14*

Even so, the negative responses are occasionally poorly received and foster unnecessary competition among Black-led organisations.
*"We did a piece of work recently with PA, and we told them straight look, do not think that we are going to allow you to carry on doing this. If you do not have the beneficiaries to reach out to, you should not go. Moreover, in white-led organisations, that is an issue with their leadership, taking work away from our communities. We must get to where we, as Black-led organisations, have the confidence to say no, we are not going to help you achieve your outcomes on our backs when you have all the money. That did not go down well, and I must manage that because, obviously, I am representing the organisation; you know, it is not my organisation. I am an employee here and must be careful because I have the board to answer to."- STO14.*

Seven STOs (6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15) argue that combating exploitation is challenging and that non-Black-led organisations and IPIMs must acknowledge the contributions of Black-led STOs, which are often overlooked for awards and nominations.
*"What we will not get is recognition from the Council. It is hard; we must prove ourselves repeatedly." – STO6.*

### *c) Misguided perceptions*

Four STOs (8, 10, 11, 4) assert that Black-led STOs must be trusted to deliver professional work, particularly in the evaluation of projects. There exists a perception among non-Black-led organisations or IPIMs that Black-led STOs are unable to produce high-quality monitoring and evaluation documents. Sometimes STOs are specifically requested to engage White-led organisations to carry out such work.

*"We were asked by FG if we could evaluate our project because they weren't sure whether we'd deliver a proper evaluation. So they kept telling us that the rest of the funds would be paid after the evaluation." – STO10.*

Moreover, STOs (7, 8, 10, 11, 14) request that IPIMs and non-Black-led STOs engage with them respectfully and acknowledge their level of intelligence. They urge these entities to refrain from assuming that mentoring support is the sole solution to their challenges when addressing systemic inequalities.

*"We are grateful for any little bit of help, but if I have to hear the word mentoring one more time as like that is the solution to all our problems –like we require such remedial help when there is never any money on the table for us." STO8.*

Black-led STOs feel they are not taken seriously by IPIMs and non-Black-led STOs. They claim that funders often prioritise numerical data as part of a tick-box process to apply for their funds. Generally, IPIMs show little interest in facilitating access to funds that specifically address the needs of Black-led STOs and their communities. Black-led STOs believe they must prove themselves to a greater extent than others. Additionally, they assert that IPIMs label Black-led STOs and their community members as 'hard to reach' due to their limited presence at decision-making tables, which is a result of their constrained capacity.

*"I just feel that we are seen differently in a negative way because sometimes, as a Black professional person, I can attend meetings and don't feel part of that meeting. I'll sit there and contribute, but I don't feel they're interested in what I say anyway. I don't think the bigger organisations take us seriously." – STO11.*

In summary, the perceptions of Black-led STOs regarding the challenges within their structure will be clarified after presenting the findings from the IPIMs perspective, determining whether these challenges are the norm or the exception.

For now, however, their experiences indicate that struggle does not facilitate growth within the socio-economic landscape.

In the next part, these perceptions are reviewed from the IPIM's perspective and then benchmarked with the experiences of the STOs to determine synergies or lack thereof and how both impact the formation, operation, and sustainability of Community Businesses (CBs). The review will also include CBs' fit in the policy discourse.

## 5.4 Chapter Five, Part Three: The Field of Power Structure

According to Bourdieu, the Field of Power is a *structure* because it is systematically ordered rather than random or unpatterned. Bourdieu advises researchers to analyse the positions of the field concerning the field of power and map out the objective structures of relations between the positions occupied by the agents or institutions who compete for legitimate forms of specific authority using their capital.

This third and final section of the empirical chapter examines the intricate and multifaceted relationships between Black-led Social Trading organisations (STOs) and Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIMs). It investigates how policymakers within these institutions perceive community businesses as a viable avenue for socioeconomic development. Five key areas are addressed in the sub-sections.

The first step is to understand the field of power through the lenses of the eight IPIMs, how they operate, and how they influence STOs and Community Members (CMs). Secondly, their support and resources shape the relational dynamics between IPIMs and STOs. hirdly, based on these relationships, discuss the current inclusion practices that IPIMs implement in their strategies. Fourthly, a focus on the policy implications for community businesses as viable social and economic development vehicles. Finally, delineate Doxa—the structure of power and the rules that either restrict or empower STOs to operate and sustain themselves equitably within the social and economic landscape.

### 5.4.1 The Field of Power

*"It is a structured social space, a field of forces, a force field containing people who dominate and people who are dominated. Constant, permanent relationships of inequality operate inside this space, simultaneously becoming a space where various actors struggle to transform or preserve the field. All individuals in this universe bring all their (relative) power to the competition. This power defines their position in the field and, as a result, their strategies" - Bourdieu 1998b: 40–41.*

According to Bourdieu (1998), the Field of Power is a force field predominantly occupied by the most dominant individuals within the social space. It is structured to protect insiders by erecting barriers between internal and external occurrences. This field comprises multiple social fields divided into subfields, where the internal activities follow regular, ordered patterns that exhibit a degree of predictability. Without this predictability, the social environment within the force field would devolve into chaos and cease to function effectively. In this research, Local Authorities (LAs) play a crucial role in the socio-economic landscape, as they also wield political power. Within their jurisdictions, multiple agencies operate across various departments.

These agencies include Local Authority departments responsible for socio-economic development, such as public health, housing, business, employment and skills, education, and social care. The space is also occupied by other statutory agencies, including the police, the National Health Service (NHS), health commissioning services, additional organisations, and agencies that support Social Trading Organisations (STOs) in their formation and operations. Collectively, these agencies are referred to as the Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIM). Both individually and collectively, they possess substantial power and economic resources, enabling them to dominate subfields such as the STOs. As detailed in Table 34, eight IPIMs participated in this research, comprising three Local Authorities (LAs) two grantmakers/funders (G/F), two advocacy and infrastructure support organisations (AISO), and one think tank and research organisation (T/R).

| *Table 34: The Field of Power Incumbents* | | |
|---|---|---|
| ***IPIM Type*** | ***Name*** | ***Purpose/Remit*** |
| ***Local Authorities*** | Coventry | Economic Development Department |
| | Birmingham | Business, Enterprise, and Innovation Department |
| | Sandwell | Regeneration & Growth Department |
| ***Grantmaker/Funder*** | The National Lottery Heritage Fund | Its vision is for heritage to be valued, cared for, and sustained for everyone, now and in the future, by connecting people to UK heritage through grants. |
| | Power to Change | Strengthens communities through community businesses. It uses its expertise to unite partners to fund, grow, and back community businesses, making places thrive by doing, learning, and testing. |
| | Local Authorities | As above |
| ***Advocacy and Infrastructure Support Organisations*** | Ubele Initiative | African diaspora-led and work towards improving the circumstances and life chances for Black and global majority people. |
| | Business in the Community | A registered charity supporting businesses and communities by convening networks of purposeful leaders committed to changing business, transforming lives, and helping the planet and communities thrive. |
| | The National Lottery Heritage Fund | As above |
| | Power to Change | As above |
| ***Think Tanks and Research*** | Institute of Community Studies | The Institute of Community Studies is a not-for-profit research institute working to influence change, bridging the gap between communities, evidence, and policymaking. |
| | Power to Change | As above |

***Source****: Author's Own*

Thomson (2012) asserts that groups of individuals operate within multiple social fields simultaneously. As indicated in Table 34, some IPIMs are engaged in various sub-fields. Their designated roles overlap across different sectoral and support departments. For instance, in addition to its primary function as a grantmaker or funder, the National Lottery Heritage Fund is also a member of the Advocacy and Infrastructure Support Organisations group. Similarly, Power to Change has priorities that span three categories: grantmakers/funders, advocacy and infrastructure support organisations, and research think tanks.

Although all eight institutions fall under the IPIMs category, subordinate IPIMs rely on dominant IPIMs for resources and collaborative efforts, similar to the relationship between STOs and IPIMs. For instance, advocacy and infrastructure support organisations and think tanks depend on grantmakers and funders for the resources necessary to provide services to

STOs. Additionally, some grantmakers, funders, advocacy groups, infrastructure support organisations, think tanks and research groups seek to engage Local Authorities to integrate collaborative policy strategies into their agendas. It is important to note that, among the eight participants, only one is a Black-led IPIM within the Advocacy and Infrastructure Support Organisations group.

Next, the findings concentrate on the scope of the IPIM and its areas of practice. The goal is to comprehend the depth and structure of their support. Individual IPIM institutions have not been anonymised due to their public nature. However, each participant has been assigned a pseudonym to safeguard their identity.

### 5.4.2 Field of Power: Scope and Practice

While the research aimed to target local and regional IPIMs, the methodology chapter (see Chapter Four) outlines the challenges of time constraints, limited capacity, and a lack of interest in the subject area when selecting the eight IPIMs. Consequently, the geographical scope was expanded to include national IPIMs that align with local and regional priorities, as well as those directly relevant to this research, specifically in the Grantmaker/Funder and Advocacy and Infrastructure Support Organisations categories.

*"We are an infrastructure organisation based in London, and most of our support is mainly local, but we have a national reach through the PW project – and this is an opportunity to have a national focus."- IPIMLG.*

The following section explores the practices within each IPIM, examining how they function in the socio-economic space, and the power they exert over STOs and/or CMs.

#### 5.4.2.1 Local Authorities (LA)

Three local authority departments were strategically selected to represent various aspects of socioeconomic development through entrepreneurship.

First, [31]Coventry City Council's Economic Development Service is dedicated to fostering a strong and resilient economy that promotes and facilitates inclusive growth.

[31] https://www.coventry.gov.uk/council-democracy/economic-development-strategy-2022-2027/2 (2023)

This enables businesses to innovate and expand, leading to the creation of new local jobs. The department is committed to establishing the conditions necessary for Coventry businesses to thrive and supporting local employment within the community.

Second, [32]Birmingham City Council's Business, Enterprise, and Innovation Department offers support services for pre-start, start-up, and post-start businesses. A recent program has been launched that focuses on a subsidised, skills-based accredited training initiative for suppliers, covering various sectors and communities. This initiative highlights the potential for significant socioeconomic development.

Third, [33]Sandwell Council's Regeneration and Growth Department has invested £1.8 billion in regeneration across the six towns to enhance the quality of life, provide decent employment opportunities, and create a more vibrant community. Sandwell is becoming a more sustainable and environmentally friendly place. Its regeneration strategy addresses various aspects of the built environment, including housing, town centres, high streets, neighbourhoods, employment sites, education and skills, transportation, digital connectivity, and sustainability. These elements are crucial for fostering an environment conducive to inclusive growth. This approach allows Sandwell to tailor its regeneration plans to meet the needs of residents and businesses, paving the way for a higher quality of life, better-paying and more fulfilling jobs, and, ultimately, a wealthier Sandwell.

#### 5.4.2.2 Grantmakers/Funders

Two prominent institutions participated in the Grantmaker/Funder Space: The Power to Change and the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The [34]Power to Change is an independent charitable trust established in 2015 with a £150 million endowment from The National Lottery Community Fund and an additional £20 million to support its strategic priorities for 2021-2025. The organisation aims to accelerate the growth and impact of community businesses in England by expanding the sector, transforming local areas, and advocating for investment in community enterprises.

[32] https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20199/business_growth_programme_2 (2023)
[33] https://regeneratingsandwell.co.uk/ (2023)
[34] https://www.powertochange.org.uk/ (2023)

Its mission is to empower community businesses to address some of society's most pressing challenges at the local level, including the three most significant issues of our time: climate change, digital transformation, and social inequalities. Power to Change believes no one understands a community better than its residents. Therefore, it works directly with community businesses to promote inclusion and collaboration in meeting local needs. The vision of Power to Change is that by 2025, more communities in England will operate businesses that enable them to influence what matters most to them, creating more resilient environments that benefit everyone who lives and works there.

Established in 1994, [35]The National Lottery Heritage Fund is the largest funder of heritage in the UK. The Organisation believes in the power of heritage to ignite the imagination, provide joy and inspiration, and foster peace by creating connections to the past. The National Heritage Lottery Fund envisions a future where heritage is valued, preserved, and sustained for everyone, both now and in the future, by connecting people to UK heritage through grants. The Heritage Fund invests money raised by...The National Lottery players, in collaboration with various statutory bodies, distribute grants of up to £10 million and more to sustain and transform heritage on behalf of the UK and devolved governments. They have awarded £9.2 billion in National Lottery monies and other funding to over 52,000 projects across the UK.

### 5.4.2.3 Advocacy and Infrastructure Support Organisations

Three IPIMs participated in this category: the Ubele Initiative, the Institute of Community Studies, and Business in the Community.

[36]The Ubele Initiative is a leading infrastructure support organisation comprised of a diverse and inclusive team of individuals of African heritage. Based in London, Ubele empowers Black and minority communities in the UK and serves as a catalyst for social and economic change. They collaborate with community leaders and organisations across the UK and beyond to enhance sustainability, resilience, and representation to achieve this mission. Ubele employs an intersectional approach to engage communities, recognising those with protected characteristics who are underrepresented and need tailored support.

[35] https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/ (2023)
[36] https://www.ubele.org/

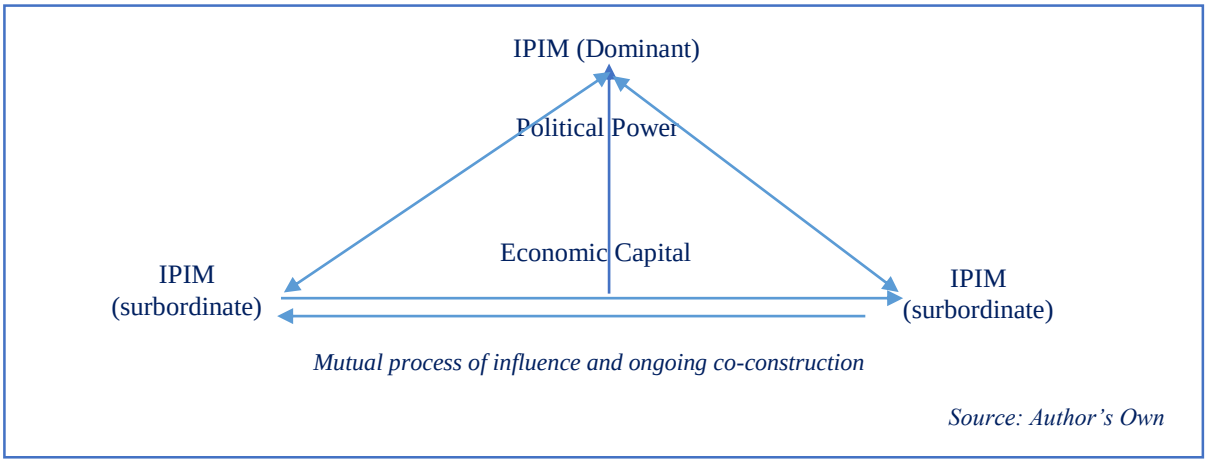
They provide infrastructure assistance, advocacy, and project implementation and facilitate connections between national funders and diverse partners to support their clients.

[37]The Institute of Community Studies is a not-for-profit research organisation that prioritises people. It engages with diverse communities for research purposes and conducts participatory research to address societal issues through a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach that encompasses various nationalities and ethnicities. Its efforts drive change and bridge community gaps through evidence-based practices and policymaking. [38]Business in the Community is the UK's largest charity focused on business-community outreach, promoting responsible business practices and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) for over 40 years. It is the most influential network dedicated to fostering responsible business practices, working with companies in the UK and internationally to build a fairer and greener world collaboratively. The organisation convenes, inspires, engages, and challenges purposeful leaders committed to transforming the business landscape. ransforming lives and helping the planet and communities thrive, the leaders take practical action and mobilise their collective strength as a force for good in society.

The findings indicate that the structure and provision within each IPIM social space in the Field of Power are uniquely organised. Although there are intersecting themes, the approaches taken by all eight IPIM participants differ and are reported accordingly. Furthermore, strategies and resources are valued differently based on the individual priorities of each IPIM participant. As Thomson (2012) suggests, the dynamics of the Field of Power do not dictate the outcomes in each social field, as they do not operate on a level playing field. Bourdieu (2005) asserts that the homology between specialised fields and the overarching social field means that many strategies function as dual plays, operating across multiple fields simultaneously, as illustrated by the cases of Power to Change and the National Lottery Heritage Fund. As depicted in Figure 17, there is a reciprocal process of influence and ongoing co-construction between these entities.

[37] https://www.youngfoundation.org/institute-for-community-studies/ (2023)
[38] https://www.bitc.org.uk/

***Figure 17: IPIM vs IPIM Relationship Axis***

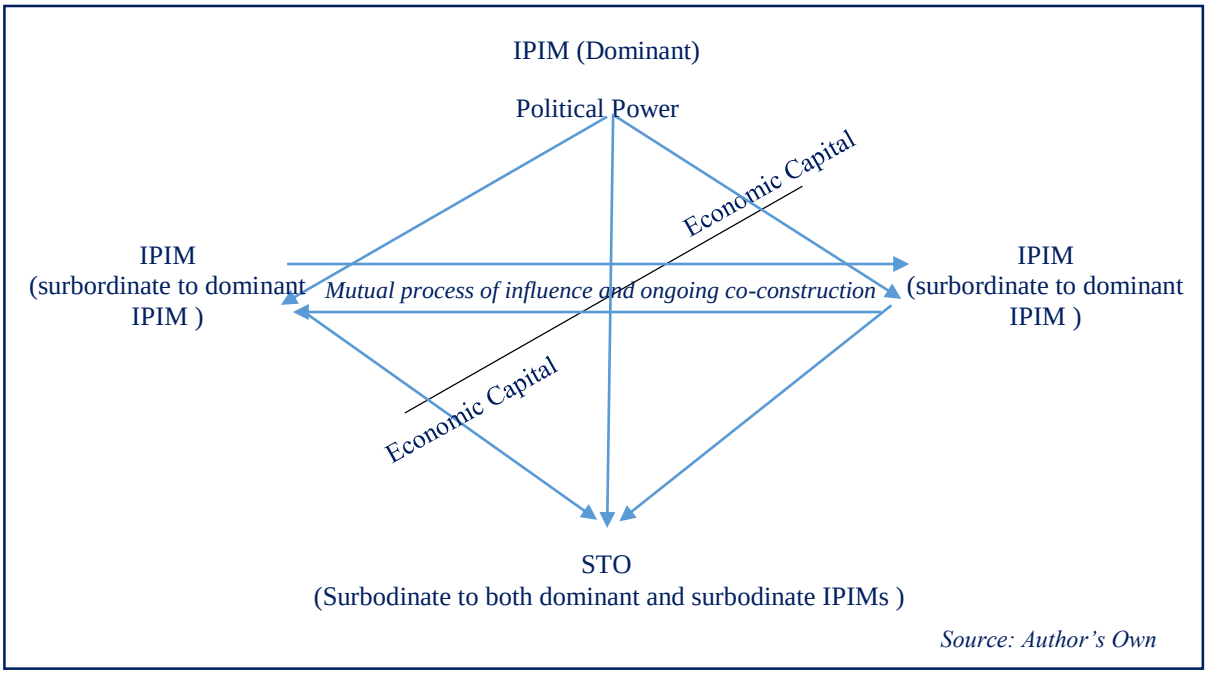



For instance, the LA's field of power activities can influence developments in smaller fields within the Social Economic Space. In the case of Power to Change and Local Authorities, Power to Change collaborates with Local Authorities to integrate community businesses as a key agenda item in the levelling up of devolution policy. Any modifications within the Local Authorities can impact the policy direction and the influence that Power to Change exerts on levelling up initiatives. Consequently, the research aimed to explore the nature of the objective relationships between IPIMs and STOs and their strategies for promoting inclusion.

