



Paper: “Leveraging Dynamic Capabilities to Overcome Financing Barriers and Drive Sustainability of Solar Social Enterprises in Kenya”

Submitted: 02 October 2025

Accepted: 22 October 2025

Published: 30 November 2025

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Doi: 10.19044/esj.2025.v21n31p67

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Date Manuscript Received: 06/10/2025	Date Review Report Submitted: 11/06/2025
Manuscript Title: Leveraging Dynamic Capabilities to Overcome Financing Barriers and Drive Sustainability of Solar Social Enterprises in Kenya.	
ESJ Manuscript Number: 50.10.2025	
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Evaluation Criteria:

Please give each evaluation item a numeric rating on a 5-point scale, along with a thorough explanation for each point rating.

Questions	Rating Result [Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]
1. The title is clear and it is adequate to the content of the article.	5
The title is strong, clear, and specific, and it makes it clear what the study is about and what it is trying to find out. It effectively integrates the primary constructs—dynamic capabilities, financing barriers, and sustainability—while delineating the empirical context (solar social enterprises in Kenya).	
2. The abstract presents objects, methods, and results.	3
The abstract is well-written and follows a logical order, but it has some minor grammar and style problems, like inconsistent comma placement and extra commas in some compound sentences.	

3. There are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.	4
it keeps a clear, consistent, and professional tone while effectively summarizing goals, methods, results, and consequences, but it has some minor grammar and style problems	
4. The study methods are explained clearly.	4
The methods are described in great detail and with great care. The rationale for the qualitative case study design, the utilization of grounded theory, and the implementation of the Gioia methodology is both suitable and well-supported by existing literature. The steps for collecting and analyzing data are clear and thorough, showing that the methods used are very reliable. But there is better method in this case of studies	
5. The results are clear and do not contain errors.	4
The results are clearly shown and grouped into logical themes (barriers to financing, dynamic capabilities, and outcomes for sustainability). The use of direct quotes makes the section more authentic and deeper, but it could use more concise synthesis to avoid repeating itself.	
6. The conclusions or summary are accurate and supported by the content.	3
The conclusion succinctly connects the findings to the research questions and the broader literature, providing pertinent policy and managerial implications. But it could be better if it made the theoretical contributions clearer and the main practical takeaways shorter.	
7. The references are comprehensive and appropriate.	5
Correct and recent	

Overall Recommendation (mark an X with your recommendation) :

Accepted, no revision needed	
Accepted, minor revision needed	X
Return for major revision and resubmission	
Reject	

Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):

The manuscript is well-organized, follows strict methods, and is easy to read. Minor grammatical changes would make it easier to read. The discussion could make the theoretical implications clearer. In general, this is a useful and helpful addition to the field.

Comments and Suggestions to the Editors Only:

ESJ Manuscript Evaluation Form 2025

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Please respond within the appointed time so that we can give the authors timely responses and feedback.

NOTE: ESJ promotes peer review procedure based on scientific validity and technical quality of the paper (not perceived the impact). You are also not required to do proofreading of the paper. It could be recommended as part of the revision.

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Date Manuscript Received: 06-10-2025	Date Review Report Submitted: 15-10-2025
Manuscript Title: Leveraging Dynamic Capabilities to Overcome Financing Barriers and Drive Sustainability of Solar Social Enterprises in Kenya.	
ESJ Manuscript Number: -09.---50.10.2025---	
You agree your name is revealed to the author of the paper: No	
You approve, your name as a reviewer of this paper, is available in the “review history” of the paper: Yes	
You approve, this review report is available in the “review history” of the paper: Yes	

Evaluation Criteria:

Please give each evaluation item a numeric rating on a 5-point scale, along with a thorough explanation for each point rating.

Questions	Rating Result [Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]
1. The title is clear and it is adequate to the content of the article.	05
<i>The title is well-crafted and effectively communicates the core focus.</i>	
2. The abstract presents objects, methods, and results.	05
<i>The abstract is clear, coherent, and well-structured, summarizing context, methodology, findings, and recommendations.</i>	
3. There are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.	04
Minor grammatical errors.	
4. The study methods are explained clearly.	05
<i>The methodology section is detailed, transparent, and appropriate for an exploratory study.</i>	
5. The results are clear and do not contain errors.	05
<i>(Please insert your comments)</i>	

6. The conclusions or summary are accurate and supported by the content.	05
<i>The conclusion summarizes the research effectively, reiterating key findings and contributions.</i>	
7. The references are comprehensive and appropriate.	05
<i>(Please insert your comments)</i>	

Overall Recommendation (mark an X with your recommendation) :

Accepted, no revision needed	X
Accepted, minor revision needed	
Return for major revision and resubmission	
Reject	

Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):

Comments and Suggestions to the Editors Only:

Reviewer A:

Recommendation: Accept Submission

The TITLE is clear and it is adequate to the content of the article.

