



Impactism

(A Proposed Purpose-Driven Alternative to Capitalism, Socialism, Communism, and Fascism)

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Abstract

*The twentieth century witnessed the dominance of capitalism, socialism, communism, and fascism, each claiming to ensure prosperity or justice but revealing deep flaws. This paper introduces **Impactism**, a human-centered paradigm that places purpose and measurable impact at the core of progress. It presents a four-level framework—individual, family, business, and government. At the individual level, it emphasizes purpose as the basis of resilience and contribution. Families extend this through legacy and social engagement. Businesses are being redefined as purpose-driven enterprises that align profit with social and environmental solutions. Governments are envisioned as partners addressing inequality, climate change, fragile health systems, and digital divides. Together, these levels form a holistic model that bridges theory and practice, offering pathways for global transformation. By embedding purpose into human, social, economic, and political life, Impactism provides an integrative and future-oriented framework that guides humanity toward inclusivity, dignity, and lasting progress in the twenty-first century.*

Keywords

Impactism; Human-Centered Paradigm; Purpose; Four-Level Framework; Global Transformation; Lasting Progress

Introduction

Isms are often seen as political, social, or economic movements, yet they also act as psychological patterns that shape how we perceive truth, reality, and morality. While present in all areas of life, they are rarely studied in terms of human psychology or spiritual growth. In today's world of polarizing ideas, *isms* persist because people identify with and attach themselves to beliefs. Though they can limit perception, they may also support early personal growth, especially in helping children form identity and self-awareness (Mesbahi:2014).

Textbooks and political discourse frequently employ labels to categorize socio-political and economic systems. These labels are often framed as “isms,” such as capitalism, socialism, communism, fascism, and many others (Luke:2011).

The dominance of competing ideologies marked the twentieth century, yet the contemporary world is moving beyond this “age of isms” into an era defined by practicality. Doctrines such as capitalism, communism, socialism, and fascism have each faced discredit in practice, leaving societies increasingly tired of rigid ideological frameworks. Today, global powers prioritize tangible outcomes and national self-interest over abstract intellectual movements, operating within the realities of an interconnected global economy. We are in a new century, and it requires a new way of looking at the world we live in (Feehery:2008).

This paper, therefore, introduces *Impactism* as a practical alternative to the rigid ideologies of the past. Unlike frameworks that divide individuals and nations into competing camps, Impactism emphasizes reciprocity, where each person's, families, business organizations, and government's

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existence gains value through the positive impact they create in the lives of others. In this model, human progress is defined not by abstract ideology but by measurable contributions to collective well-being. By making individual growth inseparable from the advancement of society, Impactism provides a universally applicable framework capable of guiding the 21st century toward purpose, inclusivity, stability, and shared prosperity.

Literature Review

Political and economic ideologies such as capitalism, socialism, communism, and fascism have long shaped the trajectory of societies, influencing governance, economic structures, and social relations. The literature on these systems provides extensive analysis of their origins, principles, and lasting impact on global history.

Capitalism:

Adam Smith, the Scottish philosopher, is often regarded as the father of modern capitalism (Letzing: 2022). The term capitalism as an “ism” was first employed by French socialists Louis Blanc and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon in the 1850s. It also appeared in William Makepeace Thackeray’s *The Newcomes* (1854) and later gained prominence through Karl Marx’s *Das Kapital* (1867). Historians continue to debate how far capitalism as a system predated its mid-nineteenth-century naming, and whether identifying its precise origins is of substantive importance. Scholarly engagement with the history of capitalism gained momentum during the Great Depression. In 1939, Norman Scott Brien Gras, recognized as America’s first business historian, traced capitalism’s evolution back to the “petty capitalism” of medieval itinerant traders and shopkeepers. He further identified subsequent forms such as early modern mercantile capitalism, industrial capitalism, and financial capitalism, noting their coexistence across different historical periods (Regele: 2023).