### 5.4.3 Relationships of Exchange – IPIM vs STOs

In Figure 17, the relationships among the IPIMs can be characterised as linear and horizontal. Although they are not all at the same level, a certain equality of status exists among the relationships within the mutual process of influence and ongoing co-construction, as perceived by the STOs. In contrast, Figure 18 illustrates a vertical relationship between the IPIMs and STOs. Regardless of the STO leader's level of symbolic capital, they remain subordinate in the field due to their dependence on IPIMs for the economic capital necessary for formation and operation. In this context, IPIMs, irrespective of their position in the field, hold a superior status over STOs because of the significant economic capital they possess and wield.

***Figure 18: IPIM vs STO Relationship Axis***




The findings indicate that the relationships with STOs are formal and transactional, characterised by a dominant-submissive or superior-subordinate dynamic, which is influenced by the economic capital of IPIMs. The relationships are short-term, project-driven, and constrained by specific timelines and milestones. In Part Two (5.2.1.3: d), STOs outlined the support they received from the IPIMs. Table 35 details the current support provided by the eight IPIMs to the STOs. It is important to note that IPIM support is available not only for Black-led STOs but also for any eligible organisation seeking to access it. Consequently, the nature of these relationships extends beyond just Black-led STOs.

***Table 35: IPIM Support Offer***

| ***IPIM Type*** | ***Support Provision*** |
|---|---|
| ***Local Authorities*** | Skills and Training - Business and Enterprise<br>Grants |
| ***Grant Maker/Funder*** | Grants<br>Social investment |
| ***Advocacy and Infrastructure Support*** | Access to capital and resources support<br>Capacity and Capability Strengthening support<br>Business Support and Enterprise advice and guidance<br>Incubation<br>Agro-food culture engagement |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Membership-based<br>Safe Space Provision<br>Skills Exchange<br>Peer support networks<br>Other resources and tools - Success Guides |
| ***Think Tanks and Research*** | Research engagement, involvement, and access to data |

***Source**: Author's Own*

According to the findings, six IPIMs provided direct support and resources, indicating that STOs successfully deliver impactful projects through these initiatives. One IPIM (4), which functions as a funder and advocacy group, reported investing over four million pounds in business support training programs and enterprise development campaigns across the UK. These investments help STOs enhance their capacity and resilience.

*"In terms of support, we have for years provided a substantial amount of capacity building and capacity strengthening work, which is inherently designed to kind of support organisations that need support to elevate themselves, whether that's to do with skills or something else."* - *IPIMAB.*

Research-focused IPIMs indicate that community businesses can take various forms, including food banks and GP surgeries, as long as they are integrated within the community. They collaborate with STOs to identify viable opportunities for utilising spaces and locations, such as high streets, to increase foot traffic and promote growth.

*"At a national level, we don't have any specific support, but a campaign in Y City was for providing safe spaces to people so we can reach groups that will not come forward for support to reach appropriate groups." – IPIMLG.*

Another IPIM stated that various community businesses could benefit from operating cafes on high streets, generating revenue. Consequently, they developed a resource provision that enables STOs to access knowledge and information on establishing successful micro-entrepreneurial ventures.

*"In this support, community businesses that ran specific businesses and did them well were interviewed on their processes and success.*

*We then codified all that knowledge into a success guide for different sectors, for example, the easy wins and pitfalls of setting up and operating a community café guide and how you make more money from what you already have. We made it available on our website, and hard copies were handed out. Another question was, what's the success guide to a community share offer? For example, when you buy an asset, you want to know how to make a share offer. So, there was a success guide for cafes and a success guide for renting space, like workspaces. It is great because it collates the needed knowledge and gives people a blueprint for doing things effectively."- IPIMAB.*

Furthermore, connecting employers and businesses with STOs facilitates resource sharing, including technology and food. This collaboration encourages businesses and employers to excel in all areas, particularly in taking responsibility for individuals with protected characteristics.
*"This is making work better for the people they employ." - IPIMLG*

The only Black-led IPIM delivers services that encompass all aspects of service provision. However, they are also an STO that offers services to community members, such as agro-food culture. In their IPIM role, they provide infrastructure support by connecting other minority-led STOs to opportunities, including capacity and capability-strengthening training, access to facilities, and incubation support. They collaborate with the Grantmaker/Funder IPIMs to distribute small funding allocations to other STOs to ensure that underrepresented groups have increased access to funding and connections with larger IPIMs. This initiative serves the mutual benefit purpose of promoting IPIM's social investment opportunities to minority-led STOs, bringing minority-led provisions closer to those in positions of power.

IPIMs establish relationships with STOs primarily through their service provision, which is strategically managed. Four IPIMs actively engage with STOs to enhance these relationships beyond mere support provision by intentionally and continuously collecting data sets as part of their Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion processes (IPIM AB, CA, CD, LG). One of these IPIMs promotes regular contact through digital and traditional marketing and active conversations (IPIM CA). Additionally, another IPIM reported on their UK-wide engagement, stating that:

*"Our teams who work with local and regional community networks attend funding fairs and equality events; they listen and learn from minority-led organisations and ensure being visible as allies in tackling inequalities across the cultural sector" – IPIM4CD.*

Overall, in certain instances, the relationships between IPIM and STO have transcended the support and resources provided, but only to facilitate IPIM's data collection or to demonstrate targets related to Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EEDI). In this context, the researcher aligns with Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992), suggesting that such relationships may exist solely in practical terms through material and/or symbolic exchanges that contribute to their maintenance.

Despite the reports mentioned above, one IPIM (BF) noted improved relations and connections with the Black community during the 1990s; however, this has diminished since 2010. This decline is attributed to changes in work focus, where there is now a greater emphasis on engaging with diverse ethnicities through mainstream programs rather than targeting specific groups.

According to them, the needs of minority businesses—specifically, the lack of capital and limited access to markets—are generally similar to those of businesses led by non-Black communities. Therefore, they argue that these needs do not warrant special attention to maintain such relationships. When asked about the specific perceived barriers that Black-led STOs face in forming, operating, and sustaining their ventures, the IPIM responded that, although they have adopted a targeted approach to their delivery, this does not negate the reality that disadvantaged communities encounter significant challenges in business. This led to a follow-up question directed at two prominent IPIMs within the local authority and grantmaker/funder sectors. Their responses are detailed below.

#### 5.4.3.1 IPIMs' perception of Black-led STO barriers

IPIMs assert that many Black-led STOs need to utilise high-street retail spaces. Due to their community-focused initiatives, these organisations are often located in community or industrial buildings that are not central to the populations they aim to serve. Consequently, they primarily depend on localised customs, meaning they operate only within the specific areas or neighbourhoods where they are situated.

As a result, their services remain largely invisible to many individuals who could benefit from them, causing them to miss out on a larger market share beyond their immediate vicinity. According to IPIMs, community businesses in high-street areas perform better than those not operating from mainstream, accessible premises.

In addition to the visibility issue, IPIMs recognise that Black-led organisations require social capital to establish and operate successfully. The two IPIMs expressed a strong interest in ensuring that communities are at the core of businesses and further noted that disadvantaged groups, particularly those with protected characteristics, lack social capital. They conveyed that this deficit hinders community businesses from forming and functioning effectively, and it is particularly prevalent within Black and disabled communities.
*"Is it possible for us to kind of find a way to quantum leap past the problem of lack of social capital because it is something that we have with disabled people as well."* - *IPIMBF*.

The findings presented above align with those from Community Members (Part One) and Social Trading Organisations (STOs) (Part Two). IPIMs identify a deficiency in social capital within the Black community and explore potential strategies for enhancement. The IPIMs questioned the appropriateness of the community principle of *"accountability to the community*" which mandates that 51% (or 75% for larger sectors) of board members reside within the locality. They explained that while designing the data and inclusion standards for their support, some metrics require board members from underrepresented groups to possess specific skills. For instance, there is an expectation for an equal number of Black lawyers, architects, and accountants. However, disabled individuals and people from minority backgrounds are significantly excluded from the workplace to a similar extent. Individuals from minority ethnicities and those with disabilities face considerable challenges in securing job roles, particularly in senior positions, and people from minority ethnic backgrounds are chronically underemployed.
*"Because it is just a falsehood because there's that element of how we can overcome those barriers that allow these communities to create community businesses. The resources, the experience, and the professional skills that you need are primarily privileges of white people—white, able-bodied people of a particular age. Further conversations must be had in this area."-IPIMAB.*

Besides, to integrate community-based (CB) principles in STOs, advocacy and infrastructure support from IPIM groups must encourage STOs to find the right balance between profit-driven trading and broader social impacts.

*"I think the downside is that sometimes we are too evidence-based and may not see things as organisations would like. So, for example, if people ask why organisations should take over high streets, we might say very well: it brings jobs into the local area, it keeps money in the local area, it can provide services that people want, and things like that, which are quite abstract concepts. Whereas, if you talk to community business leaders, they're like, no, we're about preventing people falling into homelessness. We are about putting food in the mouths of people who would not otherwise have it." – IPIMAB.*

The imbalance makes the STOs unprofitable, as the focus is more on value creation than on market-driven strategies.

In this context, the two IPIMs observe that many community businesses are often established as canteens, restaurants, or small cafes, which require significant initial investment. One IPIM explains that, some time ago, Local Authorities provided annual grants to support these businesses. However, despite this influx of resources, the businesses either did not grow or experienced only minimal and localised growth, which limited their ability to reach broader markets.

*"So, H Employment Scheme Limited was a multi-purpose building with several units. It had a training project, a canteen, a sewing workshop, and a few others, which attracted local people already in the industrialised area to come in to have a meal, etc. However, it was still limited. They could start in the first growth stage but could not grow after that. They ran out of money because they were not generating turnover. It is not sustainable."- IPIMBF.*

This supports the findings presented in Chapter Five – Part 2, which indicate that Social Trading Organisations (STOs) prioritise deprivation alleviation or reduction over financial sustainability. Furthermore, this evidence corroborates the evidence-based claim from the IPIMs, suggesting that STOs led by individuals from minoritised ethnic backgrounds experience lower turnover rates and are nearly 25% less likely to have the highest turnover trading ratio. Consequently, they advocate for financial resilience assessments that do not rely on trading ratios or stringent metrics that may exclude these groups.

*"What we are essentially saying then is if we think that trading ratio is representative of financial resilience, if we chose the organisations that we thought were most resilient, we would be choosing fewer, Black-led organisations, basically because of how this structure works." – IPIMAB.*

In summary, this section discusses the various forms of support provided to STOs and the benefits and relationships that arise from this support. The findings reveal a power imbalance in which dominant IPIMs and subordinate STOs engage in transactional relationships. Bourdieu (2000d: 29) referred to such relationships as "properly economic habitus," which involves perceiving economic transactions as governed by their own logic, distinct from the logic of ordinary social relationships, particularly among family members. He argues that this type of relationship reduces the scope of exchanges to mercantile transactions, which are oriented both objectively and subjectively toward maximizing profit, that is, economically self-interested.

*"One must indeed distinguish between the mere possession of (say, economic or cultural) capital and the possession of capital conferring power over capital, meaning over the very structure of a field, and therefore, among other fields, over profit rates, and by extension, overall ordinary capital holders"—Bourdieu 2020:34.*

The findings presented here regarding the debate between 'trading for profit' versus 'having a broad impact' prove Otola's (2021) assertion that social entrepreneurship prioritises activities where economic value is not the primary focus but rather the development of innovative solutions to social problems. Consequently, in Part Two, section 5.2.11, it is noted that only a limited number of Social Trading Organisations (STOs) engage in profit-driven trading; however, those that do tend to achieve a more significant overall impact. Conversely, the IPIM's perspective on this matter emphasises that STOs must cultivate financial resilience, which can reduce their dependence on grant funding and enhance the sustainability of their organisations. In this context, Bourdieu (1986) elucidates that such transactions implicitly categorise other forms of capital exchange as non-economic and disinterested. When individuals prioritise monetary gain and power, they often overlook other important factors and considerations. Previous findings indicate that STOs attribute their challenges to an imbalance stemming from a lack of entrepreneurial skills necessary to develop more financially resilient strategies. Until this issue is addressed, their focus will likely remain on alleviating or reducing impact due to the higher levels of deprivation within the community.

### 5.4.3.2 Structure for Inclusion and Representation

In Part Two (see 5.2.1.6), STOs asserted that IPIMs implement systems and processes that impede their equal access to support and services. In this section, IPIMs acknowledge the underrepresentation of minority communities within IPIMs' services. Consequently, the research aimed to gain a deeper understanding of IPIMs' Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EEDI) strategy, particularly in relation to how IPIMs address the needs of Black-led STOs and their respective communities when designing and delivering support programs. The section begins with IPIM's definition of "minority groups" and examines their representation—or lack thereof—based on IPIM's existing or periodic data collection records.

Firstly, concerning definitions, the findings indicate that IPIMs use the term to encompass all non-white individuals, groups, or communities. However, the terminology may vary depending on what is accepted within the IPIM institutions. Alternative terms include BAME, minority groups, underserved populations, and those identified as part of the global majority. One IPIM (IPIMAB) expressed uncertainty about which term to use when formulating demographic inclusion questions or how to frame EEDI inquiries. Two IPIMs (IPIMFG and IPIMGJ) conveyed significant discomfort regarding collecting such data sets. They acknowledged that the terminology used was problematic, as it marginalised individuals and categorised them into invisible aggregated groups that served no meaningful purpose.

They further assert that some inquiries regarding EEDI (Equity, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion) can be generic. For instance, a question like “Are you experiencing racism?” may elicit responses from a wide range of individuals, including those from Jewish or Irish backgrounds. IPIM (GJ) contends that, in recent times, more specific terms such as experiencing racial inequity are frequently employed; however, this approach often homogenises groups and overlooks their distinct identities, such as Black, Asian, or Irish. Nevertheless, it is essential to recognise that these terms are more respectful, inclusive, and less demeaning than the term BAME.

Another IPIM (RU) described the confusion caused by terms such as "Black" when referring to their clients are referred to in that manner. They noted that some clients prefer alternative terms, such as Afro-Caribbean because the term pertains solely to skin colour and does not encompass their heritage, culture, or origin.

They explained that, in their experience, some STOs prefer Black-led organisations, while others favour Black People's Organisations. They proposed a novel approach in which clients are asked to specify their heritage instead of relying on generic terms, often reducing the process to a mere tick-box exercise. IPIMs agree that implementing an inclusive data collection process would facilitate moral and ethical changes in terminology, as well as enhance data collection efforts. Current practices hinder the ability to extract meaningful insights from data on minority ethnicities. Furthermore, they recommended that the capture and collation of demographic data be monitored throughout the investment process.

Notwithstanding, administering a process that involves sifting through thousands of data points and identifying the nuances in responses can be challenging. For instance, spelling errors in the data, especially in names, can pose significant issues. Nevertheless, it is essential to invest time in disaggregating the data in a manner that respects the nuances of various ethnic origins.

"*And then we would analyse that data for about a year and then create a form based upon everything that we told, so in that way, we are not wasting our time doing some big consultation. We do not have to go out in groups. We are not just copying the census; we are saying, tell us, and then we will use what you told us if that makes sense." – IPIMRU.*

Following this, IPIMs were asked about the approximate number of Black-led STOs they engage with or have as clients annually. According to Table 36, of the eight IPIMs surveyed, only one provided a definitive response, indicating that approximately 70% of the institutions they support are from the Black community. It is important to note that this is also the only Black-led IPIM in the group.

***Table 36 – Representation of Black-led STOs***

| ***Item*** | ***Yes no.=*** | ***Not sure no.=*** |
|---|---|---|
| ***Percentage of clients from the Black community.*** | 1 | |
| | | 7 |

***Source:*** *Author's Own*

Another response from an IPIM was based on data collected for a specific program.
*"The most recent fund we had was something like, 28% of people said they were from a community business led by people from minorities, ethnicities. But I'm not 100% sure that is Black-led only, so the number continues increasing."- IPIMAB.*

Another IPIM's response was based on a collective figure across their programs.
*"Using information from our EDI research 2022, p.44 shows that 12.8% self-identified as being from a minority ethnic community, slightly below the UK population's 13.8%." - IPIMCD.*

Both IPIMs further clarify that the data collected pertains to minority groups in general rather than specifically to Black-led STOs. However, in terms of data collection processes, IPIMAB adopts a more targeted approach by documenting data for place-based events, intending to reach groups that often have limited access to support. To enhance accessibility, they occasionally organise events in specific locations commonly visited by minority groups.
*"So far, the response has been good, and we have been able to reach new groups who enjoy a community of people around them who will not normally be in the networks."- IPIMAB.*

Apart from collecting data on program metrics, IPIMCD gathers monitoring data on staff characteristics to inform its recruitment strategy. Additionally, they maintain employment networks, cultural networks, and networks for LGBTQ+ individuals, including gay and transgender communities. Their campaigns empower Small to Medium STOs to enhance operations and cultivate a diverse workforce. In terms of events, they strive to engage underrepresented groups by supporting small businesses and providing accessible spaces for their activities. Through these efforts, they foster trust within various groups and network circles.
*"The intention is to reach groups that struggle to access support. We look at data about the groups that do not access support and try to reach them. The reason is trust. People who have been let down in the past do not feel like the resources are for them, and there is underrepresentation in network circles." – IPIMCD.*

One IPIM disclosed that, as a mainstream delivery organisation, its programs are more flexible than those of others, catering to and targeting diverse groups—such as women and single parents—rather than focusing solely on the Black community.
*"Having worked in this field for so many years, we must make our programme much more flexible and more responsive to the needs of disparate groups, which wasn't happening before. So, we would say that if you were to talk to us on the Black community, we would say look, we understand your needs, and we can then respond to your needs within that programme."- IPIMBF.*

Five IPIMs provided general insights into their approach to representation.