Yes, the title is clear, relevant, and adequate to the content.

The ABSTRACT clearly presents objects, methods, and results.

Objectives: The study's goal is stated in the abstract without any ambiguity—"to analyze the impact of finance and dynamic capabilities on the sustainability of solar social enterprises (SSEs) in Nairobi County, Kenya." It places the study clearly among the energy access problems in sub-Saharan Africa and the sustainability discussions.

Methods: The qualitative case study method was specified, along with the in-depth interviews with the founders and managers and the triangulation with documents and sectoral reports, which gave the research design and methodological rigor a very clear portrayal.

Results: The abstract compresses the main conclusions into a concise statement—SSEs suffer from enormous financial barriers (bias, risk aversion, and due diligence) and the lively alertness, strategic flexibility, and resource orchestration are defined as the dynamic capabilities that allow the enterprises to adapt and be sustainable.

Conclusion: It concludes by suggesting meaningful changes—accommodating financing models to the contexts and empowering capacity-building to create equitable growth.

There are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.

there are a few grammatical errors, redundancies, and minor inconsistencies throughout the manuscript, though they do not obstruct comprehension or academic rigor.

The study METHODS are explained clearly.

Research Design: The paper unequivocally mentions that a qualitative case study design was employed, which was justified by the necessity of "unpacking the complex and institutional factors embedded in African entrepreneurship." This is a really strong justification for the approach taken.

Sampling: The article talks about theoretical sampling and states that data collecting went on "until saturation was reached at 20 interviews." This is indicative of the qualitative methodological rigor demonstrated.

Data Collection: The article explicitly states that semi-structured interviews with SSE founders and managers were the primary source of data, further enriched by business documents, websites, and industry reports — this is a case of data triangulation, which increases the credibility of the study.

Data Analysis: The study follows the Gioia methodology (Gioia et al., 2013) and integrates NVivo software for coding, putting forward the three stages:

First-order categories

Second-order themes

Aggregate dimensions

Thus, the analytic process shows transparency and systematic reasoning.

The body of the paper is clear and does not contain errors.

The body of the paper is well organized and conceptually clear

The CONCLUSION or summary is accurate and supported by the content.

Alignment with Findings:

The main empirical results are correctly reflected in the conclusion:

Financing difficulties (foreign founders bias, banks' risk aversion, and the tutorials for due diligence).

The contribution of dynamic capabilities — entrepreneurial alertness, strategic agility, and resource orchestration — in breaking down those barriers.

These aspects could not be more clearly expressed as the data and topics presented in the Findings and Discussion sections.

Logical Consistency:

The analysis gave rise to the argument in a logical sequence — it connected obstacles in financing with capabilities in adaptability that were necessary for SSEs to be sustainable.

Moreover, it was accompanied by the evidence on networking, agility, and diversification, which were the key mechanisms supported by participant interviews.

Integration of Theoretical Lens:

The conclusion very nicely circles back to Teece's Dynamic Capabilities Theory, showing the way these microfoundations (sensing, seizing, transforming) come to be in the Kenyan solar social enterprise context.

In addition to that, it cites empirical works (e.g., Sanyal et al., 2020; Bhardwaj & Srivastava, 2021) that are relevant to the discussion, thereby making the theoretical grounding even stronger.

Practical and Policy Relevance:

The paper wraps up with a set of implications that are clearly made, based on evidence:

Adapt financing models to local contexts.

Employ local professionals in impact funds to reduce bias.

Encourage diversification for resilience.

The above recommendations receive strong support from both field data and previous studies.

The list of REFERENCES is comprehensive and appropriate.

Comprehensiveness:

The paper cites a broad and balanced range of sources, including foundational theoretical works (e.g., Teece et al., 1997; Teece, 2007), contemporary studies on social enterprises (Bhardwaj & Srivastava, 2021; Littlewood & Holt, 2018), and recent policy or industry reports (ESMAP et al., 2024; British Council & Social Enterprise UK, 2022).

Coverage spans academic, institutional, and applied sources, ensuring both theoretical depth and contextual relevance.

The inclusion of recent works (2020–2024) demonstrates strong literature currency.

Appropriateness:

Every major claim in the text is properly supported by citations drawn from credible journals, reports, and organizations (World Bank, OECD, UNEP, IMF, etc.).

The references are directly linked to the study's focus on dynamic capabilities, financing, and social enterprise sustainability — no irrelevant citations are present.