Beyond questions of origin, scholars have also sought to conceptualize capitalism as an economic system. It is generally defined as one in which private individuals and enterprises control the means of production, including factories, resources, and capital. The system emphasizes private property rights, allowing owners to use their assets for profit-making purposes. In this framework, voluntary exchanges in competitive markets regulate production and pricing, while the pursuit of profit incentivizes efficient use of resources. Wages reward labor, profits incentivize ownership, and prices guide resource allocation. Ultimately, capitalism is driven by self-interest, which functions as its central motivating force (Evans: 2024). When governance is considered within capitalism, it functions as an indirect system of rule shaped by a dynamic political bargain. In this arrangement, political authority empowers private actors to own and utilize property for personal gain, but within the framework of established laws and regulations. Workers may freely sell their labor for wages, capital may earn returns, and both labor and capital retain the ability to move across different sectors of economic activity. The system relies on market prices to balance supply and demand, and on profit motives to guide the allocation of resources and opportunities among competing producers. At the same time, it depends on political authority to set and enforce the rules of the game, ensuring that market exchanges account for broader social costs and benefits. The state and its institutions are also responsible for providing security of persons and property, as well as maintaining the legal and regulatory framework that sustains the system (Scott: 2006).

The historical evolution of capitalism, however, has always been intertwined with its critiques. Many reforms initially dismissed as utopian later shaped business practices, legislation, and social policy, particularly during periods of crisis when conventional mechanisms proved inadequate. Today, capitalism faces a multidimensional crisis—social, ecological, moral, economic, and financial—manifested in environmental disasters, recurring financial instability, and increasing inequality. In response, reformist discourses and initiatives have proliferated, echoing earlier historical “reforming nebulae” observed in the late nineteenth century, the 1930s, and the 1970s. These episodes of reform were characterized by collective engagement among policymakers, unions, intellectuals, NGOs, and business actors, often under pressure from critical movements. While not all reformist proposals were adopted, such processes frequently resulted in compromises between the imperatives of profit and the demands for systemic adjustment, giving rise to “third way” visions that sought to avoid both the excesses of laissez-faire liberalism and the rigidities of state socialism (Chiapello: 2013).

Socialism

The term *socialism* was first employed by the Owenites in Britain and the Saint-Simonians in France during the 1820s and 1830s. It quickly gained currency as both a critique of capitalism and a vision of an alternative social order. Emerging as a response to early industrial capitalism, socialism opposed the unregulated market economy in which privately owned means of production compelled propertyless workers to sell their labor for minimal wages. To socialist critics, the system was marked by inherent exploitation, the reduction of labor to a mere commodity, and conditions that undermined human dignity. They further argued that capitalism produced widespread poverty, recurrent unemployment, stark inequalities of wealth and power, degrading labor conditions, and an increasingly fragmented, individualistic society (John: 1998).

Socialism is a political and economic system defined by collective ownership or control of the means of production and distribution, typically administered through government or communal mechanisms. Originating as a response to the inequalities and class conflicts inherent in capitalism, it seeks to promote a more egalitarian social order by addressing structural injustices. Interpretations of socialism vary widely, ranging from the Marxist-Leninist view of socialism as a transitional phase toward communism to democratic socialism, which emphasizes combining collective economic principles with democratic governance. Historically, socialism has taken diverse forms, influencing political movements, state structures, and social policies across contexts, from authoritarian regimes to democratic welfare states. Critics, however, highlight challenges such as inefficiency, reduced innovation, and issues like the “tragedy of the commons.” Despite these debates, socialism continues to evolve by incorporating contemporary concerns, including environmental sustainability and welfare-oriented reforms. In modern times, socialist principles are evident in regions such as Europe and Latin America, as well as in mixed economies that integrate market mechanisms with redistributive policies. As a dynamic and adaptable ideology, socialism remains central to ongoing debates on equity, governance, and the future of social organization (Azria: 2021).

In a purely socialist system, decisions regarding production and distribution are made collectively, typically under the direction of a central planner or government authority. Alternative models, such as worker cooperatives, also reflect forms of socialized production. Socialist economies are generally characterized by extensive welfare provisions and social safety nets, whereby the state assumes responsibility for essential services ranging from food supply to healthcare. Output levels and pricing structures for these goods and services are determined by government agencies rather than competitive markets (Kenton: 2025). However, such systems often minimize or disregard economic incentives. The absence of profit-and-loss accounting under central planning limits the ability to evaluate program effectiveness. At the same time, collective ownership of assets frequently results in reduced accountability, as responsibility for maintenance is diffused. Without the mechanisms of market prices, profit signals, and well-defined property rights, socialist economies are vulnerable to stagnation and decline. This economic deterioration is commonly attributed to the neglect of incentive structures that are crucial for efficiency, innovation, and long-term sustainability (Perry: 1995).