*"We are motivated to tackle inequality"- IPIMLG*
*"We recognise structural inequalities."- IPIMFG*
*"A large proportion of work is from minority communities."- IPIMRU*
*"Inclusion is embedded in our current funding framework but I'm unsure if data is collected nationally, but I will follow up later."- IPIMCA.*
*"That will be challenging because we don't specifically monitor ethnic origins. We monitor what we ask applicants if their leadership is from a minoritised ethnicity, but we don't capture specific ethnic origins beyond that."- IPIMBF.*

In summary, the systemic and stereotypical perception of Black individuals as a homogeneous group tends to hinder a critical examination of the community, particularly regarding its ethnic diversity, collective history, and current circumstances. According to Bourdieu (1990), the misrecognition of social arbitrariness leads to an unarticulated, non-discursive, internalised, and practical acknowledgement of that same social arbitrariness. There exists a lack of understanding among IPIMs regarding the nature and needs of the Black community. The findings indicate that only two IPIMs have implemented robust processes to collect data on minority and underrepresented groups. However, this data did not specifically address the needs of Black-led STOs. The only Black-led IPIM collects specific data; however, this study did not examine their data collection methods. Nevertheless, the data further reveals that all four IPIM groups are making efforts to expand their applicant pool to identify the exclusion of underrepresented individuals. To achieve this, they intentionally design approaches to mitigate disparities in allocating support and funding resources to these groups.

The debate over the most appropriate terminology to define Black groups is ongoing, as IPIMs have yet to determine, on an individual basis, the term that best aligns with their programs or accurately reflects the community that seeks change. Moving forward to policy implications, the next chapter will present findings regarding the role of community businesses in promoting social and economic development, as well as their implications for policies aimed at addressing or alleviating socioeconomic challenges.

### 5.4.4 CBs for Socioeconomic Development and its Policy Implications

Chapter Two (see sections 2.2.2 and 2.5) confirms the evolution of social and community enterprises, establishing their central role in driving transformational change within societies. Consequently, in the UK, ongoing political and academic discussions regarding the future development of the social economy and public policy increasingly incorporate community and social enterprises. Within the social trading economy, community businesses (CBs) are depicted as a powerful force capable of generating social value while offering financially sustainable solutions to various social issues requiring adequate attention from the public and private sectors.

This section focuses on responses from four IPIMs, comprising three Local Authorities and one Grantmaker/Funder, whose practice involves advocating for or shaping policy towards socio-economic development. Three areas are covered here: the economic development and regeneration policies/strategies of Local Authorities, consultations with various groups to influence these strategies, and the assessment of how community businesses align with the overall plan. First, the economic development and regeneration strategies of the three Local Authorities will be examined.

#### 5.4.4.1 Coventry City Council

The primary strategy is the Economic Development Strategy, titled One Coventry Plan. At the time of the research, the plan still needed to be adopted but was undergoing consultation and review. The One Coventry Plan has two main focus areas: 1) promoting economic prosperity and 2) addressing inequalities. The first focus area emphasises the creation of social value.

New developments by large national private companies will be required to hire local employees and contractors rather than relying on contractors and labour from outside the region, as increasing economic growth and prosperity is essential. Secondly, addressing inequalities within the city is crucial; this aspect will concentrate on health disparities, as they significantly impact individuals' opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship.
"*The benefits of those developments in terms of employability do not reach communities that face high unemployment. The One Coventry Plan changes this to ensure local people benefit from these developments through job opportunities or business contracting."*

#### 5.4.4.2 Birmingham City Council

Over the years, Birmingham City Council has witnessed the evolution of strategies for economic regeneration. During the 1960s, regeneration efforts were primarily focused on physical urban development, based on the belief that the benefits of constructing buildings would trickle down to the community. However, this approach proved ineffective in practice despite the sincere intentions behind the policy. The lessons learned from this experience informed a second phase that emphasised the integration of economic regeneration with development. The council has established an Economic Regeneration Plan that recognises the importance of equality and social inclusion for all ethnic groups. This plan includes collaboration with a network of contracted agencies to provide business support to diverse groups throughout Birmingham.

#### 5.4.4.3 Sandwell Council

Sandwell Council adopted a regeneration strategy approved by the council's cabinet in March 2022. This strategy encompasses approximately 66 projects, with an estimated total value of £1.8 billion if all are successfully implemented. It features a Business Support Action Plan to illustrate how local businesses will be supported through an inclusive approach in economically disadvantaged areas. The plan acknowledges socioeconomic inequalities and proposes potential solutions, emphasising education and skills development. The strategy positions diversity as a key driver of productivity within the economy, ensuring that its benefits extend to all communities.

For instance, many Black-owned entrepreneurs tend to focus on the retail and food sectors; therefore, individuals interested in entrepreneurship will be provided with the skills and knowledge necessary to launch and expand existing businesses, particularly in exports. Additionally, the strategy includes provisions for access to finance to support start-ups and facilitate business growth.

#### 5.4.4.4 Power to Change

Power to Change is the only IPIM operating across all three support and resource provisions: Grantmaker/Funder, Advocacy and Infrastructure Support Organisations, and Think Tanks/Research. The organisation advocates for including community businesses (CBs) in policy discussions and seeks modifications to mainstream policies that affect them. Its mission is to empower community businesses to address society's most pressing challenges at the local level while advocating for and influencing relevant policies. Power to Change's Strategic Plan for 2021-2025 encompasses three cross-cutting themes: climate action, digital transformation, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). The organisation's strategic priorities are:

a) Enhanced capabilities among community businesses to address the challenges posed by COVID-19.
b) Community businesses will receive enhanced funding and support from various donors and government agencies.
c) Sector Growth
d) New and diverse communities actively engage in the community business sector.
e) More community-owned assets in underserved communities.
f) More community-led and community-owned solutions across various sectors.
g) Community businesses are creating locally-based solutions to achieve net zero emissions.

In the next five years, according to Power to Change's strategy, the organisation aims to serve as a catalyst for the entire sector by generating ideas, evidence, and exemplars that can persuade policymakers to support community businesses. This initiative ultimately seeks to amplify the efforts of community businesses and position them at the forefront of a fair recovery.

Within their Equity, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EEDI) theme, an annual action plan delineates internal processes and practices to foster inclusivity, outlining the necessary actions to achieve the strategy's objectives. To this end, Power to Change is committed to creating a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive sector, leveraging its influence to address inequity, particularly for marginalised groups who have historically faced barriers to accessing support and funding.

Next, a delineation of how IPIMs consult with STOs during the planning, design, and implementation of their strategies. All IPIMs claim to create opportunities for all communities to contribute, including individuals from the Black community. One IPIM acknowledges adopting a conversational approach to consultations and is dedicated to listening to and collaborating with participants to enhance the accessibility of support and funding.

Another IPIM utilises internal functions to communicate opportunities for consultation events and promote a conversational approach with professionals in specific fields who possess greater knowledge and expertise. Subsequently, the feedback and responses are compiled, and an event is organised to develop a plan and implement additional strategies. While the IPIM is uncertain about the effectiveness of these events, its overarching goal is to foster inclusivity.

*"I have not been to one of these consultations yet, so I can't really comment on the makeup of people that will get in those consultations; however, I wouldn't be at all surprised if I turned up to one of these sessions and it would be empty or a very small number of people from minority backgrounds attending those consultations, it wouldn't surprise me at all. That's just being completely honest. So, until that happens, I am speculating, but I wouldn't be surprised. All these consultations will want to encourage people from all communities. They will be actively trying to make sure that people from distinct parts of the community will get the opportunity to speak."* - *IPIMFG.*

Another IPIM explained that its strategy involves collaborating with various organisations, although it does not specifically target Black-led STOs.

To ensure that the support provided is impactful, they consult with successful entrepreneurs from the Black community, using them as role models to co-design programs that address the needs of their communities.

*"We have mainstream policies and strategies, but mainstream policies are statements of intent. Strategies are statements of actions, and we work with several organisations to ensure that our support can make a difference; they have been built into the strategy base."- IPIMBF.*

Finally, one IPIM's strategy is to recruit town boards composed of representatives from various member areas within the borough. These town boards encompass six of the borough's towns and are consulted when developing innovative ideas. For example, they formulate plans for the Government Leveling Up Fund. Additionally, they engage in internal consultations with diverse employees; for instance, when developing a multi-faith prayer room, they seek input from faith representatives regarding the location and facilities.

*"We do a wide range of consultations with community groups on plans, planning decisions, and facilities design. As an example of how we take account of the needs of diverse communities – we designed a dedicated swim facility in the £90m Aquatics Centre that has a discrete entrance, changing facilities and screens to make this a secluded area so that certain groups in the locality such as female Muslims can use this swim pool centre." – IPIMRU.*

### 5.4.4.5 CBs and Policy Fit

More than ever, the activities of many governments necessitate that community businesses (CBs) tackle the challenges presented by evolving social issues. Consequently, there is a continuous development of community enterprises (Wang, 2018; Sepulveda, 2010). Given that CBs are positioned at the core of welfare and public service reform in Britain and are portrayed as the future of public services, this section aims to understand how community businesses (CBs) integrate into local strategies and policies is essential. Below are the responses from the IPIMs regarding the role of community businesses in policy agendas related to socioeconomic development.

*"We are interested in supporting businesses that start in the community for the benefit of the community, and as your research question suggests, there is often a need for that in some of the minority ethnic communities, and there are examples of some quite successful businesses in those communities."- IPIMFG.*

All three Local Authorities (LAs) envision a direct and constructive collaboration in their strategic objectives. This can be achieved through:

a) Provide targeted support to local businesses, including community enterprises, that facilitates connections for micro-businesses and self-employed individuals with larger employers in the city. This support could focus on critical sectors such as advanced manufacturing, creative industries, tourism, and healthcare, with community businesses playing a significant role in these sectors.
b) Collaborate with community enterprises by providing them with a constituency, a voice, and the necessary space to operate effectively.
c) Ensure that developers who invest in the city also allocate a portion of their funds to the community. Consequently, businesses will be motivated to utilise local suppliers, hire local residents, and support community organisations.
d) Supporting residents in accessing employment opportunities and developing skills to establish community businesses.
e) Provide additional opportunities for community-based organisations (CBs) to participate in procurement activities.
f) Collaborating with existing community centres and religious Organisations can engage diverse groups and individuals in the local economy. Initiatives focused on digital inclusion could serve as a catalyst for discussions about establishing community businesses.

Furthermore, one IPIM (BF) noted that the recent influx of community businesses could be enhanced by supporting these businesses in marketing, targeting a broader customer base, establishing connections, and becoming more integrated within local authority supply chains. Another IPIM explained that a previous strategy, which combined community development, employment development, and enterprise development, resulted in an imbalance where community enterprises did not receive a fair share of the allocated resources. However, there has been a recent increase in the growth rates of Black-led businesses in their constituency, indicating valuable lessons learned from strategic and community development perspectives. *"If they are doing well in one, then they are not doing well in another. "Now, with a mainstream business strategy, we can reach out to community members who want to start and grow a business. So, we are attracting more serious recipients.*

*Therefore, they will be supported if you look at some of the programs on business growth. We are seeing an increasing number of businesses from the Caribbean community, and we often work with some of them as role models." – LA IPIM2.*

Power to Change's recent policy intervention aims to increase the number of community businesses utilising high-street shops within local areas, generate significant and positive outcomes, and enhance job satisfaction for individuals employed in community businesses. *"If the government runs a consultation for what can be done about the high streets, often, community businesses cannot respond to how to revitalise the high streets."* – PtC participant.

### 5.4.5 Proposing an agent-structure approach to CB Formation, Operation and Sustainability.

In their pursuit of transformation (see 5.2.1.2), STOs advocate for eliminating minority labels, thereby granting new entrants equal access to the field. They emphasise the need for equitable support and resources, particularly in developing and implementing entrepreneurial strategies within their organisations, which are crucial for fostering the agency required for growth.

In this context, IPIMs were asked about their interest in fulfilling this request, specifically whether they would consider adopting a more effective and proactive approach to ensure that the support structure is inclusive and representative of all client groups. This will involve co-producing a robust agent-structure community-based (CB) provision that recognises the interdependence of the structure and the agents within it, even though they may not be on the same playing field, in addressing socioeconomic deprivation. Their responses are presented in Table 37.

***Table 37 – IPIM Interest in an Agent-structure Approach to CB Formation, Operation, and Sustainability***

| *IPIM Type* | *Name* | *Yes no.=* | *No no.=* | *Response* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Local Authorities*** | Coventry | 8 | 0 | *I absolutely want the economic development strategy to provide opportunities for groups facing social inequality.* |
| | Birmingham | | | *Absolutely, this will make our programmes more flexible and therefore, we'd be more than happy to talk to you and others to see how we can accommodate.* |
| | Sandwell | | | *It connects with our social value agenda. Sandwell business ambassadors, anchor network centre for local economic strategy, exploring the work of big institutions and how their spending benefits all people in the community.* |
| ***Grantmaker/Funder*** | The National Lottery Heritage Fund | | | *The Heritage Fund is open to listening to and learning from minority-led organisations, for example, through conversations and meetings with them to learn more about their differing challenges, local contexts, and organisational aims.* |
| | Power to Change | | | *Yeah, 100%. I think the Power to Change is an abstract organisation, and I personally and professionally would be extremely interested personally and professionally. We have partnered with Ubele and Black Southwest Network, and there have been situations when we said, you know, we do not want to overburden your belly. We do not want to give you a pellet of money every time we need to have a kind of Black Community business leadership experience to do the next thing; we want a wider net. So yeah, we are open to it.* |
| ***Advocacy and Infrastructure Support Organisations*** | Institute of Community Studies | | | *Yes, we work with Black Southwest, which is based in Bristol and Ubele. We do not work with any Black-led organisation in the West Midlands.* |
| | Ubele Initiative | | | *Yes, of course, we would be interested in the Agbero initiative.* |
| | Business in the Community | | | *I would like to know that BITC has knowledge and resources around inclusion work, which would be helpful.* |
| ***Think Tanks and Research*** | Institute of Community Studies | | | *The question is how open we are. I think we are becoming much more aware of the value of partner organisations rooted in the type of places we want to reach, so yeah, we're entirely open to it* . |

***Source****: Author's Own*

The responses indicate that all IPIMs desire a more inclusive approach to their work, with 100% expressing a positive commitment to achieving the equitable standards required by STOs. Additionally, three IPIMs provided more detailed explanations for their reasoning.

Power to Change has acknowledged the benefits of community asset transfer as a strategy for Black-led social enterprises to establish effective, sustainable, and locally beneficial community businesses.
*"I would love to support that because it immediately sets off so many thoughts in me, things about asset transfers from councils. If there is a way to prove that not having an asset in the hands of a local Black community is the thing that prevents them from establishing effective, long-lasting, locally beneficial Community businesses?"*

They continued that community assets are the levers for approaching Local Authorities with many empty properties that LAs do not know what to do with. Here, a viable case regarding equity, exclusion from assets, and lack of social capital will be made. These properties can then be handed over to the local Black community for community businesses and followed through with the existing research evidence of job creation in the local area.
For the Heritage Fund, recent EDI research indicates that additional efforts are required to address barriers to funding applications. Furthermore, there is a need to enhance awareness of the concept of heritage and its alignment with the objectives of minority-led organisations. These initiatives encompass community development, enhanced well-being, and the creation of employment and skills opportunities for young people. However, the research also identified challenges related to the capacity of those engaged in the UK's Social Trading Economy, as well as the growing demand for funding. Addressing these issues necessitates an open dialogue between minority-led organisations and funders, crucial for achieving intentionality in development, infrastructure support, and overall funding outcomes.
*"We are developing trusted, open relationships between the Heritage Fund and minority-led organisations. It is especially important to us as a funder using public money, and we recognise that these relationships need time and capacity for all concerned."*

Finally, Business in the Community proposed exploring other infrastructure partners led by individuals from underrepresented communities, recognising the value of partner organisations that are deeply rooted in the areas they aim to serve.

# CHAPTER SIX: PRACTICE IN THE STRUCTURED, STRUCTURING STRUCTURE

## 6.1 Introduction

*"To understand Practice, one needs to understand both the evolving fields within which actors are situated and the evolving habituses which those actors bring to their social fields of practice."Bourdieu, 1990: 52–65.*

This chapter summarises the empirical studies to conclude the current state of practice in the Structured Structuring CM Habitus, the Structuring Structure STO Field, and the IPIM Field of Power Structure. Subsequently, the structured rules for operating within these fields are outlined based on the findings. Following this, proposed resolutions for socioeconomic development by CMs, STOs, and IPIMs are mapped. Finally, proposals for community business practices are presented alongside a Community Business Practice Process Model.

## 6.2 The State of Practice in the Structured Structuring CM Habitus

*"Men make their history but do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past." Marx 1972:245.*

Habitus refers to the way society is internalised by individuals, manifesting as enduring dispositions, trained capacities, and structured tendencies to think, feel, and act in specific ways that subsequently guide their behaviour (Wacquant, 2005). In developing the concept of habitus, Bourdieu (1990) questioned how behaviour could be regulated without being merely a product of obedience to established rules. According to Maton (2018), Bourdieu does not imply that *"we are pre-programmed automatons acting out the implications of our upbringings"* (p. 53). In contrast to this assertion, the findings indicate that the structured Black habitus comprises individuals who are largely unaware of the consequences of their past despite being cognizant of history. This awareness does not negate the connection between historical events and their current circumstances, characterised by significant social deprivation. Presently, the Black community remains mired in historical grievances, bearing the legacies of slavery and colonialism, which perpetuate divisions, negative perceptions, and disruptive behaviours, including self-sabotage and destruction—often enacted unconsciously.