Diversity and Authority:

Sources come from peer-reviewed journals, institutional reports, and doctoral theses, offering methodological and conceptual diversity.

The citation base reflects both global theoretical foundations and Kenyan or regional empirical context, which adds robustness.

Please rate the TITLE of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]
5

Please rate the ABSTRACT of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]
4

Please rate the LANGUAGE of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]
4

Please rate the METHODS of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]
4

Please rate the BODY of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]
4

Please rate the CONCLUSION of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]
4

Please rate the REFERENCES of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]
4

Overall Recommendation!!!

Accepted, no revision needed

Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):

Reviewer B:

Recommendation: Revisions Required

The TITLE is clear and it is adequate to the content of the article.

The title explicitly identifies the key variables and context: dynamic capabilities, financing barriers, sustainability, and solar social enterprises in Kenya. The geographical focus (Kenya) and thematic emphasis (social enterprises, financing, sustainability) are consistently maintained throughout the article, ensuring the title's relevance.

The ABSTRACT clearly presents objects, methods, and results.

The abstract clearly identifies the aim — “to find out how solar social enterprises (SSEs) navigate financing barriers and leverage dynamic capabilities to achieve sustainable growth.” The approach and design are also described in the abstract, where it mentions the qualitative approach taken in the study. The main results are also mentioned, where key findings are summarized in a clear and coherent manner.

There are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.

The article is generally well written, but there are a few minor grammatical and stylistic errors scattered throughout. These do not affect comprehension, but careful proofreading would improve clarity and polish. “British Council (2017) notes there were about 44,000 social enterprises in in the country...” the in is redundant here. Some references in the bibliography are duplicated or inconsistently formatted (e.g., “Littlewood & Holt, 2018” appears twice).

The study METHODS are explained clearly.

The article explicitly states that it used a qualitative case study approach, explaining that this method was selected to “unpack the complex and institutional factors embedded in African entrepreneurship.” The sampling and data collection methods are also described, with details clearly outlining who was interviewed, how data were gathered, and when the collection was deemed complete. The section on trustworthiness adds substantial strength — detailing measures to ensure validity, reliability, and reflexivity.

The body of the paper is clear and does not contain errors.

The paper follows a clear academic structure, moving logically from Introduction → Literature Review → Methodology → Findings → Discussion → Conclusion. Headings and subheadings (e.g., Financing Barriers, Networking, Agility, Diversification) make navigation easy. The writing style is formal, academic, and fluent; however, there are minor language issues, such as Occasional missing commas after introductory phrases. The body of the paper is clear, well-structured, and mostly error-free. Only minor grammatical, punctuation, and formatting adjustments are needed for perfect polish before publication.

The CONCLUSION or summary is accurate and supported by the content.

The conclusion directly addresses the study’s main objective — to examine how financing barriers and dynamic capabilities affect the sustainability of solar social enterprises (SSEs) in Kenya. The key findings clearly trace back to the objectives stated in the abstract, introduction. The conclusion effectively extends beyond summarizing results — it provides policy-level insights, recommending: Adapting financing models to local contexts, employing inclusive investment approaches that involve local experts. It successfully synthesizes the results, reinforces the paper’s main arguments, and offers meaningful policy and practical implications — making it a strong and credible ending to the research article.

The list of REFERENCES is comprehensive and appropriate.

The reference list includes a wide range of sources: journal articles, institutional reports, working papers, and policy documents from academic, governmental, and developmental organizations. It cites both seminal theories (e.g., Teece’s dynamic capabilities framework) and recent empirical works (e.g., studies from 2021–2024), ensuring theoretical depth and current relevance. The inclusion of regional sources (e.g., British Council, Intellectap, KNBS, and Power Africa reports) makes the reference base contextually strong for Kenya and Sub-Saharan Africa. The list includes recent publications (2020–2024), showing awareness of the latest debates in financing and sustainability. Many references are from peer-reviewed journals (e.g., Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, Journal of Social Entrepreneurship, and Strategic Management Journal). Only minor formatting refinements are needed for perfect consistency before publication.

Please rate the TITLE of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

3

Please rate the ABSTRACT of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

4

Please rate the LANGUAGE of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

4

Please rate the METHODS of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

3

Please rate the BODY of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

4

Please rate the CONCLUSION of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

4

Please rate the REFERENCES of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

2

Overall Recommendation!!!

Accepted, minor revision needed

Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):

This is a well-conceived and well-executed study that makes a valuable contribution to the understanding of financing barriers and dynamic capabilities among solar social enterprises (SSEs) in Kenya. The paper is conceptually strong, empirically rich, and contextually relevant — addressing a critical gap in African entrepreneurship literature. The qualitative approach is justified, and the findings are logically presented and well supported by existing theory.