Communism

Rooted in the writings of Karl Marx and others, communism gained prominence after the French Revolution. It went on to shape the trajectories of states such as the Soviet Union and China, profoundly influencing global power dynamics. Broadly, communism serves as an umbrella term for diverse schools of thought unified by the principle of collective ownership. The modern term was first popularized by Victor d’Hupay, an 18th-century French aristocrat who envisioned communes where property would be shared and the labor of all would benefit everyone. However, the concept predates d’Hupay: the Bible’s *Book of Acts* describes early Christian communities practicing *koinonia*—a system of shared property—which later inspired religious movements such as the 17th-century English “Diggers” to reject private ownership (Chen: 2025).

Communism is a political, social, and economic ideology that advocates the replacement of private ownership and profit-based economies with a classless economic system under which the means of production—buildings, machinery, tools, and labor—are communally owned, with private ownership of property either prohibited or severely limited by the state. Because of its opposition to both democracy and capitalism, communism is considered by its advocates to be an advanced form of socialism. Pure communist ideology is defined by six core features: collective ownership of all means of production, the abolition of private property, and governance through democratic centralism,

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where party decisions are binding on all. Economically, it operates through a centrally planned system aimed at eliminating income inequality by distributing resources based on need. However, it also involves significant repression, restricting political opposition, economic freedom, and individual rights under strict party control. Communism seeks absolute social equality by abolishing private ownership and placing all production under central government control. Socialism, though, accepts the existence of social classes and focuses on reducing inequality through democratic regulation, while still allowing private property (Longley:2024).

Communism failed because abolishing private property and markets removed the price signals (profits and losses) needed for rational economic decisions, leading to inefficiency and waste. While inspired by ideals of equality and dignity, it ignored the realities of large, diverse societies where central planning could not match the flexibility of markets. Communist regimes often descended into repression and mass violence, justified as necessary for social transformation. Intellectual defenders repeatedly excused failures as “not real socialism,” but the pattern persisted across countries. Ultimately, communism concentrated power, attracted corrupt leaders, and produced oppression and broken promises instead of prosperity (Carden:2020).

Fascism

Fascism, though often used broadly today, has precise historical roots in the destructive political movements that emerged in Europe between World War I and World War II. It is generally defined as a mass political movement built on extreme nationalism, militarism, and the prioritization of the nation over individual rights. Unlike liberal democracies, which uphold political dissent, individual freedoms, and competitive elections, fascist regimes seek to overthrow existing systems while persecuting opponents. They are revolutionary in dismantling democratic structures yet conservative in promoting traditional values. Despite rhetoric of representing the ordinary people, fascist governments frequently align themselves with powerful business interests (CFR Education:2024).

Fascism is a complex and adaptable political ideology that gained prominence in Europe during the 1920s and 1930s. Its most infamous examples include Benito Mussolini’s National Fascist Party in Italy (1922–1943) and Adolf Hitler’s Nazi Party in Germany (1933–1945). While definitions vary—viewing it as a philosophy, a political strategy, or a mass movement—most agree that fascism is authoritarian and rooted in extreme nationalism, though its core features remain debated. The term *fascism* was first coined by Mussolini in 1919, derived from the Italian *fascio*, meaning “a bundle” or “group,” symbolizing militant brotherhood. It also draws from *fascies*—an axe bound with sticks—an emblem that became a defining symbol of the fascist movement. Robert Paxton, professor emeritus at Columbia University, defines fascism as a distinctly 20th-century political practice that mobilizes popular enthusiasm through sophisticated propaganda. This propaganda is used to advance anti-liberalism (opposing individual rights, civil liberties, free enterprise, and democracy), anti-socialism (rejecting socialist economic principles), exclusion of targeted groups often through violence, and nationalism aimed at expanding state power and influence (Weisberger:2021).