This supports the arguments of Archer (1982) and Giddens (1993), who contend that recognising unacknowledged conditions of action inevitably shapes social practices and generates unintended consequences that influence subsequent interactions.The behaviour within the community's habitus persists despite generations of civil rights advancements and the promotion of inclusion and social development by both past and present community leaders. These internal behaviours are exacerbated by inequalities within the systems and structures designed to bridge the gap between deprivation and social mobility. Bourdieu (1984) elucidates that habitus is neither a product of free will nor solely determined by external structures; rather, it emerges from a dynamic interplay between the two over time. Dispositions are shaped by historical events and structures, which in turn influence current practices and structures and, importantly, condition perceptions of these elements. In this context, habitus is created and reproduced unconsciously; *"without any deliberate pursuit of coherence… without conscious concentration" (ibid: 170).*

In this context, one could argue that, on one hand, Black individuals in the UK have had the opportunity to critically examine their history and, in doing so, identify any positive aspects, learn from past challenges, and implement meaningful and practical strategies to raise awareness, educate, and promote collective action through solidarity to enhance living conditions. On the other hand, it can also be contended that this very history has established objective structures that consistently oppress and hinder progress for members of the Black community, thereby obstructing social and economic development. This leads to the research question of whether the Black community can establish, operate, and sustain community businesses and whether these community businesses (CBs) have the potential to serve as catalysts for socioeconomic development.

According to the findings, there is a lack of complete trust within the community and among its members. This predisposed mindset towards trust and trusting relationships has exacerbated historical and existing divisions within the community. This entrenched behaviour indicates a norm rather than an exception, perpetuated unintentionally as a deeply rooted tendency passed down through generations. Consequently, this has led to inward thinking rather than collective progress.

These internal dispositions reflect external social structures that shape how community members perceive and act. Maton (2018) suggests that habitus should be considered from both experiential and sociological perspectives, which is particularly relevant. Experientially, individuals may feel like free agents while basing their everyday decisions on assumptions about the predictable character, behaviour, and attitudes of others. Sociologically, social practices are characterised by regularities, yet no explicit rules dictate these practices. Community members often exhibit behaviours driven by mistrust, self-interest, ego, and a scarcity mentality, competing for what they perceive to be limited resources rather than cooperating with their neighbours and community for the collective good. Consequently, the prevailing practice is mistrust, which manifests in subtle micro-political manoeuvres. For instance, this can occur through the propagation of rumours rather than facts regarding structures intended to support community members' needs. This phenomenon is evident in New Project Initiators (NPIs), Community groups and Associations (CO/A), volunteer groups, and service user groups (see Chapter 5, section 5.1.12: e), which struggle to engage within the structures that offer support. Thus, while agency exists, the historically and culturally determined learned beliefs and assumptions also suggest a form of structure (doxa) through the habitus.

From the research, community members recognise this behaviour as harmful, stating that building trusting relationships would require a significant event or disaster to occur. They cite historical instances when individuals demonstrated love and support, both financially and emotionally, during or after crises such as wars or the loss of a prominent person or family member (see Chapter 5, Section 5.1.12:a). However, given the heightened levels of socioeconomic deprivation in the community—exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis—the question arises: can the Black community afford to wait for unexpected opportunities or time? Community members acknowledge that this mistrust hinders progress toward social and economic development and reducing inequality. Furthermore, the entrenched mistrust has created a framework that current and future community development programs must primarily address. In summary, the community's habitus is currently in a state of survival. – as one member asserts: "*It is challenging to trust anyone as everyone fights for themselves." (CM1).*

To address Objective One, which focuses on assessing the conditions conducive to establishing community businesses within the Black community, this research examines the attachment of community members to their place of residence, their existing and potential levels of social capital, and their accountability to one another. The findings indicate that if the Black community seeks to improve its socioeconomic status, the empirical evidence presented in this study provides a candid analysis of the historical barriers that illuminate the ingrained habits and structures contributing to this situation. This introspection initiates the journey to chart a pathway toward progress and transformation, emphasising the importance of community businesses (CBs) as a critical area of study.

In assessing the conditions that facilitate the formation of community businesses (CBs), this research concludes that, although community members (CMs) are attached to their places of residence, a lack of social capital—defined as trust, reciprocity, and goodwill—impedes their accountability to one another and to the community as a whole. Consequently, bonding social capital is currently nonexistent, which, according to Power to Change, is a prerequisite for establishing community businesses.

However, Claridge (2018) suggests that increasing awareness of social capital can help address some of these issues by redirecting focus to the importance of social interactions. Specifically, the development of social capital plays a crucial role in leveraging social connections to enhance the productivity of individuals and groups (Putnam, 1994). In this context, research indicates that CMs tend to invest in personal relationships that foster individual social capital. Therefore, in the current habitual disposition, social capital is concentrated at the individual level rather than within the community, which may pose challenges when mobilising for collective action.

Claridge (2018) further asserts that individual investments in social capital can be harnessed for the collective good. He explains that individuals can attend networking events, join community or interest groups, or volunteer their time. These activities facilitate the opportunity to meet new people and form meaningful relationships. Participants can be friendly, helpful, and trustworthy, offering favours to others and spending quality time with their network connections while sharing experiences and perspectives.

Such interactions foster goodwill and a positive reputation and contribute to the development of social capital by enhancing networks, trust, reciprocity, and a shared language and understanding.

In doing so, these individual forms of capital can be harnessed through education and awareness for collective purposes that acknowledge both the differences among people and the commonalities they share, such as heritage and cultural activities. In this context, the findings align with Claridge's (2018) definition of social capital, which refers to the relationships and shared understandings that do not reside within an individual but exist in the space between individuals. Consequently, the relationships among individuals have both micro- and macro-level consequences for individuals and broader implications for the collective.

### 6.3 The State of Practice in the Structuring Structure STO Field

The *structuring* community business field is a football field occupied by Social Trading Organisations (STOs) led by Black individuals. This sector is conceptualised as a system of dispositions that shape perceptions, appreciations, and practices (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 53). The structure of this field is influenced by Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIM). Within this domain, the present and future practices of STOs play a crucial role in shaping the community business sector through their habitus.

The second objective of this research is to investigate whether Black-led STOs qualify as Community Businesses (CBs) and to explore how they form, operate, and sustain successful CBs. In this context, six conditions were examined: the structuring of the field as a CB; the STO's struggle for transformation; the relationships established with the CM habitus, other Black-led STOs, non-Black-led STOs, and Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIMs); their perceptions and interests in collective action, along with the perceived barriers that could potentially impede such action; and finally, their appreciations and perceptions of the structure (doxa) that governs the field, which shapes their dispositions presented here.

In Chapter 3.2.2, Thompson (2012) emphasises Bourdieu's perspective on the football field as a space governed by specific conditions. Players' actions and movements during a game are influenced by their positions on the field.

Additionally, the physical condition of the field—whether it is wet, dry, well-maintained, or riddled with potholes—also affects player performance and, consequently, the overall dynamics of the game. There are inherent limitations to what players can achieve, and these limitations are further shaped by the conditions of the field. In evaluating the structuring of the field as a Community Business (CB), the initial task was to understand the rules of the community business game. This involved benchmarking the STO field structure against the four tests established as prerequisites for operating successful CBs, defined by Power to Change (refer to Chapter Two, Table 2).

The evidence revealed that although all 15 Social Trading Organisation (STO) participants operate within the Social Trading Economy, none fully understood the concept of community business, its approach, or its benefits for socioeconomic development (see section 5.2.1.1). Despite this lack of understanding, five STOs operate unconsciously in accordance with the principles of community businesses, which include being locally rooted, accountable to one another, having a broad impact, and trading for profit. The remaining STOs tested two or more of these community business principles, with the majority being locally rooted. All STOs have broad impacts that benefits their stakeholders; however, because some members of STO governance bodies are not from the same locality, they lack accountability to their communities. Nevertheless, all STOs strive for accountability by ensuring that non-local members possess lived experiences related to the issues they aim to address. In summary, most STOs do not qualify as community businesses and those that do operate unconsciously, without fully adhering to the aforementioned principles. Consequently, both new entrants (New Project Initiators leading community business formation) and existing organisations (Social Trading Organisations) must first understand the structural rules of community business in order to become community businesses that achieve sustainable outcomes and financial resilience.

Within this context, Social Trading Organisations (STOs) establish relationships that enable their operations. An assessment of subjective relations indicates that similar to the Community Members (CM) habitus, the internal dispositions characteristic of the CM habitus are mirrored in the STO field, influencing how STO leaders interact with other Black-led STOs.

Currently, both the Black CM habitus and the STO field appear to be stagnant, failing to evolve into a robust network of institutionalised relationships characterised by mutual acquaintance and recognition (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Within this field, as in the habitus, a pervasive lack of trust exists among Black-led STOs, which is evident in their difficulties in forming meaningful relationships and collaborating for mutually beneficial purposes (see 5.2.1.3: b).

According to the findings, STOs face internal, operational, and structural challenges. These include difficulties in accessing resources—particularly funding, capacity deficits, limited visibility for capability support, and unstructured development in resilience and sustainability (see section 5.2.1.2). Furthermore, STOs must consistently uphold high standards to demonstrate their validity and worthiness to  Institutions with Power, Influence and Money (IPIMs) in exchange for resources. Additionally, STOs often find themselves comparing their circumstances to those of non-Black-led organisations that perceive Black-led STOs as lacking credibility and trustworthiness. This perception persists despite the significant symbolic and cultural capital, i.e. track records, expertise, experience, qualifications, accolades, and credentials that Black-led STOs possess, including (see section 5.2.1.2:c).

The findings demonstrate that STOs possess significant symbolic capital, which they can leverage as equal players and contribute valuable knowledge to the sector. However, despite these credentials, their ability to act and influence is constrained by two primary factors: limited economic capital and their “minority” status. These factors position them as inferior to others in the field. Such predetermined conditions restrict the contributions that STOs can make in shaping the dynamics of the sector. Furthermore, the relationships between Black-led STOs and other STOs foster competition for opportunities, with non-Black STOs and the established Field of Power serving as gatekeepers.

The aforementioned challenges persist despite establishing formal and informal relationships within all structures in the field, involving other Black-led STOs, non-Black-led organisations, and Institutions with Influence, Power, and Money (IPIMs). Here, social capital aligns with Bourdieu’s (1986) original concept, which posits that social capital is primarily an individual asset rather than a collective one. It is not uniformly accessible to all members of a social group or collective; rather, it is available to those who actively strive to acquire it by attaining positions of power and status and fostering goodwill.

The nature of relationships within the field indicates that they are often temporary and inconsistent, primarily due to a prevailing mistrust among Black-led STOs. This mistrust complicates efforts to establish collaborative relationships aimed at achieving common goals. By adhering to Claridge's advice, social capital can be cultivated, particularly through connections with institutionalised power. Such connections can provide external assets and resources that benefit the collective. STOs can leverage these assets and resources, fostering relationships within the social structure that enable Community Members (CM) to benefit and develop a sense of ownership over their social capital, as well as a degree of control. This dynamic links the individual's habitus (CM) to their structured field (STO).

Eventually, STOs acknowledge that their operations resemble a game—*"It's simply about survival"* (STO15). Their perceived struggles (see Chapter Five: Section 5.2.1.6) are more the rule rather than the exception. Despite these challenges, they believe engaging in the game does not necessarily mean losing sight of one's identity. Consequently, they remain optimistic about future collaborative efforts to establish community businesses, particularly those that involve the younger generation as future leaders. Therefore, the recommendation here will be for STOs to implement positive strategies that foster resilience in strategic thinking and enhance knowledge of finance and funding for development (see section 6.6.2).

For change to occur, Community Members (CMs) and Social Trading Organisations (STOs) must be aware of their history, current circumstances, and their roles in the evolving landscape of the game. On a positive note, they recognise community businesses as catalysts for change and the foundation for the intentional development and production of economic and social capital, serving as sustainable strategies to address socioeconomic deprivation and inequality.

## 6.4 The State of Practice in the Field of Power Structure

For the third objective, the research examined the extent to which policymakers and support organisations consider community businesses as a viable option for locally led socioeconomic development and regeneration. First, the field of power was assessed through the lenses of the eight Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIMs) and their relationships with Black-led Social Trading Organisations (STOs).

This analysis includes how these institutions operate and the power they exert over STOs and, to some extent, Community Members (CMs). It also explores the relationships between IPIMs and STOs in terms of the support or resources they provide, the current inclusion practices that IPIMs implement in their strategies, and the rules that either restrict or empower STOs to operate and sustain themselves equitably within the social and economic landscape.

Finally, the discussion addresses policymakers' perspectives on community businesses as vehicles for socioeconomic development. Like the playing field, the power field is also structured, as it is systematically ordered rather than random or unpatterned. The findings suggest that the field of power constructs the structured context and its rules when designing support and delivery (the game), thereby influencing the agency for Black-led STO to form, operate, and sustain themselves. Additionally, the field of power also decides on policy development for socioeconomic regeneration. In this sense, the field can be viewed as a battlefield, as defined by Bourdieu, where Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIMs) agents attempt to impose the game's rules on STOs (players) when they seek resources.

The research established that the relationship between STOs and IPIMs was across formal lines of authority, marked by institutionalised power gradients (Szreter & Woolcock, 2004). These relationships are 'vertical' (see Figure 18) and transactional, with IPIMs positioned as superiors and STOs as subordinates. The interactions between IPIMs and STOs are typically short-term and lack longevity, irrespective of the IPIMs's national, regional, or local strategic objectives—whether long-term or short-term—that govern their implementation. These objectives necessitate that IPIMs adopt strategies aimed at achieving Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EEDI) within their respective institutions. Consequently, IPIMs gather data to ensure that underrepresented groups receive adequate support.

Based on this, the research concludes that the IPIM Field of Power structure adheres to rules that categorise Black-led STOs under labels such as *"underrepresented," "minority,*" and *"underserved*." These rules represent accepted norms and fundamental beliefs practiced across all IPIM subfields, regardless of the power level.

Consequently, the unique nature and needs of each "underserved" entity are overlooked. As Bourdieu states, these are *"assumptions of an epoch which are taken for granted and lie beyond ideologies (orthodoxies), yet can generate conscious struggles"* (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 16). The doxa is formed, but it is not asserted as an explicit, self-conscious dogma. Instead, it blankets all "underserved" groups protected by race under the *"minority ethnic"* umbrella, automatically positioning them as undeserving and unequal.

Black-led STOs do not enter the field fully equipped with God-like knowledge of the dynamics at play. Instead, as Bourdieu (1996) suggests, they possess a unique perspective shaped by their positions, enabling them to acquire resources and understand the game's tempo, rhythms, and unwritten rules over time and through experience. These resources empower STOs to navigate and operate within the social and economic landscape, thereby accepting their roles as subordinate agents within the field and actively participating in the game. Deer (2014) argues that STO players in specific positions comprehend the expected behaviours within the field. This understanding feels "natural" and can be explained using the prevailing truths, or doxa, that are common parlance—terms such as "under-represented," "minority," and "underserved." By accepting this doxa as the norm, there are no strategic ambitions to maximise their positions.

The mandated doxa is closely connected to the STO Field and CM Habitus, as changes in the IPIM Field of Power significantly affect the STO Field and create a domino effect on the habitus members, including service users, beneficiaries, staff, and volunteers of the STOs. For instance, the research demonstrated that the Field of Power and its agents exert considerable influence and authority over subordinate incumbents. Grantmakers/Funder IPIMs can halt STO operations by withholding economic capital and influence. Similarly, Local Authority IPIMs may continue categorising all underrepresented groups under the "minority umbrella" tick box, failing to recognise the diverse needs of these groups, which can lead to their exclusion from appropriate interventions.

The Advocacy and Infrastructure Support Organisations IPIMs rely on Grantmakers/Funders for resources. If grantmakers and funders were to discontinue allocating these resources, the Advocacy and Infrastructure Support Organisations IPIMs would cease supporting the STOs.

This situation may also arise when the allocated funds for the Advocacy and Infrastructure Support Organisations IPIMs are exhausted. If this trend persists, it could lead to the discontinuation of STO operations, resulting in adverse consequences for the beneficiaries who rely on these resources. Consequently, while STOs are independent entities, they are not entirely autonomous; they are interconnected with the IPIM structure. Moreover, the sustainability of Black-led STOs is compromised by the very IPIMs that provide resources, which impose complex eligibility criteria, short-term funding, limited visibility of information and opportunities, and other systemic inequalities within their processes.

In this context, community businesses can act as vehicles for generating economic and social capital, offering sustainable solutions to address socioeconomic deprivation and inequality. They can also empower STOs by enhancing their negotiating power to influence policymakers and drive meaningful change.

The research findings indicate that community businesses are currently not considered in locally led policies as an entrepreneurial approach to socioeconomic development and regeneration. Nevertheless, the findings reveal that Local Authority IPIMs identify synergies with CBs across their business and social development initiatives. They propose recommendations for integrating community businesses into existing strategies for socioeconomic development (see section 5.3.1.4: e). From a socioeconomic perspective, Power to Change advocates for the government to recognise community businesses as essential to the radical devolution of the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government (previously known as Levelling Up). Power to Change (PtC) stated that the strategies proposed by the Local Authorities would create a pathway for individuals to exit unemployment. Additionally, PtC's recent policy intervention, which aims to increase the number of community businesses utilising high-street shops within local areas, fosters impactful and beneficial outcomes, leading to greater job satisfaction for those employed in community businesses.

In practice, the challenges faced by Black-led STOs within the field hinder their formation, operation, sustainability, and growth. To overcome these obstacles, STOs must develop and implement entrepreneurial strategies that generate income, foster financial resilience and reduce dependence on grant funding.

