

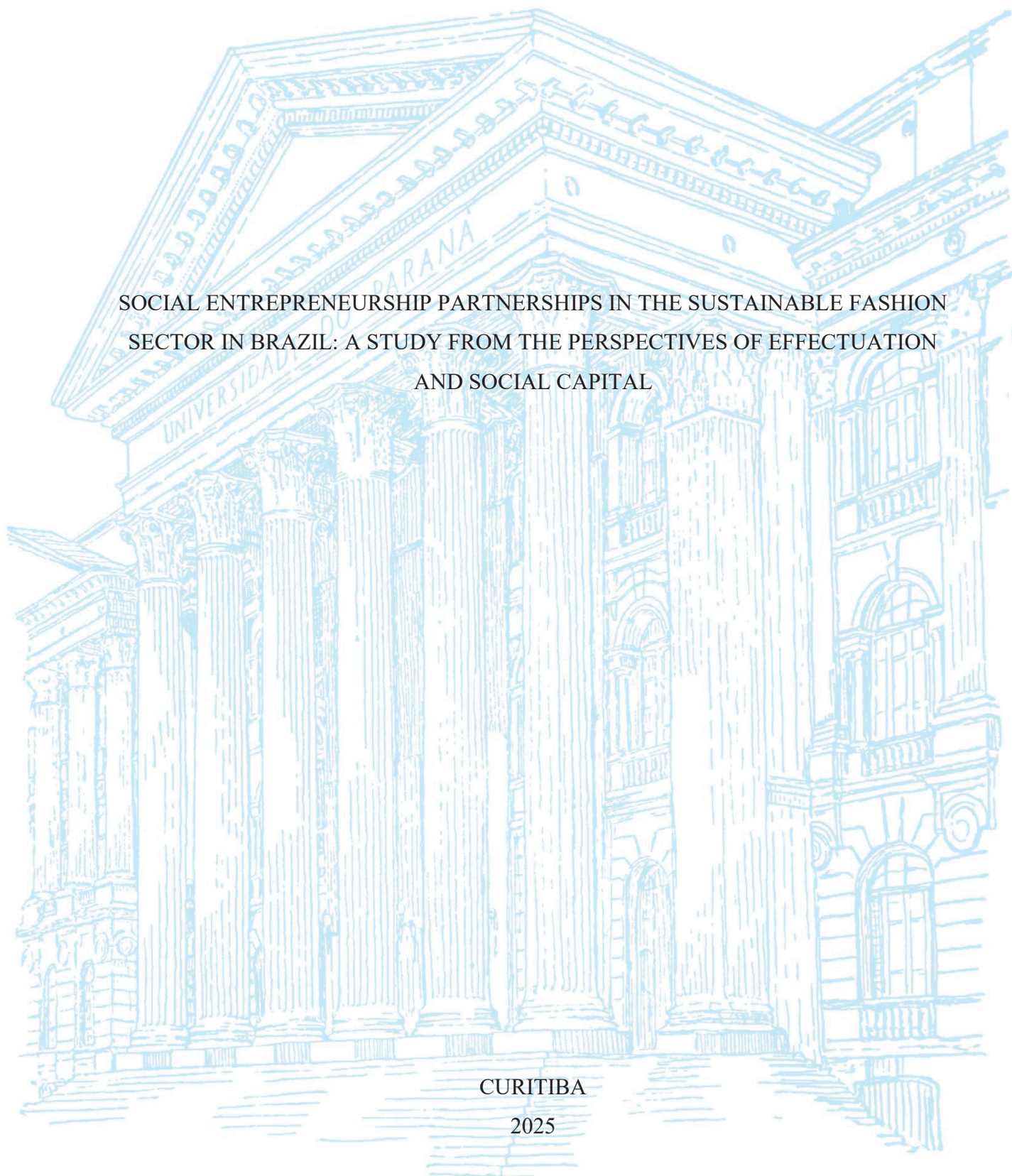
UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO PARANÁ

MAYARA DE OLIVEIRA NECO

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP PARTNERSHIPS IN THE SUSTAINABLE FASHION
SECTOR IN BRAZIL: A STUDY FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF EFFECTUATION
AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

CURITIBA

2025



MAYARA DE OLIVEIRA NECO

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP PARTNERSHIPS IN THE SUSTAINABLE FASHION
SECTOR IN BRAZIL: A STUDY FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF EFFECTUATION
AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

Dissertação apresentada ao curso de Pós-Graduação em
Administração, Setor de Ciências Sociais Aplicadas,
Universidade Federal do Paraná, como requisito parcial
à obtenção do título de Mestre em Administração.

Orientador: Dr. Rodrigo Luiz Morais da Silva

CURITIBA

2025

DADOS INTERNACIONAIS DE CATALOGAÇÃO NA PUBLICAÇÃO (CIP)
UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO PARANÁ
SISTEMA DE BIBLIOTECAS – BIBLIOTECA DE CIÊNCIAS SOCIAIS APLICADAS

Neco, Mayara de Oliveira

Social entrepreneurship partnerships in the sustainable fashion sector in Brazil : a study from the perspectives of effectuation and social capital / Mayara de Oliveira Neco .– 2025.

1 recurso on-line: PDF.

Dissertação (mestrado) - Universidade Federal do Paraná, Setor de Ciências Sociais Aplicadas, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Administração.

Orientador: Profe. Dr. Rodrigo Luiz Morais da Silva.

1. Administração. 2. Capital social. 3. Empreendedorismo social.
4. Moda. 5. Sustentabilidade. I. Silva, Rodrigo Luiz Morais da.
II. Universidade Federal do Paraná. Setor de Ciências Sociais Aplicadas. Programa de Pós-Graduação em Administração. III. Título.