Fascism presents numerous disadvantages that undermine both society and governance. It suppresses basic human rights, curtailing freedoms of speech, movement, and even the right to life. The system disregards international law, often rejecting global norms and sanctions. Concentrated power in the hands of a single leader leads to corruption, abuse, and the dangers of absolute authority. Fascist regimes also promote xenophobia and discrimination, targeting minorities, immigrants, or groups seen as outsiders, thereby deepening social divisions. Leaders frequently build a cult of personality, fostering blind loyalty and decision-making based on personal will rather than rational analysis. The emphasis on conformity and traditional values stifles creativity, innovation, and intellectual progress, limiting cultural and scientific advancement. Moreover, fascism’s militaristic orientation drives expansionist policies, increasing the risks of regional and global conflicts. Ultimately, this ideology creates a repressive, unstable environment that hinders both human dignity and long-term societal development (Deborah:2023).

Postulation

The foregoing review of capitalism, socialism, communism, and fascism highlights not only their historical significance but also their persistent limitations. Each system, despite its theoretical promises, has revealed critical flaws—whether in the form of exploitation, inequality, inefficiency, repression, or conflict—that have hindered their ability to deliver sustainable prosperity and justice for humanity. These “isms” have shaped centuries of political and economic organization, yet none

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has fully resolved the multidimensional crises facing the modern world: social fragmentation, ecological degradation, moral decline, and widening disparities of wealth and power. In light of these shortcomings, there is a pressing need for the articulation of a new “ism”—a transformative paradigm that synthesizes lessons from past ideologies while transcending their failures, one that prioritizes human dignity, equity, sustainability, and real impact for humanity and the planet.

This paper, therefore, postulates four levels of impact creation that offer a lasting solution to the global socio-economic and political challenges. Within this postulation, the following purpose-driven impact creators will be examined:

Individual as an Impact Creator

The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why. — Mark Twain.

Medical research suggests that individuals who possess a clear sense of purpose are less susceptible to illness. Purpose, however, should not be conflated with one’s accumulated education, professional qualifications, or occupational titles. For instance, attaining an MBA, PhD, or organizational position does not, in itself, constitute purpose. Instead, purpose extends beyond professional achievements and may, for example, lie in enabling others to lead more meaningful lives. While articulating one’s purpose is important, merely writing a purpose statement is insufficient. It is equally essential to envision the broader impact of living with that purpose. Ultimately, it is consistent, impactful actions—rather than stated intentions—that give actual substance to purpose (Craig & Snook: 2014).

Numerous individuals throughout history have discovered a sense of purpose that enabled them to leave an enduring legacy. A prominent example is Nelson Mandela, whose lifelong struggle against apartheid in South Africa epitomizes purposeful leadership. As an activist, he advocated for the rights and dignity of his people, enduring decades of imprisonment without relinquishing his commitment to justice. Upon his release, Mandela continued his pursuit of equality and democracy, ultimately becoming the president of South Africa. His unwavering dedication to ending apartheid and fostering peace and reconciliation has secured his place as one of the most influential figures in modern history (Brunod:2023).

Purpose transcends individual growth, encompassing contributions that benefit the broader community. When personal purpose is aligned with collective well-being, it enables individuals to generate a meaningful and lasting impact (Dunn:2025). Living with a clear purpose provides a pathway to fulfilment, contentment, and a deeper connection with the surrounding world. Purpose is not confined to personal boundaries; instead, it often motivates individuals to make enduring contributions at both community and global levels. Purpose-driven individuals usually engage in prosocial behaviors, such as volunteering and participating in charitable initiatives, thereby fostering positive societal outcomes and advancing meaningful causes that have a significant impact (Liao: 2023). The prevalence of global challenges reported in the media can make it seem unlikely that a single individual can create meaningful change. However, social transformation does not occur instantaneously or in isolation. Through collective action within communities and incremental efforts to improve lives, individuals can contribute to a significant impact (Minshew: nd).

In contemporary society, the pursuit of purpose is often overshadowed by the dominant emphasis on achievement, success, and material consumption. Consequently, individuals must make a deliberate and conscious effort to engage in self-reflection and align themselves with a higher sense of purpose, thereby generating a meaningful impact (Peele: 2018).