However, STOs will require IPIMs to allocate resources to initiate these strategies, as the structure and the agents are interconnected. Nevertheless, IPIMs are committed to creating opportunities for all communities, including those from the Black community, to contribute to policy and strategic interventions. This can be achieved by actively listening to and collaborating with consulted participants to make support and funding more accessible, as well as by effectively communicating opportunities for consultation events. This approach encourages dialogue with individuals with expertise and knowledge in their respective fields. The overarching goal of the IPIMs is to promote inclusivity.

### 6.5 Doxa – The Structured Rules of the Game and Agency for Transformation

Bourdieu (1990) argues that in a specific social formation, the greater the stability of objective structures and the more completely they are internalised in agents' dispositions, the larger the field of doxa that is accepted as self-evident. As Bourdieu states:
*"What is essential goes without saying because it comes without saying," where "the tradition is silent, not least about itself as a tradition" (Ibid:165).*

In the preceding sections, the findings indicate that each IPIM field of power is uniquely structured. Although there are overlapping themes, the methodologies employed in their work differ and are reported accordingly. This supports Hardy's (2014) assertion that the body of the Field of Power does not dictate the dynamics within each social field, as they do not all operate equally. Furthermore, the same dispositions, strategies, and forms of capital are valued differently based on the specific remits or priorities of individual IPIMs. It is also evident that some IPIMs hold dominant positions. Positions in one field may be highly valued, while in another, they may be less significant. This is exemplified by PtC's role as a Grantmaker/Funder in the Field of Power, which is considered important, contrasted with its comparatively lesser value in policy-making.

In the realm of power structures, doxa manifests not as inaudible, as Bourdieu argues, but rather as overt, where the rules are articulated in terms of "them" versus "us," often under labels such as "underrepresented," "minority," and "underserved." Consequently, subordinate field agents accept their positions and conform to the established norms.

However, this acceptance has detrimental effects on their agency in forming new community-based initiatives led by those labelled. As the game continues to be played and accepted without challenge, new entrants will also engage in the game as it currently exists. According to Deer (2014), this understanding appears “natural” and can be explained through the prevailing truths or doxa. Thus, the existing doxa on both the IPIM and STO sides is widely accepted, reinforcing the structure's rules and rendering them admissible and defensible.

Consequently, in the pursuit of agentic transformation, Bourdieu (1977) raises the question of how social structure and individual agency can be reconciled, as well as how the 'outer' social environment and 'inner' self-help influence one another. This research examines the ultimate objectives of Social Trading Organisations (STOs) and the fields in which they operate, particularly considering that these entities are continuously constructed and shaped within a structured context. CMs and STOs identify the essential components for establishing community businesses (CBs) based on need, passion, and a sense of duty. Simultaneously, the Field of Power delineates the context, including the principles governing CBs, funding resources, and the rules of engagement within the sector.

Nonetheless, change must begin with the understanding that all three groups, CMs, STOs, and IPIMs, are interdependent relational structures. CMs rely on STOs as beneficiaries to address their social and economic needs, ultimately enhancing their quality of life. Conversely, STOs depend on CMs to fulfil their organisational objectives as service users. Additionally, STOs require resources from IPIMs, while IPIMs rely on STOs to achieve their inclusion objectives. Even so, the IPIMs unanimously propose a more inclusive approach to fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive sector (see Chapter Five, 5.3.1.5 a). They advocate for leveraging their influence to address inequities, particularly for groups historically facing barriers to support and funding. Consequently, a more agent-sensitive approach to community entrepreneurship is recommended—one underpinned by a supportive structure while preserving independence through entrepreneurial practices that generate organic income and enhance financial resilience in pursuit of socioeconomic development—advancing Bosma’s (2016) perspective on social enterprises (SEs), which, although primarily driven by social value creation, is also rooted in a market-based approach. In conclusion, Thomson’s (2012) reiteration of Bourdieu’s assertion suggests that the quest for a universal theory of change within various fields is integral to the scholarly doxa.

## 6.6 Resolutions for change

*"Habitus is a product of social conditioning, and thus of history (unlike character), and it is endlessly transformed" (Bourdieu, 1994d, p. 7).*

As evidenced in previous sections, CBs have the versatility to address socioeconomic inequality and poverty, specifically within the context of being "community-led." Besides its versatility, the CB model is proven to help the most deprived communities build social capital and transform their socioeconomic position through entrepreneurial approaches. To bring about this change, Suomi (2017) argues for the active involvement of participants in CB development and operations due to its demonstrable positive effects on those with lived experiences of inequality and poverty, including feeling heard and empowered, learning new skills, and increasing trust. The Power to Change Research Institute Report (2015) also cites that the community's involvement in CB development treats the community as owners and gives them control over their future. As such, those with lived experience must initially be consulted when proposing actions for change. In this research, all three participant groups, i.e., CMs, STOs, and IPIMs, proposed resolutions for building a sustainable community business of practice towards socio-economic development. The following section presents their recommendations.

### 6.6.1 CM Resolutions for Change

*"This community has been at the bottom for so long, and the fact that we want to change paths is a positive one"- CM13.*

Community Members (6, 8, 11, 13, 15) proposed that Black Africans and Caribbeans must first recognise their shared values, culture, and heritage to establish a common ground for collective action. Africans and Caribbeans should understand that they are one people—though distinct—and that their shared values, culture, and heritage unite them. From this foundation, unity can be fostered through cultural programs such as carnivals, clothing exhibitions, music and musical events that highlight the positive aspects of the community. CMs cite well-known Caribbean annual festivals, including the Notting Hill Carnival, the Leicester Caribbean Carnival, and the Ghana Party in the Park, which a diverse audience enjoys. Such economically viable initiatives can generate income to support the STOs and their efforts.

*"Establishing CBs will enable positive opportunities and change in people's lives and a source of income for their communities - CM18. This will be a significant achievement for the community, so we are not "looked down upon" - CM12.*

Besides, CMs further argue that participation in cultural and heritage activities can reveal untapped talents and provide a platform for their development. Whether in hairdressing, music, catering, or childcare, these talents can be cultivated into employment pathways for the younger generation. They assert that this approach not only teaches practical skills but also fosters a deeper understanding of cultures and languages while building interpersonal and social skills.

CMs (3, 12, 15, 18) further propose that lessons should be learned from the Caucasian and Asian communities that successfully create and operate community businesses. The Black community can also establish businesses, such as an African supermarket, that provide job and volunteer opportunities, unite the youth, and promote African heritage and culture among young people.

Other proposed initiatives include affordable after-school clubs, where parents pay for the service, generating funds to be reinvested in the community to create wealth. Additionally, community businesses (CBs) will foster entrepreneurial networks and collaboration opportunities that mutually benefit entrepreneurs. For instance, caterers will support one another, while the entertainment industry will assist caterers. These networks will create opportunities and highlight the challenges that must be addressed.
*"There are several strategies to learn from. Establish a model with a central community-led body to develop, inform, educate, and support people. This will also create a support system where entrepreneurs support one another using a sector-specific approach." CM18*

Furthermore, Community Members (2, 3, 7) indicate that establishing community businesses may face challenges in identifying suitable individuals to provide the necessary support and guidance, even when capital is accessible and secured. This difficulty arises from the lack of visibility of professionals within the community. Consequently, it is essential to prioritise mapping the professionals in the community and organising those who can form the leadership body to guide the formation of CBs.

They further emphasise that for CBs to be effective, there must be a convention of rotational leadership roles that creates opportunities for qualified professionals within the CMs to foster trust, transparency, and openness. This approach will demonstrate to the community that leadership is a collective responsibility rather than an individual one. The leaders should share similar ideologies, values, and energies, and they must undergo a screening process to ensure they are committed to providing clear and effective solutions for the community's needs. From this perspective, they assert that the development of community leadership will be a valuable asset to the UK and the economies of African and Caribbean nations, as there is significant potential for growth and development.

In addition, community members (CMs 8, 13) advocate for the effective use of existing religious structures, as these are deeply embedded in the community's cultural fabric. They perceive these structures as opportunities for community business gatherings, collective development, and activities. As CM13 stated*, "The fact that the church is embedded in African culture can be a massive force for good."* Furthermore, initiatives such as the Coventry City of Culture create legacies that foster an environment conducive to establishing and growing community businesses.

Finally, the CMs (3, 5, 16) propose establishing connections with statutory organisations to facilitate the CB structures that align with the policies and strategies these bodies understand. This approach will create pathways to engage the appropriate types of investors, enabling the community to generate funding to support its initiatives. Leaders will enhance their bargaining power, acquire best practices from others, and establish development frameworks through constructive and collaborative efforts.

### 6.6.2 STO Resolutions for Change

*"We work together collectively to make us stronger. More friendly, happier, and stress-free. It promotes community cohesion, brings people out, and reduces mental health when we all work together and support each other. We can achieve so much together." - STO1.*

STOs propose nine potential solutions for change. First, STOs (4, 8, 10, 12, 14) suggest that as more individuals become aware of the consequences of the community's divisions, collaborative activities or events among Black-led STOs should be encouraged to unite the organisations together and foster cohesion that is currently lacking in forming and

maintaining these subjective relationships. The benefits will extend to harnessing entrepreneurial interests as small businesses collaborate to provide catering, table decorations, balloon arrangements, and more.

*"We will see the wider societal benefit that the Black communities working together can bring. There has been a realisation that we are more recently from Africa, the continent of Africa, or the Caribbean islands. We are one people, and our future will be brighter if we see the value in working with each other, setting our agenda, and changing the conversation." - STO14.*

Awareness of the benefits of collaborative efforts will help identify commonalities among cultures, tribes, and languages, enabling cohesive action to improve both the community and its host country. Only then can socioeconomic deprivation be effectively addressed from the grassroots level—through a bottom-up approach rather than a top-down one.

*"And I'm seeing a lot more of Black people just even acknowledging each other on the street. I'm seeing this coming together of African and Caribbean communities, and it's good. What I'm seeing within the Black communities is positive, and it has changed, and it's changing for the better." - STO15.*

In collaboration and cohesion, STOs recommend utilising existing directories or memberships in Black-led social organisations that the community can access for assistance or support. This approach ensures that capability support focuses on development, resilience, and sustainability.

*We would like to have a social event where we bring members together and get to know each other. That is how I want to build the community. I want people to acknowledge each other for being part of this work." I wanted to create a programme that allows people to have the skills to make money for themselves and buy and fund their projects, but many organisations refused membership because of this trust issue." – STO10.*

Secondly, STOs (2,3,4,5,7,8,9,10,12,14,15) propose strategies for sustainable development and assert that, in such a competitive environment, it is challenging to identify whom to trust or seek support.

Therefore, operating an STO involves more than merely acquiring resources; it also entails leveraging existing expertise, particularly that of older community members who have retired from active service and can contribute to the organisation's development. However, it is important to note that there are only a limited number of these members in the community of that calibre, which necessitates mapping leadership in this area as well. Like Community Members (CMs), STOs advocate for utilising existing expertise, beginning with an initial mapping of Black-led professionals within the field. These professionals can evaluate the most effective solutions to create opportunities for Black-led businesses. Social enterprises are crucial in accessing commissioning work and developing various trading activities.

Furthermore, larger Black-led STOs can enhance the capacity and capabilities of smaller STOs across different sectors, including social care and catering. In this manner, Black individuals and their organisations can effectively represent their voices within specific corridors of power and partnerships.

Third, concerning leadership issues, STOs (2, 7, 9, 11, 14) recommend nominating a lead representative for each locality to champion collaborative efforts and collective action. This leader should be a professional social activist who embodies the appropriate attitude toward leadership. They also suggested drawing inspiration from African American leaders in the United States, who provide strong examples of effective leadership.
*"Considering the experiences of different community groups throughout history and how those initial experiences may still have an impact until now." –STO14.*

Fourth, the STOs (2, 4, 5, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15) recommend involving young individuals interested in community entrepreneurship in forming Community Businesses (CBs). This initiative will equip the next generation to reclaim their space and foster a transformative reimagining of the community. Furthermore, engaging with young people will enable them to acquire new skills and encourage intergenerational collaboration.

Fifth, STO (11, 12, 15) proposes that Black-led organisations must establish the appropriate foundations and integrate research and evidence-based practices into their objectives to address the lack of diverse services. This also entails having effective systems or infrastructure to support the operation of those services.

*"What is the need for your organisation? Are there any framework perspectives, ideologies, models, or methods that support what you are trying to establish? These questions must be asked – we tend not to get all the systems in place that ensure you are connected to people who know. Some organisations think that because we are Black, we think when we say what we want, we are going to get it, but the reality is it does not work that way – it is about understanding what it means to be evidence-based and credible." STO11.*

Sixth, the STOs (2, 8, 9, 10, 15) indicate that since race and ethnicity play a significant role throughout the fundraising process, it is essential for more Black-led STOs to collaborate with IPIMs.

This partnership will help IPIMs better understand the specific needs of Black-led STOs during the grant funding assessment process. Additionally, it is essential to support STOs in comprehending the technical language that funders expect to see on application forms.
*"We are out here struggling still, and we see all the equipping of other organisations as if they always default to the centre because people see them first. Moreover, we may be here trying to say we are over here too." - STO15.*

As such, they propose culturally relevant support that is led and provided by the Black community, along with systems or mechanisms to consolidate resources for developing robust funding applications.
*"We need something that brings us together easily and effectively." – STO7.*

Seventh, STOs report that the responsibility of maintaining relationships with IPIMs is often underestimated. They outline several strategies, including networking, inviting IPIMs to STO events, and having STOs participate in IPIM events. They emphasise that maintaining these relationships involves attending meetings, aligning with the priorities of the IPIMs, and ensuring that all necessary documentation requested by IPIMs is produced promptly. This includes submitting reports within deadlines and in the correct format. Additionally, it entails being open and transparent about any changes and discussing challenges with the IPIMs (STO 2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 15).

*"Particularly with the example of the Heritage Fund, we have had a close relationship with them. We can talk quite honestly about what is going on, and they have been able to express an understanding that they have visited events and exhibition launches. They have not just been there, like checking that the money is being spent correctly, but participating and meeting some of our young people."* - *STO9.*

STOs emphasise that maintaining relationships requires honesty, especially in reporting and evaluations. This is crucial, as Black-led STOs must cultivate trust to counteract stereotypical perceptions. Otherwise, their diligent efforts, often of high quality, may be disregarded.
*"Even with our quality work, there is so much learning. Big companies want to learn. Moreover, from other people's mistakes, there is so much to reflect on.?" STO15.*

Eighth, STOs (4, 9, 11) advocate for collaborative relationships with IPIMs and encourage IPIMs to seek clarification or assistance if they do not fully understand the community's needs when evaluating funding applications or the work of their projects.
*"We specifically work with young people of colour, but then we have influenced funders who haven't had that lived experience. When we talk about business versus output and community work, there can sometimes be a bit of a clash. That might be detrimental to the work we are trying to do with the young people"* - STO9.

To ensure this occurs, they further emphasise the importance of being personable and maintaining open lines of communication with IPIMs. This can be achieved by providing regular project updates through emails and newsletters, as well as informing them about networking opportunities and other relevant information.
*"Relations are maintained through regular conversations with the key people at the head of affairs. I have a way of dealing with people who can make decisions and have the power by emailing, making phone calls, and inviting them to the office. So, the head of probation came up here to the office. P has come here with the CEO of LBF." – STO4.*

The ninth and final recommendation, STOs (2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 15), emphasises that maintaining ongoing relationships and being taken seriously will only occur if Black-led STOs have a 'seat at the table.'

This inclusion enables them to attend meetings, access specific opportunities, and regularly engage with the IPIMs. Furthermore, it ensures that Black-led STOs participate in decision-making processes and hold statutory organisations accountable, and vice versa. In this context, Black-led STOs will enhance their capabilities by embedding continuous professional development within their organisations to cultivate essential skills. They will also learn to navigate the dynamics of power, language, and its associated rules.
*"You need to build your skill set so that when you come to the table, you are not coming as someone begging for an opportunity. You are just someone with the skill set and doing something positive because if you have certain skills, they will let you through that door."- STO10.*

Considering the lack of trust, it is proposed that whilst CBs remain locally rooted, the geographic boundaries for board members be expanded to adopt a "Communities of Interest" approach where the board members of CBs will include individuals who share a common interest and lived experience in the areas of deprivation and inequality being addressed, without a strict requirement to be from or reside in that community. In this context, skills and expertise can be drawn from various regions. These skills will encompass entrepreneurial capabilities to ensure the CB is established and operated with sound financial sustainability and resilient strategies. This approach aims to achieve profitability, which can be reinvested locally to create broad impacts for beneficiaries, ultimately enhancing quality of life and promoting socioeconomic development.

### 6.6.3 IPIM Resolutions for Change

In Chapter Five (refer to Section 5.3.1.5: a), all IPIMs advocate for a more inclusive approach to their work, with 100% expressing a positive response to engaging in follow-up conversations after this research. In addition to the recommendations from Local Authorities, community businesses align with local strategies and policies (see Chapter Five, section 5.3.1.4: e).

First, ***collaborate with communities to address inequalities***, ensuring that underserved populations recognise that community business is for them and have equal access to funding and support as other groups. For instance, as a funder, Power to Change asserts its responsibility to leverage its influence to combat inequity.

They are dedicated to listening to these communities and partnering with them to enhance the accessibility of community business support and funding. Additionally, they aim to help strengthen local networks and improve employability by fostering the development of future leadership skills.

Second, it is essential to advocate for community business leadership among the younger generation. According to Power to Change, most individuals involved in community businesses are over 40 years old, and only a limited number of these organisations have established clear succession plans. Consequently, there is an urgent need for community businesses to engage and inspire younger individuals to enter the sector. They assert that those under 35 are grappling with a combination of high unemployment, a skills gap, and a crisis of loneliness and that community businesses can provide valuable support. IPIMs propose that participation in community businesses—whether as volunteers, staff, shareholders, directors, or trustees—would greatly benefit younger people, including enhancing their confidence. As a result, they are calling for inspired and diverse changemakers, inclusive leaders, and younger individuals to become actively involved in the sector. Through these efforts, IPIMs aim to inspire and rebalance power dynamics, making it easier for everyone to participate in community business.

Third, IPIMs propose implementing leadership programs aimed at increasing the number of dedicated changemakers who lead community businesses and support their development. This initiative will also help open community businesses to a more diverse range of communities.