Bibliotecária: Kathya Fecher Dias – CRB-9/2198

TERMO DE APROVAÇÃO

Os membros da Banca Examinadora designada pelo Colegiado do Programa de Pós-Graduação ADMINISTRAÇÃO da Universidade Federal do Paraná foram convocados para realizar a arguição da dissertação de Mestrado de **MAYARA DE OLIVEIRA NECO**, intitulada: **Social entrepreneurship partnerships in the sustainable fashion sector in Brazil: a study from the perspectives of effectuation and social capital**, sob orientação do Prof. Dr. RODRIGO LUIZ MORAIS DA SILVA, que após terem inquirido a aluna e realizada a avaliação do trabalho, são de parecer pela sua APROVAÇÃO no rito de defesa.

A outorga do título de mestra está sujeita à homologação pelo colegiado, ao atendimento de todas as indicações e correções solicitadas pela banca e ao pleno atendimento das demandas regimentais do Programa de Pós-Graduação.

Curitiba, 07 de Março de 2025.

Assinatura Eletrônica

10/03/2025 10:57:33.0

RODRIGO LUIZ MORAIS DA SILVA

Presidente da Banca Examinadora

Assinatura Eletrônica

16/04/2025 13:23:29.0

MICHAEL BULL

Avaliador Externo (THE MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY)

Assinatura Eletrônica

14/03/2025 18:34:26.0

ANDRÉA PAULA SEGATTO

Avaliador Interno (UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO PARANÁ)

To my little angel in heaven, Lilica, who stayed by my side for as long as she could.

To my beloved parents, who have always been by my side, and to my uncles, especially my aunt, who welcomed me and encouraged me in the moments I needed it most.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

How many people does it take to write a dissertation? Throughout my journey, I have received help from many, and this has made the subject of this dissertation even more special and meaningful to me. At many moments, it was directly linked to my personal growth and development. However, I could not begin my acknowledgements without first thanking God, who was my rock when, on several occasions, I thought about giving up. If I was able to believe in my journey, it was because my strength was always renewed in Him.

I must also thank my family, both the one I was born into and the one I found along the way. To my mother, Rosa, who thought this journey was madness but still had the strength to let her daughter venture into new paths. To my father, Moacir, who said nothing but gave me his quiet support. To my aunt, Nathália, and my uncle, Airton, who welcomed me into this city and, many times, provided me with support during the most challenging moments, even when they were unaware of it. I would like to extend a special thank you to my cousin, Junior, with whom, between discussions about Marvel and DC, I also had long conversations about life and my master's degree. And, of course, to my cousin, Nicoli, with whom I shared so many valuable conversations, especially about psychology.

I could not forget my dear friends. A special thank you to Juliana, who listened to me talk about my dissertation countless times and was always close by, offering her advice and support. I will never forget the afternoons spent at your house writing articles – in fact, you were the one who taught me how to navigate this world. To Eduarda, my dear friend, who not only made me laugh endlessly but also reminded me that there was a world beyond Sarasvathy and effectuation. More than just offering support, she gave me her genuine friendship. To Olívia, who arrived a little later, but with whom I had an instant and genuine connection. Beyond helping me with so many things, she encouraged me to seek answers from different sources. These women have inspired and continue to inspire me, and I have no doubt about their talent for research. I truly hope that in the future, you will inspire many others.

There are so many friends I would like to thank, but I extend a special appreciation to Édipo, Gustavo, and Leonardo. We shared many moments along this journey – the times at the university restaurant, Friday afternoons at university discussing research, soap operas, and stories that always made us laugh. Thank you for your support, for the conversations, for the advice on classes, and for helping me understand those difficult graphs in quantitative research. And of course, I must also thank Antonio, Carla, Eli, Elisa, Enminly, Gabriel, Gabriela, Noah,

Simone and Victor – your friendships were precious and enlightening. I wish you all the success in the world.

To my professors, my eternal gratitude. First, to Professor Samantha Frohlich, who, through many conversations during my undergraduate years, gave me her valuable and straightforward advice: “May, try the master’s!”. Her presence remained throughout this journey, and I am very grateful for that. And finally, to my dear supervisor, Rodrigo Silva, who taught me to see research in a different way. If I have learned so much, it is because he guided me so well. I could not fail to thank him for supporting me in continuing with effectuation and later incorporating social capital, even when the chances of success were uncertain. Still, he believed it was possible. And from that belief, this dissertation was born, built with great effort and many changes along the way.

I also extend my gratitude to the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq) for its invaluable support throughout this journey. The scholarship provided allowed me to dedicate myself fully to research, making this work possible and significantly contributing to my academic and professional development.

Who would have thought that Mayara, in her first year of undergraduate studies – conducting research without knowing anything about methodology and interrupting professors’ lectures to hand out questionnaires about the importance of teaching the Portuguese language – would, today, be a master’s graduate from UFPR? So, I could not end without thanking myself. With no certainty of where I would be two years later, but with a deep desire to understand what research truly was, I decided to apply for the master’s programme. And later, with even fewer certainties, I bought a ticket on my credit card and followed what I believed to be right for me – without fear, knowing that things could either turn out exceptionally well or go completely wrong. I am grateful that my journey has been a blend of curiosity and courage. Beyond the academic words on these pages, this work is a testament to a soul in motion—growing, evolving, and embracing the path of individuation.