Family as an Impact Creator

Family purpose represents a collective rather than an individual orientation. Similar to individual purpose, it extends beyond self-interest—and in this case, beyond the family itself—by encompassing goals such as advancing philanthropic initiatives (Colby & Damon: 2018). A family’s purpose represents a long-term, collective commitment of multiple generations to use shared resources in ways that benefit both the family and the wider society. This concept incorporates five critical dimensions. First, family purpose reflects a long-term orientation, embodying a consistent thread of vision and focus that endures across time and generations, even as it evolves. Second, it holds deep meaning for family members, motivating them to actively pursue and make progress toward it rather than treating it as a passive ideal. Third, family purpose is embedded within the family’s historical trajectory, current practices, and future aspirations, making it more than a symbolic vision and instead a

reflection of lived actions. Fourth, it is collectively recognized within the intergenerational family system, where the majority of members view it as significant, even if unanimous agreement is not feasible in larger family networks. Finally, family purpose extends beyond the boundaries of the family itself, channelling efforts toward causes or communities outside the family unit, thereby generating shared motivation and inspiration. Together, these dimensions capture the essence of what constitutes a family purpose (Bronk, Liechtenstein, Sehity, Mitchell, Postlewaite, Colby, Damon & Swanson: 2023).

A family mission statement can be understood as a concise articulation of a family's fundamental purpose (Dorsett: 2023). A well-formulated family mission statement functions as both a guide for present decision-making and a legacy that encourages future generations to preserve and expand upon shared principles. It serves as a foundational element in financial planning, facilitating the creation of wealth that not only ensures long-term security but also contributes to the family's overall well-being and leaves a lasting, positive impact on the world (Tran:2024).

The positive impact that a family can create on the world is through family philanthropy, which provides an avenue for shaping and preserving a family's legacy. It enables families to confront and articulate fundamental intergenerational questions, such as: What does our family represent? What values guided our parents and grandparents? What principles and purposes do we wish to carry forward to future generations to cultivate pride and continuity? This legacy may manifest in various forms, whether through acts of giving back to society, the establishment of community institutions such as a hospital wing, or other contributions of enduring value. Ultimately, family philanthropy fosters a shared understanding, strengthens family identity and cohesion, and contributes positively to both societal well-being and healthy human development (Remmer: 2023).

Business Organization as an Impact Creator

An impact company is an organization that prioritizes addressing a significant social problem as its foremost objective, while simultaneously developing a sustainable business model to achieve that aim. In such enterprises, impact serves as the ultimate goal, with business functioning as the enabling mechanism. Unlike conventional models that emphasize personal gain, impact-oriented businesses are designed for collective progress by offering solutions to pressing societal challenges. As long as these challenges persist and their urgency remains, impact companies continue to adapt and evolve. They recognize that when products or services deliver value—such as effectiveness, safety, and accessibility—without harmful trade-offs, consumer demand grows, particularly when the offerings align with established market principles of familiarity, availability, and affordability. Thus, beyond holding a compelling purpose, impact companies must provide high-quality products and services. These organizations cultivate cultures built upon four key dimensions: a positive mindset, social safety and cooperation, purposeful and socially oriented goals, and a commitment to continuous learning and innovation. Among these, the pursuit of positive goals—or purpose—serves as the primary source of motivation and inspiration for their teams (Bremer:2024).

In business organizations, purpose and profit need not be in conflict; rather, they can function as complementary forces. An organization whose mission is to contribute to a better world may pursue this aim even within a narrowly defined domain or for a specific group. The same underlying principles that shape its mission can also serve as a foundation for identifying and advancing its broader social and environmental objectives (Power:2023).

Positive Impact Organizations expand their purpose and value creation to align with principles of strong sustainability, thereby generating economic, social, and environmental benefits. Within this framework, 'positive impact' refers to products and services intentionally designed to address societal challenges. This approach signifies a shift from merely minimizing negative externalities to actively making a substantial net positive contribution to both society and the planet (Muff: 2021).

Impact-driven businesses are increasingly in demand as they demonstrate the ability to generate both social value and financial returns. While the original purpose of business was to address societal needs, the evolution of capitalism has often shifted this focus toward profit maximization. Enterprises oriented toward solving social problems, however, are structured to deliver meaningful value. Purpose-driven organizations not only achieve positive societal outcomes but also tend to experience accelerated growth and enhanced profitability. Academia has a critical role to play in fostering such enterprises by equipping students with an entrepreneurial mindset—encouraging

innovation, continuous improvement, and problem-solving—whether applied to the creation of new ventures or within existing organizations (Onwuegbuzie: 2019).