Fourth, it is essential to implement intentional systemic changes, as many IPIMs did during the COVID-19 pandemic when it became evident that Black and Asian communities were disproportionately affected by the virus. These groups often face significant barriers to funding for various reasons. For instance, according to IPIMAB, a weighting system was developed during the pandemic to evaluate funding applications. This system prioritised organisations led by individuals from minoritised ethnic backgrounds or those supporting communities experiencing racial inequity, allowing them to score more favourably and thus receive funding priority.

Additionally, within their consortium networks, they effectively promoted their funding opportunities, attracting numerous organisations they had not previously supported. A total of £9.5 million was allocated to 302 community-led organisations, with 60% being led by individuals from minoritised ethnic backgrounds or those assisting communities facing racial inequity. Remarkably, 50% of these organisations went on to receive funding, a notable achievement given that the typical drop-off rate is significantly higher. This principle can be applied in similar contexts.

## 6.7 Towards a Community Business Practice

*"If the mentality for working together exists, it will be easy for people to own a place and begin to run a business; we need to educate people and raise awareness about thinking differently about collective working. We must move people out of their comfort zones to start making them think." STO4.*

Currently, the practice of structuring the CM habitus, the STO field, and the field of power is characterised by uncertainty, yet there is hope for change and progress toward addressing socioeconomic deprivation and inequality. As previously mentioned, change must begin with the understanding that all three groups—CMs, STOs, and IPIMs—are interdependent relational structures. As Bourdieu (1982) posits, a dual relationship exists between habitus and field. On the one hand, the field structures the habitus; on the other hand, it serves as the foundation for actors' understanding of their lives, including their perception of the field. This relationship can be characterised as one of knowledge or cognitive construction, wherein habitus plays a crucial role in constituting the field as a meaningful world (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992a: 126) refer to this as an "obscure and double relation," while Bourdieu (1993a: 76) describes it as an "unconscious relationship" between habitus and field. Each element influences the other, contributing to our understanding of practice. This discussion focuses on whether habitus (CM & STO) and field (STO & IPIM) can effectively collaborate.

### 6.7.1 The Hysteresis Effect in Practice

In this context, King (2000) argues that reactionary individuals and groups (CMs, STO habitus) cling to outdated ideas and values that conflict with emerging social realities.

In contrast, progressive groups (STOs and IPIMs Field) effectively articulate the direction of change. The research indicates that change has become an essential outcome of the structured dispositions within the habitus, field, and field of power. To advance, all parties—CMs, STOs, and IPIMs—have proposed 33 individual resolutions (see section 6.6) to foster socioeconomic development through community businesses.

Consequently, the current disposition state aligns with King's (2000) argument that, at some point, the objective status of the habitus (structure) must be rejected to account for change. It is essential to concede that the habitus (structured structuring) does not impose itself on individuals "willy-nilly"; rather, individuals (structured) possess an intimate understanding of their culture. As such, the habitus (structured, structuring, structure) necessitates a "practical theory" for engaging with virtuosic individuals, which it obscures with its discourse on objectivity while recognising individuals' (CM & STO) affection for their social destinies. This reality becomes evident when the objective habitus (IPIM Field of Power structure) agrees to eliminate ethnicity labels, granting new and existing incumbents equal access to resources and support. Whether this occurs in practice remains to be seen, but a favourable consensus for change has emerged within this research context.

Within this context, the current dispositions within the habitus—the structured, structuring, and structure—are neither fixed nor in constant flux (Bourdieu, 1990c). Instead, dispositions evolve (durable and transposable but not immutable) simultaneously with the social landscapes they traverse (the contextual fields), which evolve according to the logic to which they contribute. According to King (2000), a classic case of hysteresis can occur when there is a mismatch between habitus and field, particularly when the habitus is uncoordinated with the field (Bourdieu, 1990). For example, in this study, the dispositional and historical habitus (structured, structuring) conflicts with the historical and contemporary (structuring, structure) field requirements. Bourdieu further asserts that ongoing contexts shape habitus: "This is slow and unconscious—as dispositions are not easily swayed by the tides of change in the social world." Therefore, in situations where the field changes more rapidly or in different directions than the habituses of its members, the practices of actors may appear anachronistic, stubbornly resistant, or ill-informed (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977a). It is certainly possible that the IPIMs could implement systemic changes rapidly due to governmental legislation.

However, the CM and STOs remain entrenched in their historically consequential practices of mistrust and self-destruction. For this, King (2000) argues that time lag occurs in practical settings, and the differential responses of IPIMs, STOs and CMs will lead to the dislocation and disruption of habitus, a common consequence of any change within a field.

In this instance, the change is not indeterminate; thus, the disruption among the CM habitus, the STO field, and the IPIM field of power will likely result in fewer consequences during the transition period. It is important to consider that field conditions vary over time while individual histories continue to evolve (Bourdieu, 1977). Thomson (2012) asserts that even though a field is profoundly hierarchical, with dominant agents and institutions wielding significant power to shape its dynamics, there remains room for agency and change. This is evidenced by findings indicating that, despite their challenges, CMs, STOs, and IPIMs maintain a sense of hope toward a collective goal. Ultimately, all parties desire to effect change and are willing to invest the necessary effort to achieve it.
Whether the Black community can establish, operate, and sustain successful community businesses for socioeconomic development is attainable.

However, both economic and social capital within the community's habitus and the STO field have yet to be fully developed, as community businesses cannot be formed and operated sustainably without these essential resources. Consequently, while the research concludes that the Black community has the potential to create and maintain successful community businesses, practical implementation of this vision necessitates the younger generation's involvement in leadership roles. In light of the proposed solutions, all three parties—IPIMs, STOs, and CMs—suggested assimilating the youth in forming and operating community businesses. There is a pressing need for these businesses to cultivate a new generation of pragmatic, innovative, and visionary social activists who can serve as changemakers in the sector, bridging the gap between STOs, IPIMs, and future generations. As one IPIM stated, *“There must be a rebalance of power from STOs and IPIMs to future generations.” - IPIMAB.*

Consequently, the Community Business Practice Framework is designed to prioritise youth integration and leadership into CB formation and operations.

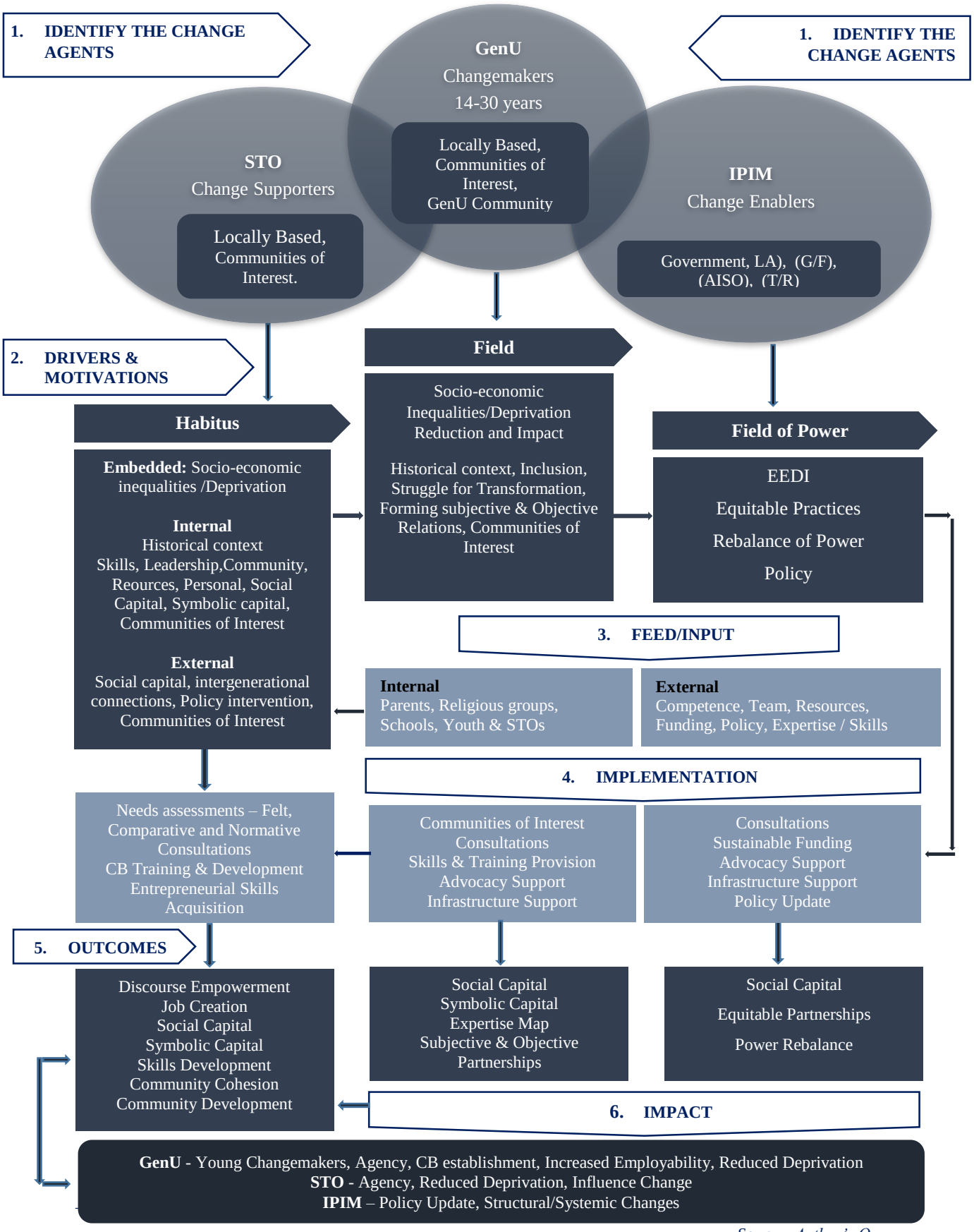
### 6.7.2 Developing A Community Business Practice Process Model

The Community Business Practice Process Model (Figure 19) guides community development practitioners and policymakers in implementing locally-led socioeconomic regeneration initiatives. It offers individuals with lived experience a process map and the opportunity to achieve sustainable change through community entrepreneurship.

Kickul and Thomas (2020) assert that social entrepreneurship leverages the passion, ingenuity, innovation, perseverance, strategic planning, resourcefulness, and growth-oriented mindset typical of entrepreneurs to tackle society's most pressing challenges.
From this awareness, innovative solutions can be developed to address socioeconomic deprivation and inequality in an inclusive and representative manner for all groups. These solutions should be led by communities with lived experience and incorporate entrepreneurial and agentic approaches within the support framework. This strategy will involve co-producing a robust agent-structure CB provision, where the structure and the agents within it, despite not being on the same playing field, recognise their interdependence in forming, operating, and sustaining CBs to combat socioeconomic deprivation and inequality.

Consequently, the modified and adaptable habitus will continuously influence the structuring of the field, fostering an ongoing change process (Hardy, 2008).
Figure 19 presents the draft outline of the Community Business Practice Process Model, developed based on the findings of this research. The model centres around young people, referred to as GenU (Generation Utopia), who are envisioned as the proposed changemakers. They will play a crucial role in shaping the direction and effectiveness of the framework, which serves as an operational tool designed to facilitate systemic change across underrepresented communities, support institutions, and policymakers. The systematic process illustrated in the diagram and the subsequent delineation clarifies the journey from inception to implementation and the outcomes.

*Figure 19: A Community Business Practice Process Model*




*Source: Author's Own*

### 6.7.3 Community Business Practice Process Implementation

*"When you are growing up, it might be that you did not have any organisation that you go to. So, if a young Black person now has options, let us do that. Everyone wants the same thing, which is to remove colonialism's ongoing impact, but everybody wants to do it differently. Even if you can look at "Martin Luther King and Malcolm X, this is a general example with extremes but different. So, I think some organisations want to create radical change, while others want to reach equality. there's a conversation about the dismantling of institutions." – STO9.*

The framework proposes six stages of implementation: identifying the change agents, determining the drivers and motivations, outlining input requirements, detailing the implementation process, and specifying the desired outcomes and impacts. This section delineates each implementation stage, using the research findings as a benchmark.

#### 6.7.3.1 Identifying the Change Entities

The change entities will adhere to the same pattern as the research participants, except that GenU will replace CMs. The following section outlines the three key stakeholders in the framework. It is important to note that CMs will still be included in the framework through their community and religious structures.

***a) Generation Utopia – GenU as the future "Changemakers."***

They are young individuals aged between 14 and 30 with a strong interest in community development, entrepreneurship, and social change. This age group did not participate in the study. Regarding the community businesses, GenUs will be locally rooted within the Social Economic Space of the West Midlands and recruited from their respective localities. However, this process also allows GenUs to join CBs established outside their immediate locality if they share a common interest in a CB with a specific focus. This approach broadens the scope of the CB principles to accommodate communities with shared interests (Communities of Interest) that are not confined to a specific geographic area.

***b) Social Trading Organisations as Change Supporters.***

According to the initial explanation, Social Trading Organisations (STOs) are entities established and operating within the socioeconomic sector for some time. They have a deep understanding of the social trading landscape and experience navigating social organisations, including their requirements and challenges, from inception to sustainability. Within this framework, they serve as supporters and influencers of change, leveraging their skills, experience, expertise, and networks to guide and mentor changemakers in forming and operating community businesses. Furthermore, the STOs will extend their engagement beyond local areas to foster a shared community interest.

***c) The IPIMs, as change enablers***

Like the STOs, Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIMs) will maintain their positions of power within their respective sub-entities, including Local Authorities, Grantmakers/Funders, Advocacy Support and Infrastructure bodies, and Research/Think Tanks. The influence they wield through their resources is crucial during the initial stages of community business formation and operations as changemakers and change supporters develop strategies for financial sustainability. These changemakers and change supporters will collaborate with the Local Authority IPIMs to ensure that the CB framework, its strategy, and implementation align with local policies in accordance with the IPIM commitments outlined in this study (see section 5.3.1.4: e).

### 6.7.3.2 Drivers & Motivations

The drivers and motivations for change stem from empirical evidence of socioeconomic deprivation and inequality (see section 2.7). Furthermore, it incorporates the barriers identified in the research by all parties (see sections 5.1.14, 5.2.1.5, and 5.3.1.3a) along with their proposed solutions (see section 6.6) aimed at overcoming these obstacles.

***a) Drivers***

The drivers for change are categorised into three sections – barriers in the habitus, barriers in the field, and barriers in the field of power. Firstly, in the CM Habitus, there are three forms of challenges that need addressing:

i. ***Embedded challenges :*** socioeconomic deprivation, inequalities, and behavioural dispositions.

ii. ***Internal challenges:*** a lack of leadership, skills and knowledge, trust, cohesion/collaboration, lack of resources, selfish interest, poverty, and community buy-in.
iii. ***External challenges:*** identifying communities of interest that share the passion and drive of CBs, convincing change supporters and influencer STOs to participate, and determining the networks within the IPIMs that will support the plan, specifically Local Authority IPIMs, to ensure policy alignment.

Secondly, in the field, STOs are driven by historical dispositions and their consequential impact on their habitus, which can be detrimental to their operations. Addressing socioeconomic inequalities and reducing deprivation are integral to their mission. They actively seek solutions to these challenges. The struggle for transformation involves establishing both subjective and objective relationships. In this context, GenU changemakers are vital in this transformational journey.

Thirdly, the unique position of the IPIM Field of Power serves as a crucial component in the puzzle of change. GenU changemakers and STO change supporters' engagement within their institutions will enhance the representation of underrepresented groups. Additionally, insights gained from this process can initiate systemic change that promotes the equitable practices they aspire to achieve and rebalances power for the changemakers. Furthermore, Local Authority IPIMs can implement policies incorporating entrepreneurial socio-economic development into economic regeneration strategies.

All three groups are interconnected and rely on one another to effectively address social and economic deprivation and inequality.

### *b) Motivations*

The proposed resolutions (see section 6.6) by CMs, STOs, and IPIMs are outlined below.

i. Identify shared values, cultural practices, and heritage.
ii. The aspirational development of untapped talents and the provision of a platform for their growth.
iii. Championing CB leadership among the younger generation.
iv. Talents nurtured into career pathways for the younger generation.
v. Creating entrepreneurial networks and collaboration opportunities.

vi. Mapping professionals to establish a leadership network that champions collaborative work and collective action by identifying commonalities in shared culture and heritage.
vii. Effectively utilising existing cultural, religious, and professional structures.
viii. Establishing connections with statutory organisations.
ix. Creating economically viable ventures to generate income to support the STOs and their operations.
x. Bringing organisations together to promote cohesion.
xi. Capacity and capability development to ensure culturally relevant support.
xii. Embedding research and evidence-based practices into organisational objectives.
xiii. Gaining access to commission work and developing additional trading activities while understanding the needs of STOs in the grant funding assessment process.
xiv. Maintaining IPIM relations requires openness, transparency regarding changes, and candid discussions about challenges.
xv. Equitable support and resources are accessible to everyone.
xvi. Involvement in decision-making processes, representing diverse voices within specific corridors of power and partnerships, and holding statutory organisations accountable.
xvii. Implement deliberate systemic changes to address inequalities.

#### 6.7.3.3 Feed/Input

The above will require collective input from both the CM habitus and the external field. Internally, the buy-in and contributions of the community—specifically, new and existing Entrepreneurs/New Project Initiators (NPIs), community organisations, religious institutions, volunteers, and service users—will be crucial in building bonding social capital to establish community businesses. Externally, the expertise of the mapped professionals will ensure that a team of competent supporters and influencers is available to assist the GenUs in their quest for change, ensuring that entrepreneurial practices are integrated into their ventures from the outset. Furthermore, with the support of the IPIMs, appropriate resources can be allocated to fund the formation and operations of new CBs while ensuring their sustainability.

### 6.7.3.4 Implementation

Firstly, consultations must be conducted with young people (GenUs), as they were not included in this study, along with all other stakeholders, to influence the direction and robustness of the framework. Additionally, ongoing discussions must take place with all four IPIM groups: Local Authorities (LA), Grantmakers/Funders (G/F), Advocacy and Infrastructure Support Organisations (AISO), and Think Tanks/Research (T/R) to ensure and solidify their commitment to inclusive support and the rebalancing of power. This is particularly important in developing and embedding entrepreneurial practices from the outset of community business formation. Subsequently, a comprehensive needs analysis of the habitus must be conducted.