No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. (John Donne, 1624)

RESUMO

Os empreendedores sociais são reconhecidos pela sua empatia e compaixão, que os levam a abordar questões sociais e ambientais negligenciadas. Esta abordagem é particularmente prática na indústria da moda, um grande poluidor, onde as missões sociais se alinham com ações sustentáveis. No ambiente brasileiro de recursos limitados, esses empreendedores muitas vezes dependem de parcerias estratégicas para obter impacto social e apoio. Nestes contextos, a abordagem de atuação é fundamental para permitir a co-criação de valor por meio da inovação e da capacidade de adaptação aos desafios. No entanto, as parcerias vão além dos aspectos financeiros - envolvem redes de confiança e apoio mútuo, integrando o capital social. Para os empreendedores sociais, o capital social complementa os recursos financeiros, enquanto a atuação oferece ferramentas para maximizar as oportunidades dentro destas redes. Apesar da importância destas parcerias, ainda são poucos os estudos que exploram as parcerias dos empreendedores sociais através das lentes do *effectuation* e do capital social. Isto leva-nos à seguinte questão de investigação: Como as parcerias contribuem para as iniciativas dos empreendedores sociais, considerando as perspectivas de *effectuation* e capital social? Para responder a esta questão, foi realizado um estudo qualitativo, utilizando um desenho de casos múltiplos, envolvendo entrevistas semiestruturadas com 12 empreendedores sociais do sector da moda sustentável. Os dados foram organizados e analisados utilizando o método de Gioia (2013) no ATLAS.ti. Os resultados deste estudo mostraram que, devido à centralidade dos objetivos, missão e propósito dos empreendedores, os seus parceiros influenciam novos meios, fornecendo recursos e *know-how*. No entanto, os parceiros desempenham um papel mais passivo na definição de novos objetivos, uma vez que estes não são negociáveis para os empreendedores sociais. Os resultados sugerem que os empreendedores sociais são impulsionados pelas competências dos seus parceiros e pelas motivações intrínsecas que orientam os seus objetivos internos. Além disso, o estudo sublinha que os empreendedores sociais adoptam uma abordagem de parceria mista. Inicialmente, a flexibilidade permite-lhes mobilizar novas redes, mas, com o tempo, é utilizada uma abordagem mais *causal* para estruturar e reduzir as incertezas da interação. A análise também revela que o capital estrutural está intimamente relacionado com o *effectuation*, embora o *effectuation* opere de forma mais periférica, promovendo a inovação, enquanto o capital social fornece a base para o estabelecimento de relações e trocas. Esta dissertação contribui para a compreensão de como os empreendedores sociais estabelecem parcerias e como os seus parceiros colaboram para apoiar as suas iniciativas. Demonstra também que os empreendedores sociais procuram inicialmente parceiros no setor da moda sustentável com base na sua reputação e concentram-se no desenvolvimento de relações estreitas.

Palavras-chave: Empreendedorismo social. *Effectuation*. Capital social. Moda sustentável. Parcerias.

ABSTRACT

Social entrepreneurs are recognised for their empathy and compassion, which drive them to address neglected social and environmental issues. This approach is efficient in the fashion industry, a major polluter, where social missions align with sustainable actions. In Brazil's resource-constrained environment, these entrepreneurs often rely on strategic partnerships - collaboration between two or more partners in the market to achieve a common goal -for social impact and support. In such contexts, the effectuation approach enables value co-creation through innovation and adaptability to challenges. However, partnerships go beyond financial aspects—they involve networks of trust and mutual support, integrating social capital. For social entrepreneurs, social capital complements financial resources, while effectuation offers tools to maximise the opportunities within these networks. Despite the significance of these partnerships, few studies still explore social entrepreneurs' partnerships through the lenses of effectuation and social capital. This leads to the following research question: How do partnerships contribute to social entrepreneurs' initiatives, considering the perspectives of effectuation and social capital? To answer this question, a qualitative study was conducted using a multiple-case design involving semi-structured interviews with 12 social entrepreneurs in the sustainable fashion sector. Data were organised and analysed using the Gioia method (2013) in ATLAS.ti. The results of this study show that, due to the centrality of the entrepreneurs' goals, mission, and purpose, their partners influence new means by providing resources and know-how. However, partners play a more passive role when defining new objectives, as these remain non-negotiable for the entrepreneurs. The findings suggest that social entrepreneurs are driven by their partners' competencies and intrinsic motivations guiding their internal objectives. Furthermore, the study highlights that social entrepreneurs adopt a mixed partnership approach. Initially, the flexibility allows them to mobilise new networks, but over time, a more causal approach is employed to structure and reduce interaction uncertainties. The analysis also reveals that structural capital is closely related to effectuation, although effectuation operates more peripherally, fostering innovation, while social capital provides the foundation for establishing relationships and exchanges. This dissertation contributes to understanding how social entrepreneurs establish partnerships and how their partners collaborate to support their initiatives. It also demonstrates that social entrepreneurs initially seek partners in the sustainable fashion sector based on their reputation and focus on developing close relationships.

Keywords: Social Entrepreneurship. Effectuation. Social Capital. Sustainable Fashion. Partnerships.

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 – Elements of effectual process.....	30
Figure 2 – The process and principles of effectuation.....	32
Figure 3 – Prediction-Control in the Negotiation Space	34
Figure 4 – Network without (a) and with (b) closure	45
Figure 5 – Social Organization.....	47
Figure 6 – Factors relevant to the different dimensions of social capital at different levels of analysis.	50
Figure 7 – A multi-level reconceptualisation of the dynamics of effectuation	54
Figure 8 – Silk Mosaic’s Timeline	67
Figure 9 – Seta native's Timeline	68
Figure 10 – Circular Sisters’ Timeline	69
Figure 11 – Botanics’s Timeline	70
Figure 12 – Crab Hollow’s Timeline.....	71
Figure 13 – Karuna’s Timeline.....	72
Figure 14 – HarmonyMove’s Timeline.....	73
Figure 15 – Trazza’s Timeline.....	74
Figure 16 – Reverto’s Timeline.....	75
Figure 17 – HolistiQ’s Timeline.....	76
Figure 18 – ReJeanse’s Timeline	77
Figure 19 – Umbra’s Timeline	78
Figure 20 – Graphic of social capital and crazy quilt principle.....	126
Figure 21 – Sankey of Cognitive dimension related to RD, SD, CQ.....	128
Figure 22 – Convergence of the effectual and social capital dynamic	145