Government as an Impact Creator

Contemporary capitalism exhibits systemic dysfunction, largely due to unhealthy dynamics between businesses and governments. In contrast, a government guided by a strong sense of public purpose designs policies around addressing critical societal challenges rather than narrowly supporting selected industries. Rather than conceiving industrial strategy as a set of subsidized sectors—such as life sciences, automobiles, or financial services—the focus should shift to identifying fundamental problems, including climate change, the digital divide, and weaknesses in health systems. From this problem-centered perspective, governments can then work backward to formulate strategies that mobilize collaboration across public, private, and non-profit actors to deliver integrated and sustainable solutions (Mazzucato:2021).

Government leaders, political figures, and public officials often assert that public sector activity is inherently oriented toward impact, with the stated aim of advancing public good and societal well-being. However, this claim warrants critical examination: to what extent are governments worldwide effectively prioritizing the delivery of social and environmental outcomes at the necessary scale and with genuine integrity? Furthermore, placing the impact policy agenda at the core of the transition toward a new economic system is crucial, ensuring that impact considerations are integrated into both investment decisions and governmental actions. This shift is a necessary response to the urgent societal challenges of our time. Within this framework, the public sector must acknowledge the pivotal role of private capital in scaling impact-oriented solutions, recognizing that government budgets alone are insufficient to meet the magnitude of these needs (Welisiejko, Sueiro, Bertolini, Gorodisch & Franchino: 2022).

Government missions represent a fundamental transformation in the practice of statecraft, requiring leadership grounded in purpose and governance founded on partnership. A mission-driven approach acknowledges the essential role of government in setting a clear direction for society and the economy, while simultaneously recognizing its limitations in achieving these goals independently. Consequently, the formation of broad-based coalitions—both within the state and extending across the private and nonprofit sectors—becomes indispensable for the practical realization of such missions (Ball, Haigh, Kimbell, Maze, Trevelyan, Wallace, & Wyld, 2025).

Moreover, to enhance policy delivery and effectively address future challenges, governments can strengthen their capacity by improving the intrinsic sense of purpose among public employees and by leveraging digital technologies to foster innovation and collaboration, and more effective implementation for social impact (Dillon, Murray, Blackburn, & Christie: 2022).

Conceptual Framework

The historical ideologies of capitalism, socialism, communism, and fascism have each shaped global trajectories of governance and economic life. Yet, their limitations are now evident in the form of inequality, ecological degradation, repression, inefficiency, and social fragmentation. In response, this paper proposes a framework based on the above postulation. The paper proposes Impactism as a new paradigm that centers purpose-driven social impact at the heart of human organization and collective progress. Unlike its predecessors, Impactism emphasizes the generation of meaningful and sustainable social impact on multiple levels.