This analysis includes a felt needs assessment, which explores GenUs' perceptions, beliefs, passions, and ambitions; a normative needs assessment that identifies socioeconomic needs within the habitus; and a comparative needs assessment that examines socioeconomic needs across various health determinant factors within specific Local Authorities, benchmarked against the findings from the normative assessment.

Afterwards, consultations will need to be conducted with all relevant stakeholders to develop a comprehensive delivery plan. This plan will include training and development initiatives for GenU, particularly in community entrepreneurship. The goal is to equip and enhance the skills of changemakers, empowering them as leaders and increasing the number of dedicated changemakers who can effectively lead community businesses and support their growth. Similarly, consultations with the STO change supporters will assist in developing and implementing the skills and training plan and providing advocacy and mentoring support to the GenUs.

The supporters will leverage their platforms to secure funding for establishing Community Businesses (CBs). Additionally, consultations must occur in the IPIM field of power as change enablers. This collaboration will further aid in the development and execution of the skills and training plan while also offering advocacy and mentoring support to the GenUs. Together, they will work to ensure that the framework and intended outcomes are integrated into policy.

#### 6.7.3.5 Outcomes

The anticipated outcomes resulting from the implementation are outlined below.

a) A discourse empowerment process will initiate the bridging of the gap between habitus and field, thereby connecting these two concepts and ensuring that social capital is effectively integrated into their structure.
b) Foster and promote intergenerational collaboration within communities to enhance socioeconomic development.
c) Encourage individuals from diverse backgrounds to participate in community business initiatives.
d) The formation of community businesses will create jobs and encourage volunteering.
e) Promote community cohesion.
f) Enhance the visibility of individual and collective human, cultural, and symbolic capital.
g) Improve and cultivate skills while increasing the number of youths involved as community development practitioners in the CB field.
h) Implementing and delivering this framework will enhance bonding, bridging, and linking social capital, thereby fostering long-term relationships and partnerships.
i) Highlight the expertise of STO leaders to legitimise their symbolic capital.
j) Encourage IPIMs to implement systemic changes that ensure equal access for underrepresented individuals in their organisations.
k) IPIM's commitment to fostering equitable partnerships and rebalancing power will be achieved.
l) Policy intervention will facilitate the adaptation of community businesses, acting as a catalyst for socioeconomic development.

#### 6.7.3.6 Impact

At the final stage, all three groups will experience positive impacts. GenUs changemakers will gain the agency to contribute to the formation, operation, and sustainability of community-based initiatives. This involvement will enhance their work experience and create pathways to employment in community development and entrepreneurship. Consequently, this will elevate income levels, reduce poverty and health-related determinants, and foster productive citizens.

As role models, the changemakers will, in turn, inspire their peers, encouraging them to become changemakers as well. Overall, deprivation will be reduced over time; however, the exact timelines are currently unknown and will be established once community-led GenU initiatives are piloted.

Similarly, STOs will gain the agency to operate effectively through close collaborations with IPIMs. They will achieve equitable access to resources, thereby enhancing their ability to continue efforts to reduce deprivation in their communities and drive meaningful change. IPIMs will implement structural and systemic changes and policy reforms that support Community Businesses (CBs) at the grassroots level. This approach will ultimately improve the lives of individuals and strengthen community businesses across various localities, fostering productive and harmonious environments for residents to live and work. A more agent-sensitive approach to community entrepreneurship will be adopted to address social and economic deprivation and inequalities, supported by a robust structure. Community Members and Social Trading Organisations maintain independence, promoting an Agent Structure Approach.

# CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

## 7.1 Introduction

This concluding chapter begins by summarising the research aims, objectives, and the problem it seeks to address. It then presents the key findings that align with the research goals and objectives. The research's contributions and implications for theory and community business practice are discussed. Subsequently, an outline of the research's strengths and limitations and future directions to inspire and motivate further contributions is presented.

## 7.2 Recapping the Problem, Aims and Objective

The research aimed to examine the efficacy of Community Businesses (CBs) as catalysts for socioeconomic development and the extent to which policymakers consider CB strategies for locally led socioeconomic regeneration. Both theoretical (literature) and empirical (practical) work were conducted to achieve this objective. The literature reviews provided context for the research purpose and guided its theoretical framework. These reviews indicated that community businesses are a subset of social enterprises with the potential to contribute to local regeneration strategies, generate social capital, and promote civil society. The Black community was selected as the focal point of the research, accompanied by a statistical analysis of their socioeconomic concerns to support this emphasis. Finally, the intentions of the UK government to address socioeconomic deprivation through its levelling-up policy were briefly outlined.

The central question arising from the study's aim was whether and how the Black community can establish, operate, and sustain successful community businesses for socioeconomic development. Consequently, three key objectives guided the empirical research. The first objective focused on assessing the conditions that facilitate establishing community businesses within the Black community. The second objective investigated whether Black-led Social Trading Organisations (STOs) qualify as community businesses (CBs) and explored how they form, operate, and sustain successful CBs. The third objective examined the extent to which policymakers and support organisations recognise the role of community businesses as a viable option for locally-led socioeconomic development and regeneration.

The adaptation of Pierre Bourdieu's Theory of Practice (ToP) and its relational concepts informed the creation of a conceptual framework that integrated the objectives. The framework systematically investigates the experiences of three groups of research participants: Community Members (CM), Social Trading Organisations (STOs), and Institutions with Power, Influence, and Money (IPIM). First, the predispositional context of the Black community (structured structuring habitus) is assessed, considering their attachment to place, social capital, and accountability to the community. Second, the focus shifts to Black-led Social Trading Organisations (STOs) as a structuring structure field concerning community benefit (CB) formation, operations, and sustainability. This includes utilising all relevant forms of capital to compete and establish relationships with the entities that shape the context and its governing rules. Third, the study explores the extent to which the field of power (structure) employs these rules when designing support and allocating resources that impact the agency of STOs to form, operate, and sustain their organisations. It also examines the alignment of community businesses (CBs) with socioeconomic regeneration policy.

A qualitative study employed radical change paradigms and interpretive and pragmatic research philosophies. This approach utilised narrative inquiry, which followed a recursive and reflexive process to produce detailed descriptions of context and social relations, thereby gaining access to the deeper realities of participants' experiences. During data analysis, an abductive approach—combining deductive reasoning with inductive references—was integrated into the Theory of Practice (ToP) framework. This integration facilitated a more robust theoretically grounded analysis, resulting in richer insights into the research findings.

### 7.3 Summary of the Research Findings

The key findings summarise the state of practice (see section 6.6) within the CM habitus, STO, and IPIM fields of power. In response to objective one, the findings indicate that the structured Black habitus comprises individuals who, despite being aware of historical contexts, overlook the connection between their past and present circumstances, where social deprivation is prevalent. Currently, the community remains mired in historical grievances, bearing the legacies of slavery and colonialism, which perpetuate divisions, negative perceptions, disruptive behaviours, self-sabotage, and destruction—often enacted unconsciously.

The research revealed that, due to these ingrained behaviours, none of the 20 participating members reported complete and total trust in the habitus. The values associated with trust—such as love, care, humility, protectiveness, and mutual support—are currently absent. This predisposed mindset towards trust and trustful relationships exacerbates community divisions and entrenched behaviours, suggesting a rule rather than an exception. Such behaviours are carried out unintentionally, rooted in historical contexts, and unconsciously transmitted from generation to generation, leading to inward thinking rather than collective progress. Therefore, in evaluating the conditions that facilitate the formation of Community Businesses (CBs), the research concludes that while Community Members (CMs) are attached to their places of residence, the lack of social capital—namely trust, reciprocity, and goodwill—impedes their accountability to one another. At present, the CM habitus lacks sufficient social capital to establish CBs.

Research in the Social Trading Organisations (STOs) field has demonstrated that all 15 participants adhere to two or more of the four Community Business (CB) criteria: being locally rooted, accountable to one another, having a broad impact, and trading for profit. While most STOs are locally based and significantly impact their communities, they often lack accountability to these communities or provide profit-oriented services. A notable finding was that none of the STOs fully understood the CB model, its approach, or its benefits for socioeconomic development. Ultimately, there was a fundamental lack of comprehension regarding the nature and purpose of community businesses. Consequently, in response to the second objective, it can be concluded that most STOs do not qualify as community businesses.

Furthermore, similar to the CM habitus, research indicates that the internal disposition characteristic of the CM habitus is mirrored in the STO field, influencing how STO leaders interact with other Black-led STOs. Both the Black CM habitus and the STO field appear entrenched in the past, failing to evolve into a robust network of internal and institutionalised relationships characterised by mutual acquaintance and recognition. A pervasive lack of trust exists among Black-led organisations, as evidenced by their difficulties in forming meaningful relationships and collaborating toward mutually beneficial objectives.

These internal behaviours, exacerbated by systemic inequalities, make it nearly impossible to establish and operate community-based organisations. This situation can only change if the CM habitus intentionally cultivates social capital to facilitate CB formation. While the STO field devises and implements entrepreneurial strategies that generate income, leading to financial resilience and reduced reliance on grant funding. However, they would still require the IPIMs to allocate resources to initiate this process, as the structure and the agents are interconnected.

STOs have likened their experiences to a “battle” when operating and sustaining their organisations. For these STOs, the IPIM field of power establishes the structured context and associated rules for designing support and delivery. It dictates policy development for socioeconomic regeneration from an uninformed position, which significantly impacts the ability of Black-led STOs to form, operate, and thrive. The relationship between STOs and IPIM exists at various levels within the societal power hierarchy. IPIM serves as the dominant field of power, and Black-led STOs occupy a subordinate position; both interact through formal channels. The established rules promote a self-conscious dogma that broadly categorises all “underserved” groups protected by race under the “minority ethnic” label, thereby positioning them as undeserving and unequal. These rules represent accepted norms and fundamental beliefs practised across all IPIM sub-fields, irrespective of the level of power involved. Consequently, the unique nature and needs of each “underserved” entity is often overlooked.

The findings indicate that these power dynamics hinder STOs from functioning as equal partners within the socioeconomic space. This occurs despite STOs demonstrating significant levels of symbolic capital through their qualifications, expertise, and skills, which have the potential to contribute valuable knowledge to the sector. Nevertheless, their ability to operate is constrained by limited economic capital and their status as “minority”, which positions them as inferior to others. These predetermined conditions restrict STOs' capacity to influence the dynamics of the field. The internal, operational, and structural challenges STOs face obstruct their development, growth, and sustainability. Furthermore, the mandated doxa is closely connected to the STO field and the CM habitus, such that changes in the IPIM field of power affect the STO field and create a ripple effect on the CM habitus, which encompasses service users, beneficiaries, staff, and volunteers.

The sustainability of Black-led STOs is constrained by the structures that support them, which are often encumbered by complex eligibility criteria, short-term funding, limited access to information and opportunities, and other systemic inequalities. Consequently, the relationships between the IPIM and the STOs tend to be short-lived and lack long-term benefits. As a result, STOs view their operations in the field as a struggle for survival, recognising that, although they are independent entities, they are not truly agentic but rather constrained by the IPIM structure.

Despite the challenges, Community Members (CM), Social Trading Organisations (STOs), and Institutions with Power, Influence and Money (IPIMs) maintain a sense of hope toward a collective goal. They conclude that establishing, operating, and sustaining successful community businesses for socioeconomic development is achievable. All stakeholders are eager to foster change and are willing to take action to make it happen. However, given the current relational dynamics within the CM habitus and STO fields, such ventures are not feasible with the present generation of research participants. Nevertheless, there is a consensus that these initiatives are possible with the younger generation. From this agreement, a Community Business Practice Process Model has been developed (see Figure 19), designed to facilitate the integration and leadership of the younger generation into CB formation and operations.

## 7.4 Contribution and Implications

This research is pertinent, influencing theory and practice while having direct policy implications. Its actionable insights will be invaluable for individuals engaged in community entrepreneurship, which seeks to address socioeconomic deprivation and inequality. The following section outlines the research's theoretical and methodological contributions, practical applications, and policy implications.

### 7.4.1 Theoretical and Methodological Contributions

Blackburn and Ram (2006) assert that a skills deficit contributes to socioeconomic inequality, low levels of social capital, and a lack of employment opportunities. Smith et al. (2019) further argue that this exclusion is exacerbated by alienation from social structures that could mitigate the identified deficit.

Although the research did not directly collect data on the skill levels of Community Members (CM) to ascertain these deficits, the observed deficits in social capital—both bridging and linking—within the CM habitus and the Social Trading Organisation (STO) Field support Smith's assertion. The evidence indicates the community's alienation within the IPIM structures, specifically in the decision-making process, whether enacted consciously or unconsciously.

The research also supports the positions of Bailey (2012) and Power to Change (2015), which assert that community businesses have the potential to significantly contribute to local regeneration strategies, generate social capital, and promote civil society as a whole. Ultimately, the primary contribution of this study lies in the evidence regarding the experiences, involvement, and impact of Black individuals in community business activities. The novelty of the research is its ability to operationalise Bourdieu's theory of practice from the perspectives of community entrepreneurship and socioeconomic deprivation, providing a comprehensive investigation that connects historical contexts to the present and future. Therefore, one can conclude that this research has helped bridge the knowledge gap surrounding Black people's participation in community enterprise activities within academia.

Furthermore, the research highlights the lack of understanding regarding community business and the extent of social relations within and among the Black community, which are essential for mobilising resources and capital for advancement. This does not diminish the work conducted by scholars and organisations, such as the Power to Change Research Institute, which has produced extensive empirical research on community businesses. Their recent work [39]*(Community Business Insights, Solutions, and Recommendations for Funding and Infrastructure Organisations - April 2023)* explores the barriers to funding and support faced by underrepresented communities. Instead, the researcher, who belongs to the community in focus, was able to access insights and data that a non-community member would likely not have obtained.

[39] https://www.powertochange.org.uk/research/exploring-barriers-to-funding-and-support-experienced-by-marginalised-community-businesses/

Consequently, this thesis provides new data on the Black community's role and position within the social trading economy, revealing relationships that, according to the evidence, are often "taken for granted" but can be intentionally leveraged to create meaningful change within the social and economic space.

In a broader context, this research addresses a call by Peredo et al. (2014) in their article, the Theory of Community-Based Enterprise, whether community-based enterprises can be effectively established in communities (such as refugee settings) lacking a shared history of cooperative efforts. Additionally, Peredo et al. (2014) explore how governments, NGOs, and other corporate entities can engage with community-based enterprises to enhance their operations and benefit their partners. The key findings of this research have responded to these inquiries as well as provided an original contribution to knowledge, both theoretically and practically. The goal is to transform and drive systemic change in communities facing socioeconomic deprivation and inequality and to support institutions that facilitate these efforts sensitively and innovatively through entrepreneurship.

Furthermore, although the research primarily focuses on the Black community, the recommendations presented in the thesis can be applied, with caution and an understanding of the local context, to any community experiencing socioeconomic deprivation. The thesis addresses the limitations of academic and empirical knowledge concerning the "underrepresented" community's involvement in community businesses (CBs), whether as new entrants or existing incumbents. By concentrating on the Black community, the research enabled a detailed, theoretically grounded evaluation of Black-led community business practices in their formation, operation, and sustainability. This research highlights the community's unique voices rather than categorising them under the "minority" umbrella, often the default in existing literature.

This voice was particularly enhanced by Pierre Bourdieu's Theory of Practice (ToP), which served as an effective tool for the research methodology. Specifically, Bourdieu's primary conceptual frameworks—habitus, field, and capital—provided theoretical and practical guidance, forming an ideal framework that facilitated logical solutions to the research problem and addressed the research question.

The research extended these by innovatively applying the ToP framework to synchronise in a multi-dimensional investigation, allowing for an exploratory review of all research subjects and their environments to understand how they experience their realities. Through this, the ToP framework and the narrative inquiry approach effectively amplified the participants' voices within their historical, geographical, and sociocultural contexts. This synergy fostered honest introspection among all research participants, ultimately paving the way for solutions to the barriers hindering CB formation and operations for socioeconomic development.

So, in addressing the research question, the findings extend beyond merely uncovering significant data and bridging a gap in the existing literature regarding the Black community's involvement in community entrepreneurship. Through a systematically guided methodological design and strategy, the research facilitates a multifaceted and simultaneous triangulation of the experiences of various subjects into a cohesive, structured, and logical model for practice-based research. This systematic process generated well-rounded and comprehensive findings through which the Community Business Practice Framework was constructed (see section 6.7.2), thereby operationalising Bourdieu's Theory of Practice framework into a practical tool for academic reference and utilisation. By implementing the Community Business Practice Framework, the research extends the Theory of Practice and its related concepts – habitus, field and capital- into community entrepreneurship settings to tackle challenging issues faced by communities in high deprivation and lacking social capital. It is mainly relevant to academics and researchers who will find the developed Community Business Practice Framework a valuable study guide, offering a transformative entrepreneurial approach to socioeconomic and community business development.

### 7.4.2 Practical Contributions and Implication

The findings from this research will be crucial in developing solutions to address socioeconomic deprivation and inequality. Furthermore, advocating for pragmatic and innovative engagement strategies that raise awareness of the exclusion, non-engagement, and lack of representation of underrepresented groups in decision-making and policy intervention processes is essential. This doctoral research will act as a catalyst for future discussions from three perspectives: Community Benefits from an Asset/Strength-Based Approach, Promoting Inclusivity, and Policy Intervention.

#### *7.4.2.1 Asset /Strength-Based Review of CBs as Catalysts for Socioeconomic Development*

According to Claridge (2018), dispositions of mistrust in the social trading organisation (STO) field and CM habits can be transformed through the development of social capital. Therefore, if community businesses (CBs) serve as catalysts for social entrepreneurial interventions, their ability to address socioeconomic inequality and poverty—mainly through community-led initiatives—can be crucial in fostering social capital during the formation and operation of CBs. In this context, adhering to the principles of CBs and the four criteria of being locally rooted, accountable to the local community, trading for profit, and having a broad impact should not be viewed merely as rules within the structure. Instead, they should be regarded as practices for both new entrants (New Project Initiators leading CB formation) and established entities (Social Trading Organisations) to achieve sustainable community impact. Thus, positioning CBs as an ideal model to address the deficit of social capital in communities facing socioeconomic deprivation and inequality is both appropriate and timely.