LIST OF GRAPHICS

Graphic 1 – Frequency of themes Effectual partnerships.....	90
Graphic 2 – Frequency of themes Motivation for partnering.....	96
Graphic 3 – Frequency of themes Structural dimension	106
Graphic 4 – Frequency of themes Relational dimension.....	117
Graphic 5 – Frequency of theme Cognitive dimension.....	123
Graphic 6 – Frequency of theme Partnerships Influence	136

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 – Distinction of causation and effectuation	29
Table 2 – Strategy of searching.	37
Table 3 – Articles selected for the review literature.....	38
Table 4 – Social capital definitions	48
Table 5 – Effectual dynamic impact on social capital.....	57
Table 6 – Conceptual and Operation Definition.....	60
Table 7 – Methodological Synthesis	64
Table 8 – Research tying matrix.....	65
Table 9 – Cases’s synthesis	79
Table 10 – Effectual and Causal Partnerships	82
Table 11 – Factors Contributing to Embedded Commitment	85
Table 12 – Network mobilisation in the crazy quilt principle.....	88
Table 13 – Effectual Partnerships Gioia Table Dynamics	89
Table 14 – Intrinsic and extrinsic motivators	91
Table 15 – Types of Competencies Necessities	94
Table 16 – Motivation Gioia Table Dynamics	97
Table 17 – Criteria to Establish Partnerships	99
Table 18 – Evidence of bonding and bridging ties.....	102
Table 19 – Structural Dimension Gioia Table Dynamics.....	107
Table 20 – Implicit norms and sanctions.....	111
Table 21 – Explicit norms and sanctions.....	112
Table 22 – Driven factors to relational dimension	115
Table 23 – Relational Dimension Gioia Table Dynamics.....	117
Table 24 – Cognitive Dimension Gioia Table Dynamics.....	123
Table 25 – Categorization of Partner Influence on Product Development.....	135
Table 26 – New means and objectives Gioia Table Dynamics	136

ABBREVIATIONS

CD	– Cognitive dimension
CLN	– Codes, language and narratives
CQ	– Crazy quilt
FSE	– Fashion-based social enterprise
GP	– Goals and purpose
ICE	– Institute for Corporate Citizenship
RD	– Relational dimension
SD	– Structural dimension
SEBRAE	– Brazilian Service of Support to Micro and Small Enterprises
SENAI	– National Service of Industrial Learning
VAB	– Value, attitude and beliefs

SUMMARY

1 INTRODUCTION	17
1.1 OBJECTIVES	19
1.1.1 General Objective	19
1.1.2 Specific Objectives	20
1.2 STUDY JUSTIFICATION	20
2 LITERATURE REVIEW	22
2.1 SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP: CONCEPTS AND CONTEXT	22
2.1.1 Social Entrepreneurship Definition	22
2.1.2 Social Entrepreneurship in the fashion sector	23
2.2 PARTNERSHIPS	25
2.3 EFFECTUATION AND PARTNERSHIPS DYNAMICS	28
2.3.1 Effectuation and its principles	28
2.3.2 Effectual partnerships: bringing partners to the table in the crazy quilt approach.	33
2.3.3 Social entrepreneurship and effectuation	36
2.4 SOCIAL CAPITAL: DEFINITIONS AND DIMENSIONS.....	43
2.4.1 A brief history of the evolution of social capital	43
2.4.2 Social Capital Dimensions	49
2.5 CONVERGENCE BETWEEN SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP, EFFECTUATION AND SOCIAL CAPITAL	53
3 METHODOLOGY PROCEEDINGS	59
3.1 SPECIFICATION OF PROBLEM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	59
3.2 ANALYTICAL CATEGORIES OF THE STUDY	59
3.3 STUDY CATEGORISATION AND DESIGN.....	61
3.4 CASES SELECTION.....	62
3.5 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE	62
3.6 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE	63
3.7 METHODOLOGICAL SYNTHESIS	64
3.8 TYING MATRIX.....	65
4 DATA ANALYSIS	66
4.1 PRESENTATION OF THE CASES ANALYSED	66
4.1.1 Interviewed A: The case of Sir Filandra and the Silk Mosaic.....	66
4.1.2 Interviewed B: The case of Arthur Serícia and the Seta Nativa.....	67