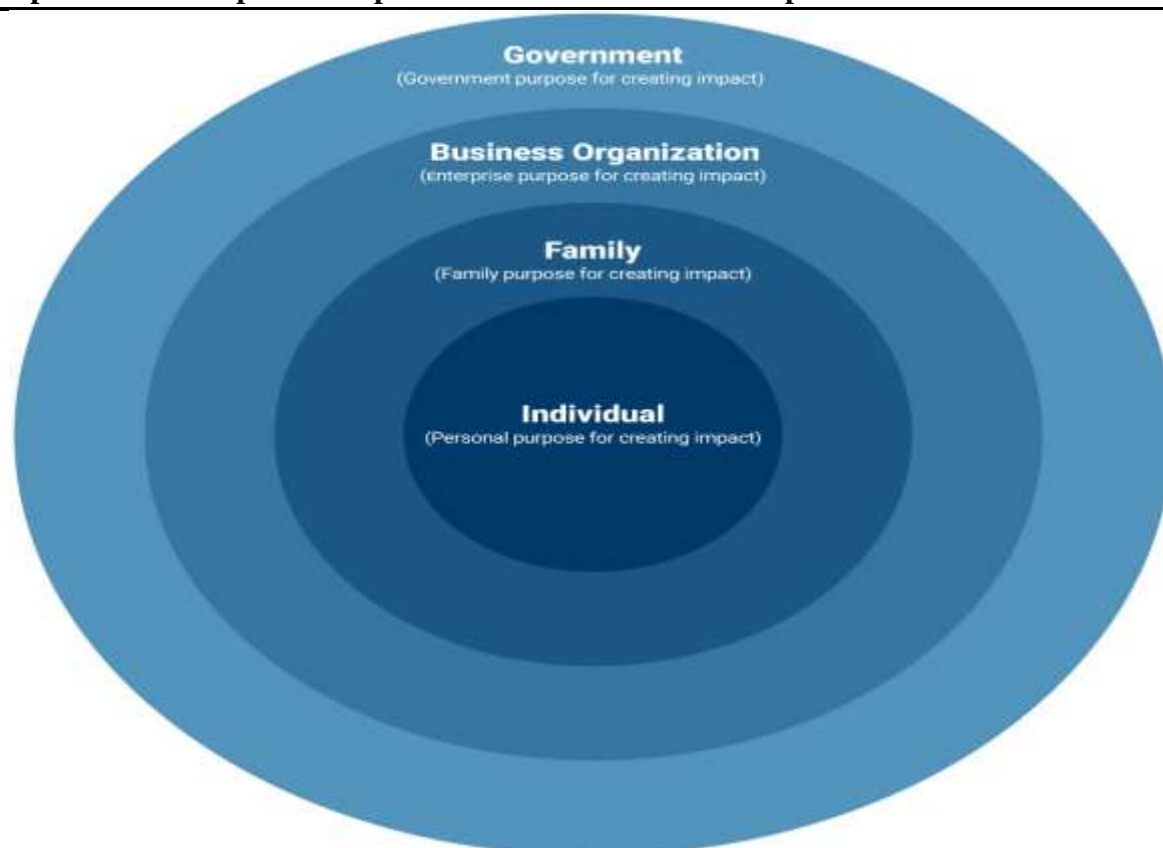


Figure 1: Four Levels Framework of Impactism

Four Levels of Impactism:

Impactism can be conceptualized across four interdependent levels of impact creation: the individual, the family, the business organization, and the government. Each level represents both a locus of purpose and a vehicle for generating lasting contributions to society and the planet.

The Individual Level (Personal Purpose for Creating Impact)

At the foundation of Impactism lies the individual's pursuit of purpose. A sense of purpose provides resilience, enhances well-being, and motivates actions that extend beyond personal success toward the betterment of others. Purpose-driven individuals exemplify how personal conviction can translate into enduring societal contributions—whether through activism, volunteering, or leadership in transformative causes. Social change does not arise solely from grand gestures but also from incremental and collective acts of purpose-driven agency. Thus, the individual is positioned as the primary unit of impact creation, generating ripple effects that influence communities and societies.

The Family Level (Family Purpose for Creating Impact)

Family purpose, when understood as a collective orientation beyond individual self-interest, serves as a powerful driver of social impact. Anchored in a long-term vision, it provides continuity across generations while motivating family members to pursue meaningful goals that extend beyond the family unit. Rooted in history yet oriented toward the future, family purpose transforms abstract ideals into lived practices that shape decision-making and resource allocation. Its intergenerational recognition ensures that shared values and principles are carried forward, cultivating pride, identity, and cohesion within the family system. When directed outward, family purpose finds expression in philanthropic initiatives, community engagement, and institution building, thereby contributing to societal well-being. Through such endeavors, families not only preserve their legacy but also address pressing social needs, create opportunities for human development, and inspire collective action. In this way, family purpose emerges as both a unifying force for families and a catalyst for enduring positive impact on society.

The Business Organization Level (Enterprise Purpose for Creating Impact)

In the Impactism framework, businesses are reoriented from being profit-maximizing engines to becoming purpose-driven enterprises that generate solutions to pressing social and environmental challenges. Impact companies treat profit as a means, not an end, ensuring that products and services

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deliver real value without harmful trade-offs. By cultivating organizational cultures of cooperation, innovation, and continuous learning, businesses become crucial vehicles of social transformation. Positive Impact Organizations, in particular, exemplify how enterprises can align sustainability with profitability, thereby generating shared value for society, the economy, and the environment. Within Impactism, business organizations are recognized as indispensable actors in scaling impact and institutionalizing purpose in market systems.