In this context, community businesses (CBs) are viewed from an asset- or strength-based perspective, where their enabling factors are influenced by community cohesion, social reinforcement, accountability processes, profit generation, and recycling principles. Their extensive impacts extend beyond the individual to the community and into external localities, reaching “communities of interest” where geographic boundaries are not strictly defined. This expansion aims to address the social capital deficit in various localities and assist IPIMs in resolving issues in communities they have previously struggled to engage.

#### *7.4.2.2 Promoting Inclusivity*

The Community Business Practice Process Model is a guiding framework for effective socioeconomic development, promoting an inclusive approach to support the formation, operation, and sustainability of community businesses that engage underrepresented groups. According to the Power to Change Research Institute report by Percy (2015), individuals with lived experience utilise community organising to strengthen their communities and enhance resilience. The efforts of community businesses (CBs), along with their staff and volunteers, foster, nurture, and sustain local relationships. By forming groups that unite individuals and communities, social capital, trust, and reciprocity are built (Perry et al., 2018).

The practical elements of this thesis provide a foundation for these communities to articulate their concerns, in contrast to a thesis that merely documents behaviours without yielding practical outcomes. These interventions are crucial for advancing community entrepreneurship and developing culturally appropriate and relevant responses to the challenges marginalised communities face, particularly those burdened by complex and intersecting historical issues.

#### *7.4.2.3 Policy Implication*

In terms of policy, communities facing significant socioeconomic challenges and inequalities could greatly benefit from participation in policy-making structures and networks. This aligns with policymakers' intent to consult, involve, and engage various communities at the neighbourhood level, as outlined in the Leveling Up policy. This government initiative promotes diverse strategies and mechanisms for devolving powers to local communities. The Power to Change Leveling Up Report (2023) indicates that funding delivery has been contentious within the Levelling Up agenda. It is marked by short-term and fragmented funding sources, complex and resource-intensive bidding processes, and delays in funding allocations.

This issue was highlighted in the findings, where STOs described the fundraising process as laborious. They noted that while a few funders are generous enough to provide core funding that helps organisations build their reserves, most funders prioritise project-specific initiatives, which are short-term and unsustainable. Furthermore, many Black-led STOs tend to be smaller and, as a result, compete for grants against larger organisations that have better relationships with funders. According to the STOs, larger and more established organisations are more likely to secure long-term funding and can sustain their operations more effectively. Additionally, unincorporated STOs face challenges when applying for funds or contract opportunities because their legal structure does not meet the funders' requirements. Moreover, STOs often struggle to articulate their needs on complex application forms due to a lack of skills in understanding what information to include. According to Power to Change, community-led regeneration cannot be accomplished with a stop-and-start funding model that fosters and undermines hope, ultimately leaving individuals feeling less optimistic, less trusting, and more disempowered than ever.

The evidence presented in this research is pertinent to policy intervention efforts to address social and economic deprivation from a regeneration perspective. It underscores the significance of collaboration with business and economic regeneration departments within Local Authorities and public health agencies. Most Local Authorities participate in the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) program, known as the Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC). This collaboration seeks to enhance research capacity and capability within local government while fostering a culture of evidence-based decision-making. Given that the determinants of health—such as poverty and inequality, income and wealth distribution, employment, education, and geographic factors—significantly impact the Black community, this thesis is particularly relevant for informing the development of policy interventions.

This research is particularly relevant to the West Midlands Combined Authority, specifically the Department of Social Economy Growth and the Social Economy Forums. The thesis will be instrumental in assisting these entities in implementing their programs within communities that have been challenging to engage. In terms of practice and policy implications, the researcher plans to collaborate with Power to Change, as they are uniquely positioned to influence policies on behalf of community businesses and possess a comprehensive understanding of the sector. This collaboration will involve working alongside them, GenUs, and Local Authorities to implement the Community Business Practice Process Model to address inequalities, promote community business leadership among the younger generation, establish leadership programs, and facilitate intentional systemic changes.

## 7.5 Strengths and Limitations of the Study

The strength of this study lies in the alignment between the research topic, participants, and the Theory of Practice framework (see Chapters 3.6 and 3.7). A key strength of the research is the active engagement of the participants and the diversity of responses obtained. As common in empirical research, the goal is to extract credible and valuable data from participants to address a research question or hypothesis. In this study, participants provided the essential information required. They demonstrated a genuine interest in the subject matter and a willingness to support the research and its findings beyond its immediate scope. Consequently, they offered additional insights into solutions for addressing socioeconomic deprivation and inequality, as discussed in Chapter 6.6.

Furthermore, drawing on previous authors' work, applying the Theory of Practice facilitated an analysis that serves as a foundation for novice researchers to comprehend the research problem, where theory and practice mutually reinforce one another within a practical framework. This framework can potentially be developed into a practical tool for real-world applications beyond the confines of the research.

Regarding the limitations of this study, first, the data transcription and analysis process took longer than anticipated due to language barriers encountered by some participants. The strategies employed to mitigate this issue are detailed in the methodology section of Chapter 4.10.1. Second, since non-Black-led STOs were included in the assessment of objective relations, it would have been beneficial to incorporate this group as research participants to gather their perspectives on the relationships between Black-led STOs and non-Black-led STOs.Third, there are data gaps regarding the impact of trading duration on revenue generation. Additionally, the ratio of trading revenues to those generated from grant funding was not evaluated to determine whether STOs qualify as Community Businesses (CBs) or Social Enterprises (SEs). These issues require further investigation and are recommended for additional research in the next section (7.6). Fourth, the absence of youth representation among participants is a significant oversight, as their perspectives would have provided valuable insights to enhance the Community Business Practice framework rather than the incomplete draft currently presented.

Finally, the aspect that remains undetermined in this research is Power to Change’s involvement in policies that specifically impact the West Midlands. This area warrants further investigation, particularly concerning their plans to collaborate with Local Authorities within the West Midlands Social Economic Space to advocate for community businesses that foster socioeconomic development. However, this limitation can be addressed during the consultation phase of implementing the Community Business Practice Model.

## 7.6 Future Directions for Research

According to Stiglitz (1998), a country's economic development is deeply intertwined with its social organisation. Therefore, addressing structural inequities necessitates both economic changes and societal transformation.

As previously mentioned, the question of whether the Black community can establish, operate, and sustain successful community businesses towards socioeconomic development is supported by evidence indicating that it is indeed possible. However, this endeavour requires the integration of a new generation of pragmatic, innovative, and visionary social activists into the formation and operation of community businesses as changemakers. Additionally, these changemakers and their supporters must collaborate closely with policymakers to ensure that change not only occurs but is also sustained and transcended. This research has initiated a dialogue among three key research groups: Community Members (CMs), Social Trading Organisations (STOs), and Institutions with Power Influence and Money (IPIM). The draft Community Business Practice Model aims to advance discussions and the implementation of community businesses with all relevant stakeholders. Consequently, a more nuanced understanding of community entrepreneurship is essential, encompassing community dynamics and policy considerations.

In addition to the limitations outlined in the previous section (7.5), there is significant potential for further research to test the conjectures presented in Chapter Six (sections 6.6.2, 6.6.3, 6.6.4) and to explore other factors related to the formation, operation, and sustainability of community banks (CBs). This research explores how communities of interest from diverse locations can foster socioeconomic development by collaborating around shared interests rather than being confined to a specific geographical area. Furthermore, additional research is necessary to ascertain the percentage of trading revenues generated by Black-led Social Trading Organisations (STOs) compared to that derived from grant funding. This analysis aims to determine whether existing social trading organisations prioritise social value creation over value capture and whether they operate in a market-based rather than a non-market-based framework. This distinction could significantly influence the Community Business (CB) principle of “trade for profit.” This also applies to investigating whether the duration of operations impacts trading income levels for Black-led STOs.

The data also suggests that Black-led STOs and their leaders are well-positioned to serve as equal partners, contributing exceptional knowledge and expertise to the sector. However, given the challenges they face, the reality is quite different. Beyond this research, further exploration of how their cultural and symbolic capital could be leveraged to their advantage in both subjective and objective relations is warranted.

Additionally, since the younger generation was not represented in this study, future research should investigate how attitudes among young people regarding trust, reciprocity, and goodwill have evolved. From an academic perspective, the Community Business Practice Process Model can be enhanced by integrating youth participation.

In conclusion, the research has determined that the historical disposition of mistrust within the Black community contributes to a deficit in social capital, hindering the formation, operation, and sustainability of community-based organisations (CBs). It has been established that the Black community and Black-led social organisations lack the economic capital necessary to compete as equal partners; however, they possess symbolic capital that allows them to integrate and distinguish themselves. Unfortunately, this symbolic capital is not leveraged to legitimise their positions within existing field structures. The research also indicates that the Black community and Black-led social organisations know the rules governing these field structures and have accepted them as the norm. Consequently, Bourdieu's (1990) question remains unresolved: *How can behaviour be regulated without it being a product of obedience to established rules?* Further inquiry is needed for this question.

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## APPENDIX A: INVITATION EMAILS TO CMs, STOs and IPIMs

**EMAIL SENT TO SELECTED COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND ORGANISATIONS**

**Subject: A Bourdieusian Analysis of Black-led Community Businesses**

**Researcher: Christabell Amoakoh, Coventry University**

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Dear Community Members,

I am a postgraduate researcher at Coventry University undertaking a research study to explore the extent of Black-led community businesses and their efficacy in addressing socioeconomic deprivation and inequality. I am looking for leaders and founders within the Social Trading Economy/Third Sector, social enterprises and community businesses, and members of the Black community across the West Midlands region to request your participation in a one-to-one interview for the research. The discussion should take around 60 minutes, and your responses will be treated entirely anonymously.

Before you decide whether to participate, you must understand why the research is being conducted. Please read the following information carefully and discuss it with others. Please ask if anything is unclear or if you would like more information. Upon your confirmation, I will contact you by telephone or email to arrange a mutually convenient interview date.

This research was granted ethical approval by Coventry University's Research Ethics Committee: P126030. HOWEVER, IF YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT ME OR MY SUPERVISOR, PROFESSOR ANDREW JOHNSTON, AT ad6366@coventry.ac.uk AT COVENTRY UNIVERSITY.

Thank you for considering this request. I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

Christabell Amoakoh (Student)

**EMAIL SENT TO SELECTED INSTITUTIONS**

**Subject: A Bourdieusian Analysis of Black-led Community Businesses**

**Researcher: Christabell Amoakoh, Coventry University**

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am a postgraduate researcher at Coventry University undertaking a research study to explore the extent of Black-led community businesses and their efficacy in addressing socioeconomic deprivation and inequality. I am looking to interview infrastructure support organisations for the Voluntary, Social and Community Enterprises (VCSE) sector to understand the extent of support available to organisations and their inclusion in your support processes.

I would appreciate your participation in the research. However, if there is someone else in the organisation whom I should contact instead, please forward this email to them. The interview should take 60-90 minutes, and your responses will be treated entirely anonymously.

Before you decide whether to participate, you must understand why the research is being conducted. Please read the following information carefully and discuss it with others. Please ask if anything is unclear or if you would like more information. Upon your confirmation, I will contact you to arrange a mutually convenient interview date either by telephone or email.

This research was granted ethical approval by Coventry University's Research Ethics Committee: P126030. HOWEVER, IF YOU HAVE FURTHER QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT ME OR MY SUPERVISOR, PROFESSOR ANDREW JOHNSTON, AT ad6366@coventry.ac.uk AT COVENTRY UNIVERSITY.

Thank you for considering this request. I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,
Christabell Amoakoh (Student)

## APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

**Subject: A Bourdieusian Analysis of Black-led Community Businesses**

**Researcher: Christabell Amoakoh, Coventry University**

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You are invited to participate in this research to explore the extent of Black-led community businesses and their efficacy in addressing socioeconomic deprivation and inequality. Christabell Amoakoh, a postgraduate doctoral researcher at Coventry University, is leading this research. Before you decide to take part, you must understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully.

**What is the purpose of this research?**

The purpose of the research is to first add to theoretical academic knowledge and secondly contribute empirically to socio-economic regeneration policies using community business strategies, with a focus on Black communities.

**Who is organising and funding the research?**

The research is being organised and funded by the researcher, to whom Coventry University's Research Ethics Committee P126030 granted an ethical approval to undertake this research.

**Do you have to take part?**

No – it is entirely up to you. If you decide to participate, please keep this information sheet and complete the Consent Form to show that you understand your rights concerning the research and are happy to participate. Please note down your participant number and provide this to the lead researcher if you wish to withdraw from the research at a later date. You are free to withdraw your information from the research at any time until the data is destroyed on 31/01/2027. You do not need to provide a reason for withdrawing. A decision to cancel or not to take part will not affect you in any way.

**What will happen if I decide to take part?**

You will be asked to respond to a set of questions relating to the research subject in a conversational format; this can be in a one-to-one interview or a focus group with like-minded people. The interview will take place at a public location convenient to you or via online conferencing.

The entire process should take no longer than 60 minutes to complete, depending on the discussions. Your responses will be noted verbatim and recorded in MS Word or within the video conferencing facility. You may also be invited to participate in action research, enabling the researcher to observe the community and its real-life habits. It is important to note that this activity is entirely voluntary, and you may wish to withdraw from participation at any time. Your comfort and autonomy are of utmost importance.

**Why have you been invited to take part?**

You have been invited to participate in this research because your unique perspective as a member of the Black community or an institution that supports community businesses is invaluable. Your response to the email invitation is a testament to your commitment to this cause, and we greatly appreciate your participation.

**What are the benefits and potential risks of taking part?**

By taking part, you will be helping Christabell Amoakoh and Coventry University to add to theoretical academic knowledge and, secondly, to contribute empirically to socio-economic regeneration policies using community business strategies focusing on the Black communities.

There are no major risks for taking part; however, as social capital entails building relations with fellow community members, cultural sensitivities may arise, such as tribal rivalry, religious influence, or the subject of race and inequality. This may cause unease/discomfort. Should this happen, please understand that you can withdraw from the research anytime. For community members and organisations, should you decide to participate in the research, you will be part of a team that begins a realistic approach to tackling socioeconomic inequalities within the Black community. Your participation has the potential to influence national, regional, and local policies, making a significant difference in our society.

**What information is being collected in the research?**

Personal data to be collected will include first name, telephone number, ethnicity/nationality, and postcode. Postcodes will be collected to ensure the sample reflects the geographic area for those participating in the action research. I want to assure you that all personal data will be anonymised so it is not identifiable by other researchers or third-party organisations, ensuring your privacy and confidentiality.

**Lawful basis for processing**

Under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) 2016, we must have a lawful basis to process your data. For this research, our lawful basis is that of Consent. Although we do obtain your consent, this is not for data protection. This research will require us to process your sensitive data (referred to by GDPR as 'special category data'). We will only process this based on your consent, where you have previously published the information for medical purposes or in certain circumstances necessary for archiving scientific or historical research or statistics purposes.

**What will happen to the results of the research?**

The results of this research may be summarised in published articles, reports and presentations. Quotes or key findings will always be anonymous in any formal outputs unless we have your prior and explicit written permission to attribute them to you by name.

**Who will have access to the information?**

Your data will only be accessed by the researcher.

**Where will the information be stored, and how long will it be kept?**

All electronic data will be stored in the researcher's university SharePoint account. The researcher will handle the personal data collected and keep it confidential. Where possible, signed consent forms and written responses from the interviews and focus groups will be stored in a lockable cabinet on campus. Clear and accurate records of the research procedures followed, and the results obtained will be kept. Upon completion, the collected data will be permanently deposited within CU's data repository (to be confirmed), meeting the university's requirements for long-term preservation. All paper records (if any) will be stored in a locked filing cabinet on campus. Your consent information will be kept separate from your responses. The researcher will take responsibility for data destruction, and all collected data will be destroyed on or before 31 January 2027. For further information about how Coventry University will handle your data, please read our Privacy Notice for Research Participants.

**What will happen next?**

If you would like to participate, please contact the lead researcher. Before participating, you will be asked to complete a consent form. Researcher contact details:

Christabell Amoakoh (Researcher)
Coventry University
**Department:** International Centre for Transformational Entrepreneurship (ICTE)
**Contact details**: amoakohc2@uni.coventry.ac.uk
**Supervisor name**: Andrew Johnston
**Supervisor contact details:** ad6366@coventry.ac.uk

**Who do I contact if I have any questions or concerns about this research?**

Please contact the researcher or their supervisor if you have any questions or concerns about this research. If you still have concerns and wish to complain, please contact the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Manager by emailing ethics.uni@coventry.ac.uk. Please provide information about the research project, specify the researcher's name and detail the nature of your complaint.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and for considering participating in this research.

## APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

**CONSENT FORM**

**Subject: A Bourdieusian Analysis of Black-led Community Businesses**

**Researcher: Christabell Amoakoh, Coventry University**

You are invited to participate in the above research, which will explore the extent of Black-led community businesses and their efficacy in addressing socioeconomic deprivation and inequality. If you have not already done so, please **read the accompanying Participant Information Sheet and Privacy Notice.**

**Researcher(s)**: Christabell Amoakoh
**Department:** International Centre for Transformational Entrepreneurship (ICTE)
**Contact details**: amoakohc2@uni.coventry.ac.uk
**Supervisor name**: Andrew Johnston
**Supervisor contact details:** ad6366@coventry.ac.uk

This form confirms that you understand the research project's purposes and what will be involved and that you agree to participate. If you are happy to participate, please initial each box to indicate your agreement, sign and date the form, and return it to the researcher. If you are participating via an online platform, you will be asked to give content on record via video.
Please do not hesitate to ask questions if anything is unclear or if you would like more information about any aspect of this research. It is vital that you feel able to take the necessary time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

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|---|---|---|
| 1 | I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for the above research project and have had the opportunity to ask questions. | |
| 2 | I understand that all the information I provide will be held securely and treated confidentially. I understand who will have access to any personal data provided and what will happened to the data at the end of the research project. | |
| 3 | I understand my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my participation and data, without giving a reason, by contacting the lead at any time until the date specified in the Participant Information Sheet. | |
| 4 | I understand that the results of this research will be used in academic papers and other formal research outputs. | |
| 5 | I am happy for the interview to be audio-recorded | |
| 6 | I agree to take part in the above research project. | |

**Name of Participant: _____Signature:_____**