4.1.3 Interviewed C: The case of Marina Everlace and the Circular Sisters.....	68
4.1.4 Interviewed D: The case of Theresa Flores and the Botanics	70
4.1.5 Interviewed E: The case of Gael Marin and the Crab Hollow	71
4.1.6 Interviewed E: The case of Amara Metta and the Karuna	71
4.1.7 Interviewed F: The case of the Novaes ladies and the HarmonyMove	72
4.1.8 Interviewed G: The case of the Thomas Maia and the Trazza	73
4.1.9 Interviewed H: The case of the Grace Rivers and the Revertto	74
4.1.10 Interviewed I: The case of Clara Hart and the HolistiQ.....	76
4.1.11 Interviewed J: The case of Zoe Brixton and the ReJeans.....	77
4.1.12 Interviewed K: The case of Noah Canopy and the Umbra.....	78
4.1.13 Case Overview.....	79
4.2 INITIATIVES OF PARTNERSHIPS IN THE CRAZY QUILT: EFFECTUAL PARTNERSHIPS	81
4.3 MOTIVATION FOR PARTNERING: ELEMENTS CONTRIBUTING TO THE PARTNERSHIP	91
4.4 THE ROLE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL IN EFFECTUAL PARTNERSHIPS	99
4.4.1 Structural dimension: the role of partners	99
4.4.2 Relational dimension: Trust and reciprocity	109
4.4.3 Cognitive dimension: shared values	119
4.4.4 The social capital in effectual partnerships	125
4.5 PARTNERSHIPS INFLUENCE: MEANS, RESOURCES AND OBJECTIVES	129
5 DATA DISCUSSION	137
5.1 HOW EFFECTUAL PARTNERSHIPS HAPPEN	137
5.2 MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS FOR PARTNERING	140
5.3 THE ROLE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL IN THE EFFECTUAL PARTNERSHIPS.....	141
5.4 THE INFLUENCE OF PARTNERS IN THE CREATION OF VALUE IN EFFECTUAL PARTNERSHIPS.....	146
6 CONCLUSION	148
6.1 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION.....	150
6.2 EMPIRICAL CONTRIBUTION.....	152
6.3 SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION.....	152
6.4 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS	153
6.5 FUTURE RESEARCH.....	154
REFERENCES	155

APPENDIX A – SEMI-STRUCTURE INTERVIEW.....168

1 INTRODUCTION

The fashion sector is considered one of the most polluting industries in the world, being among those with the highest consumption of raw materials (Luz, 2022; Dhivya and Subathra, 2023). Recently, part of the fashion industry has incorporated sustainability into its discourse, advocating for more sustainable consumption, using natural materials, and, most notably, promoting fashion shows focused on the circular economy, known as Fashion ReModel (FITEC, 2024). Brazil is one of the largest producers in the fashion sector, with 97.5% of micro, small, and medium-sized businesses operating in this industry in 2024 (SEBRAE, 2024). Driven by social and environmental concerns, movements integrating fashion and the circular economy—giving new life to pieces that would otherwise be discarded or incinerated in landfills—have gained increasing traction as sustainable alternatives (FITEC, 2024).

Thus, the fashion sector has become a fertile ground for social entrepreneurs, who can contribute to community and sustainable development by combining environmental awareness with social aspects (McQuilten, 2017). Barki *et al.* (2020) argue that given the current state of the world—with environmental degradation and the depletion of natural resources—it is increasingly necessary to integrate social and environmental missions into the objectives of social entrepreneurs, and in doing so, they also contribute to society's well-being.

Social entrepreneurs have the unique characteristic of empathy and compassion that drives them through an altruistic feeling to help others in finding the solution to social and environmental problems in order to provide well-being (Mort *et al.*, 2002; Mair and Noboa; 2006; Susilowati *et al.*, 2024). The role of social entrepreneurs means more than philanthropical and voluntary activity; they impact the economy by creating new job opportunities and innovating, bringing up new ideas that provide solutions for a social problem as a new product or service (Dess, 1998; Barki, 2015; Cavazos-Arroyo, *et al.*, 2017; Susilowati *et al.*, 2024). Social entrepreneurs are uniquely positioned to achieve commercial and social interests (Eng *et al.*, 2020).

In Brazil, social entrepreneurship is discussed in relation to social and environmental problems (Barki *et al.*, 2020). Since social entrepreneurship in Brazil was fostered by civil society and institutions, such as Artemisia and the Quintessa, the social and environmental focus has been popularised. Because of that, social entrepreneurs may be understood as individuals focused on solving social or environmental problems (ICE, 2015).

In emerging economies such as Brazil, social entrepreneurs' actions are constrained by the scarcity of resources needed for entrepreneurship (Barki *et al.*, 2020). Because of that, social

entrepreneurs may look for partners, in other words, alliances, networks or cooperation made to achieve a common goal (Agostini *et al.*, 2019; Eweje and Palakshappa, 2009), in their formal or informal network that can foster new opportunities, organise sales, and facilitate new resources, as well as essential or new information (Pai and More, 2018; Ho and Yoon, 2022; Ferrara *et al.*, 2023).

Recent literature has pointed out that an effectual approach may be suitable for social entrepreneurs in emergency contexts, especially in mobilising their resources and co-creating value within their partners (Yusuf and Sloan, 2015; Akemu *et al.*; 2016; York *et al.*, 2016; Weerakoon *et al.*, 2019; Chandras and Paras, 2020; Martin *et al.*, 2023; Yang *et al.*, 2022; Masilamani *et al.*, 2024). Partnerships in the effectuation process are a central element that refers to the effectuation's capacity to bring stakeholders that can help in the co-creation process (Sarasvathy, 2008).

The process of establishing partnerships is not isolated; It is foremost a social relationship that allows both parties to exchange resources and achieve economic efficiency (Hite, 2003; Claridge, 2020; Kerr and Coviello, 2020). In this sense, researchers have been arguing that to comprehend the effectuation approach, a second theory of social capital might be considered (Dimov, 2007; Fischer and Reuber, 2011; Kerr and Coviello, 2020; Mikic *et al.*, 2020; Dato-on and Banerjee; 2021).

The adaptation and flexibility of effectuation approaches are directly linked to social capital (Mikic *et al.*, 2020). On the other hand, social capital is an important asset, allowing social entrepreneurs to access resources and gain support in their networks (Tsotetsi, 2020). While social capital is a strategic asset of resources shared or borrowed among individuals, such as wealth, power, or reputation, through social connections (Bourdieu, 1986; Lin, 2001; Lin, 2005), the flexibility of effectuation allows for more significant innovation and problem-solving, which combined with the emerging context of social entrepreneurs, allows them to both mobilise resources and adapt more quickly to the uncertainties of the environment (Chandras and Paras, 2020; Dato-on and Banerjee; 2021).