The Government Level (Government Purpose for Creating Impact)

Governments, as the ultimate custodians of collective direction, hold a unique responsibility within Impactism. Moving beyond narrow industrial strategies or symbolic claims of public good, governments must ground their missions in solving systemic challenges—climate change, inequality, digital divides, and fragile health systems. Purpose-driven governance entails partnership: mobilizing public, private, and nonprofit actors in broad coalitions to deliver impact at scale. Importantly, governments must embrace the role of private capital and innovation, recognizing that public budgets alone are insufficient. By harnessing digital tools, aligning government employees with a sense of purpose, and embedding impact in all policies, governments transform into architects of sustainable futures. Within Impactism, the state is neither a controller (as in communism) nor a minimalist facilitator (as in capitalism), but rather a purpose-driven partner in creating impact.

Definition of Impactism:

Maksym Kramarenko, a writer for Medium.com, generally defined Impactism as a system that guarantees every person a stable, dignified life through meaningful work, directing entrepreneurial energy toward positive social impact rather than profit alone. However, according to the writer, he is not an economist, but he suggested that the system should be designed to gravitate towards social prosperity organically (Kramarenko: 2025).

But this paper proposes a comprehensive definition of Impactism based on four levels, and that is:

“Impactism is a purpose-driven philosophy and framework that positions impact creation as the central organizing principle of human, social, economic, and political life. It recognizes four interdependent levels of impact—the individual, the family, the business organization, and the government—each serving as both a locus of purpose and a vehicle for contributing to society and the planet. At its foundation, individuals cultivate resilience and meaning by aligning personal purpose with the betterment of others. Families extend this purpose by actively contributing to society, shaping values, undertaking collective work for community well-being, and creating enduring legacies across generations. Businesses reorient themselves from profit maximization toward purpose-driven enterprises, developing solutions to pressing social and environmental challenges while aligning sustainability with profitability. Governments, as custodians of collective direction, embrace purpose-driven governance by systematically addressing socio-economic issues—such as inequality, climate change, fragile health systems, and digital divides—through partnerships that mobilize public, private, and nonprofit actors. By integrating these levels, Impactism advances a holistic vision in which purpose and impact are inseparable, offering a transformative alternative to conventional “isms” by prioritizing sustainability, justice, and the long-term flourishing of humanity and the planet.”

And the brief definition of Impactism can be:

“Impactism is a holistic philosophy that places purpose and impact at the center of human life, family legacy, business enterprise, and government, aligning all four to address systemic socio-economic and environmental challenges for the sustainable flourishing of humanity and the planet.”

Impact

The paper presented the new concept of *Impactism* to the world and can serve as a source to introduce a new human-centered ism that guides the globe. It synthesizes the limitations of capitalism, socialism, communism, and fascism into a paradigm rooted in purpose, human dignity, and intergenerational justice. At the individual level, it emphasizes personal purpose as the foundation of resilience, well-being, and contributions that generate ripple effects across society. Families extend this purpose by building legacies, shaping values, and engaging in collective work for societal good. Businesses are redefined as purpose-driven enterprises that align long-term value creation with profitability while addressing social and environmental challenges. Governments are envisioned as purpose-driven partners systematically addressing socio-economic issues, including inequality, fragile

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health systems, climate change, and digital divides. By merging conviction, responsibility, enterprise innovation, and governance, the framework bridges theory and practice. Its global relevance lies in positioning purpose and measurable impact as central organizing principles of society. Ultimately, Impactism provides a holistic paradigm that advances justice, inclusivity, and enduring progress. It reframes prosperity and societal well-being in ways that meet the urgent demands of the 21st century.

Conclusion

Impactism is a new human-centered paradigm that redefines the pursuit of prosperity and collective well-being. It establishes purpose and impact as central organizing principles across four interconnected levels: the individual, the family, the business organization, and the government. At the individual level, Impactism elevates personal purpose as the foundation of meaningful contributions. Within families, it emphasizes legacy building and societal engagement. In business, it reimagines enterprises as engines of value creation that balance profitability with social good. In governance, it calls for purpose-driven partnerships to address systemic socio-economic challenges.

Together, these levels present a holistic framework that can unite personal conviction, intergenerational responsibility, enterprise innovation, and collective governance. Unlike traditional “isms” that often polarize or fragment societies, Impactism offers an integrative vision rooted in human dignity, inclusivity, and long-term progress.

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