Despite the literature pointing to the role of social capital in effectual partnerships, especially its importance for adapting social entrepreneurs in emerging contexts, there is still little research addressing these themes. On the one hand, the effectual process provides vague ideas of the structure of partnerships and how they develop over time (Kerr and Coviello, 2019). On the other, despite the importance of partnerships in social entrepreneurship, there is still scarce research on the benefits and the odds of partnerships, and analysing such aspects is vital to understanding the process of social entrepreneurship (Mathias and Fischer, 2023), especially

in an emerging economy and in environments where decision makings have to be taken in the context of high uncertainty (Yang *et al.* 2022). In this sense, it is necessary to understand how partnerships in social entrepreneurship take place, especially how their partners influence the raising of resources and the co-creation of value.

Considering this gap in the literature, analysing how social entrepreneurship partnerships are based on a crazy quilt is relevant. Therefore, the main research question of this study is: **How do partnerships contribute to social entrepreneurs' initiatives, considering the perspectives of effectuation and social capital?**

In order to answer this question, this study analyses, through a qualitative approach of multiple case studies, cases of social entrepreneurship in the sustainable fashion sector in Brazil. We chose this sector because it is relevant to the regional economy and hosts some possible social entrepreneurship cases. The choice of context is given the emergence of studies focusing on social entrepreneurship in emergent contexts and the need for studies conducted in Brazil once most studies regarding social entrepreneurship and effectuation approaches were undertaken in North American and European contexts. Furthermore, partnerships are essential to creating value for social entrepreneurs, enabling them to face the problem of legitimising social entrepreneurship (Johannisson, 2018; Weerakoon *et al.*, 2019).

In doing so, this study recognises the difference between the impact of the emergent context on social entrepreneurship and the traditional form of entrepreneurship (Austin *et al.*, 2012), in each the effectuation approach, for being an approach for uncertain environments (Sarasvathy, 2008), may provide better insights to explain the social entrepreneurship impact and effects on the society and economy, by generating value through partnerships.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

In order to achieve the research problem previously stated, the following objectives were set:

1.1.1 General Objective

Analyse how partnerships contribute to social entrepreneur's initiatives in the sustainable fashion sector through the lenses of effectuation and social capital.

1.1.2 Specific Objectives

- a) Analyse the crazy quilt principle of effectuation in partnerships established by social entrepreneurs.
- b) Identify the motivators for social entrepreneurs to establish partnerships.
- c) Analyse how social capital contributes to the formation of effectual partnerships by social entrepreneurs.
- d) Analyse how partnerships influence the initiatives of social entrepreneurs.

1.2 STUDY JUSTIFICATION

Theoretical and practical questions justify this study. From the theoretical perspective, I) the connection between social entrepreneurship and effectuation is recent; II) the discussion is novel; and III) the role of social capital in effectual partnerships. These justifications were identified through a systematic review of publications concerning the theme to identify what was being discussed in the literature.

Firstly, concerning the connection between social entrepreneurship and effectuation, we reviewed the literature employing the keywords “social entrepreneurship” and “effectuation,” including the variation of terms related to ‘social entrepreneurship.’ The search was applied to Web of Science, Scopus, Elsevier, Sage, Emerald, and Scielo (a Brazilian database), and during the analyses we identified 14 articles focused on the social entrepreneurship and effectuation.

The studies leveraged explored the process of decision-making in social entrepreneurship through the lenses of effectuation (Yusuf and Sloan, 2015), the entrepreneur action in social entrepreneurs inserted in social movement activism (Akemu *et al.*, 2016), the entrepreneur identity of social entrepreneurs to engage in entrepreneurship activity (York *et al.*; 2016), the entrepreneur profile based on the effectuation approach (Dewivedi and Weerawardena, 2018, and Martin *et al.*, 2023), the effectual logic in the process of development of social entrepreneurship (Johanisson, 2018), the entrepreneurship process investigation through the relations of causation and effectuation in the creation and development of social entrepreneurship (Lubberink *et al.*, 2018; Anderson *et al.*, 2019; Weerakoon; Gales; McMurray, 2019; Rosca *et al.*, 2020), the value creation through the effectuation process (Chandra and Paras, 2020; Yang *et al.*, 2022; Masilamani *et al.*, 2024) and a review of what has been discussed in the Region of Great China (Chandra *et al.*, 2021).

In this sense, the small number of publications on both themes reveals vast opportunities to discuss and develop the themes. Some studies, for example, have indicated the need to study social entrepreneurship from an effectuation perspective (Yusuf and Sloan, 2015; Akemu *et al.*, 2016; Johannison, 2018). Other studies have also suggested that partnerships should be explored in deep detail (Johannison, 2018; Kerr and Coviello, 2019; Weerakoon; Gales; McMurray, 2019; Martin *et al.*, 2023), mainly considering their relevance for social entrepreneurship initiatives.

The third justification is the role of social capital in the discussion of effectual partnerships in terms of co-creation and opportunities visualisation (Dimov, 2007; Fischer and Reuber, 2011; Kerr and Coviello, 2020; Mikic *et al.*, 2020). We consider social entrepreneurs collective individuals in social interactions, given that partnerships do not occur in isolation (Kerr and Coviello, 2020; Claridge, 2020). To this extent, we expect to broaden our understanding of “how” partnerships occur from the crazy quilt perspective, which can also provide insights into the influence of the emerging economy and the development of social entrepreneurship, especially in Brazil. This may provide the field with new perspectives that have not yet been explored.

Regarding practical justification, social entrepreneurs demonstrate a particular challenge when establishing partnerships and relationships (Bozhikin *et al.*, 2019). Brazilian social entrepreneurs have impacted society in the last year with their innovations, especially in health and care (Pipe, 2014). Such a challenge may also be approached with the crazy quilt principle of effectuation. Regarding this, the crazy quilt principle may support social entrepreneurs in forming partnerships and relationships by demonstrating the formal and informal partners and how they contribute to their business.

Furthermore, regarding social justifications, we expect that identifying the factors and mechanisms that contribute to strengthening the collaborative networks of social entrepreneurs may help develop programs and public policies encouraging cooperation among organisations with social missions, especially social entrepreneurs in the fashion sector. We also expect this study to create more ethical, social, and environmentally sustainable social enterprises in the fashion sector.

Such impact can be expanded to the global context of social entrepreneurship once this study's objective explores more aspects of the crazy quilt principle. In the long term, this study may provide scholars and social entrepreneurs with an approximated framework to establish partnerships in social entrepreneurship.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to understand the main themes of this dissertation, the following literature review has been divided into five parts. Thus, it is structured as follows: i) the context and definitions of social entrepreneurship; ii) partnerships in social entrepreneurship; iii) the dynamics of partnerships from the effectuation approach; iv) the definitions and dimensions of social capital, which guided the discussions in this study; v) the convergence between the themes of social entrepreneurship, social capital, and effectuation.

2.1 SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP: CONCEPTS AND CONTEXT

This study focuses on the individual social entrepreneurs and the process of social entrepreneurship rather than the specific social enterprises they set up. In this sense, this chapter is divided into three parts: I) we will discuss the concept of social entrepreneurship, and II) we will discuss the initiatives of social entrepreneurs in the fashion sector.

2.1.1 Social Entrepreneurship Definition

In South America, the withdrawal of government may be one of the causes of the emergence of social entrepreneurship, especially after the “Washington Consensus,” an adjustment of programs aimed at a market reform that affected social benefit programs in Argentina (Kerlin, 2006). In Argentina, as in Brazil, the same context perpetuated the development of social entrepreneurship: unemployment and social problems, which still reflect the lack of public investments (Oliveira, 2003; Kerlin, 2006;).

In this sense, social entrepreneurship rises as a response to the demands and problems created by capitalism (Barki, 2015; Cavazos-Arroyo *et al.*, 2017). Social entrepreneurship provides new ways to address social problems that used to be attended by government/third-sector organisations (Sousa *et al.*, 2022), in which the aim is to create social value by combining resources for social changes or meeting social needs (Mair and Martí, 2006).

The main characteristic of social entrepreneurs is their commitment to a social cause (Johannisson, 2018; Bargsted *et al.*, 2013; Othman and Wahid, 2014; Abebe *et al.*, 2020; Sotiropoulou *et al.*, 2021; Lozano *et al.*, 2024; López, 2024). They are often described as empathic individuals, enabling them to recognise and connect to the feelings of other’s suffering, putting aside their desires to achieve the well-being of others (Mair and Noboa, 2006;

Miller *et al.*, 2012; Bargsted *et al.*, 2013; Bacq *et al.*, 2016; Pangriya, 2019; Griffin-El; 2021). They may have experienced at an early age the same or similar problem or a traumatic event that helps them to visualise a social situation, which also collaborates with a differentiated vision of value creation (Rispaal and Servantie, 2016; Yitshaki and Kropp, 2016; Dickel *et al.*, 2021).

According to Ridley-Duff and Bull (2019), the characteristics of social entrepreneurship discussions rely on the adherence to individual action and vision and their capacity as change agents. Because of that, social entrepreneurs seek to recognise a social need, a demand, or a market failure in which they can offer solutions through an innovative approach (Austin *et al.*, 2012). Such demands can be visualised through the personal history of the social entrepreneurs (Yitshaki and Kropp, 2016) and a combination of altruism and consciousness (Mair and Noboa, 2006), which allow social entrepreneurs to recognise opportunities.

Sometimes, social entrepreneurs have great prior experience in public or private institutions but feel a sense of self-transcendence, a feeling of giving to the world what they know and their prior experience to solve a social problem (Sastre-Castillo *et al.*, 2015; Pangriya, 2019), or at least alleviate the cause of the problem (Kruse *et al.*, 2023). Additionally, social entrepreneurs are encouraged by their beliefs and values, which are also transformed as a value inputted in the goods (Akemu *et al.*, 2016).

Because the social purpose drives social entrepreneurs, the proposition of social value creation is central to the discussion (Austin *et al.*, 2012; Choi and Manjundar, 2014). In this sense, social entrepreneurs visualise the opportunity differently from traditional entrepreneurs, combining it with a “perceived need” (Gawell, 2012). The purpose and actions of social entrepreneurs can extend to various fields to achieve social, economic and sustainable goals. In the next section, we will discuss the initiatives of social entrepreneurs in the fashion sector.

2.1.2 Social Entrepreneurship in the fashion sector

The fashion industry plays a role beyond clothing and the essential need for comfort, also serving as a form of personal and cultural expression (Bastos and Almeida, 2024). However, it is one of the industries that uses the most material resources and is one of the most polluting in the world (European Parliament, 2024). Part of its significant environmental impact comes from its consumerist communication, from the fast-fashion industry, which causes a separation between human beings and nature in a relationship where, for the individual, having becomes the only way to be happy, to have well-being and to belong (Secco and Neiman, 2023).

In recent decades, the fashion industry has shifted its position regarding its purpose, adopting a discourse focused on sustainable, environmental, and ethical values (Charles and Marciniak, 2021). Because of that, the actions of social entrepreneurs may have proven to be fertile ground for social enterprise initiatives to present sustainable consumption models (Lamrad and Hanlon, 2014).

The concept of sustainability within social enterprises is focused on solving social, economic, and/or environmental problems that the market has failed to address (Kamaludin, 2024). Sustainability can be linked to social enterprises through proactive actions, either through pressure on companies to rethink their practices or through applying the concept to the organisation's mission and objectives, aiming to generate economic, social, and environmental value (Barki *et al.*, 2020). Therefore, by addressing environmental issues, especially in regions or communities without access to natural resources, sanitation, or adequate climatic conditions, social entrepreneurship promotes improving the quality of life in these communities (Kamaludin *et al.*, 2023; Ayoungman *et al.*, 2023).

Similarly, in the fashion sector, social entrepreneurs balance their social mission, prioritising sustainability to empower and promote conscious consumption (Parker; McQuilter; Bigolin, 2024). This business model is called *fashion-based social enterprise* (FSE), a term McQuilter coined in 2017. FSEs aim to address social issues in various ways, such as access to education, social problem relief, employment for marginalised individuals, community empowerment, or sustainability promotion (Parker *et al.*, 2024). McQuilter (2017) argues that in the art and fashion sector, FSE creates jobs and challenges power structures and inequalities by promoting cultural identity, social inclusion and economic empowerment.

The great paradox of social entrepreneurs in the fashion sector lies in marketing to increase unbridled capitalist consumption (Parker *et al.*, 2024). The strategies of social entrepreneurs are on the other side of the coin, precisely to create a sense of aspiration and awareness among consumers (Taylor and Costello, 2017). Their proposal is more geared towards raising awareness and guiding more sustainable consumption, based on sustainability, a fairer and more environmentally balanced society, which, on the other hand, also leads the consumer to be more critical of what they consume, how they consume and why they consume, in other words, a socially critical individual (Secco and Neiman, 2024). In doing so, fashion becomes an instrument through which social enterprises seek to educate their consumers about environmental education while at the same time promoting sustainable practice in their value creation.

2.2 PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are defined as alliances, networks, or cooperation (Agostini *et al.*, 2019), understood as all kinds of connections that provide individuals with information, resources, and opportunities (Jack, 2005) that would only ever be acquired with support (Guardo and Harrigan, 2011; Silva, 2018). These links can be formal and informal, such as friends, family (Birley, 1985), or strong and weak ties (Granovetter, 1973)

To situate our discussion, we will define partnerships as a shared commitment “where all partners have a right and an obligation to participate and will be affected equally by the benefits and disadvantages arising from the partnership. (...)” (Carnwell and Buchanan, 2005, p.6). The partnership, therefore, is characterised as a collaboration between one or more partners to achieve a specific goal (Ewje and Palakshappa, 2009, p. 340).

In the early stages of the organisation, partnerships are an advantageous way of acquiring resources, and as the organisation continues to grow in the market, more and new resources are needed to maintain its growth (Hite and Hesterly, 2001). In emerging economies, such as Brazil, the actions of social entrepreneurs are constrained, given the scarcity of resources needed in the process of entrepreneurship (Barki *et al.*, 2020; Machado *et al.*, 2021).

To Moss *et al.* (2022), resources are an essential part of the creation of value, inclusively by creating “more” with “less.” However, mobilising capital, such as human and financial resources, is social entrepreneurs' most challenging and onerous task (Austin *et al.*, 2012). Consequently, the constraints of resources influence social entrepreneurs to broaden their social network, especially to implement and carry out social enterprise (Colby *et al.*, 2004; Urbano *et al.*, 2010). Because of that, social entrepreneurs may be motivated to look for partners in their formal or informal network that can foster new opportunities, organise sales, and facilitate new resources, as well as essential or new information (Pai and More, 2018; Ho and Yoon, 2022; Ferrara *et al.*, 2023).

According to Atkinson (1994), motivations are the factors that influence an individual's direction, intensity and persistence. For Oliver (1990), the motivations for establishing partnerships can be divided into six factors: i) necessity, to meet legal or regulatory requirements; ii) asymmetry, to control or have power over a resource; iii) reciprocity, searches for partners who can cooperate, collaborate and mutually coordinate organisations; iv) efficiency, to increase performance and reduce operating costs; v) stability, and vi) legitimisation.

According to Niesten and Jolink (2020), entrepreneurs are motivated by environmental and knowledge values. However, the lack of resources or knowledge can also be a motivational factor in settling a commitment; for example, two or more parties may collaborate because of knowledge and know-how, strengthen employee skills, and learning transfer (Pesämaa *et al.*, 2010; Guardo and Harrigan, 2011; Guieu, 2019). In this exchange process, social entrepreneurs may benefit from collaboration advice to use the available resources better (Pai and More, 2018).

The base of an alliance will depend on other factors and motivations, particular to each partner. The partnership between both sides will be based on a common strategic goal: to improve the firm's competitiveness (Braga, 2010). Partnerships are only formed if there are motivational factors and opportunities for collaboration (Silva, 2018), and they are specially formed from the firm's emergence and growth (Hite and Hesterly, 2001). Despite this, such an alliance does not eliminate the competitiveness between both partners (Alves *et al.*, 2016).

Trust, management support, and objective compatibility are some factors that influence a partnership's success or failure (Alvez *et al.*, 2016). Hite (2003) argues that three components affect the relationship: 1) effect on the personal relationship, 2) dyadic economic interaction, and 3) reciprocity. In her study, Hite (2003) also highlighted the importance of trust between the parties and the feeling that both sides can rely on each other. However, Smirnova (2020) argues that other factors play an important role in the failure or success of a partnership, such as the structure of the market, which can vary from country to country. For the author, dysfunctional market competition also affects partnerships.

The literature includes two types of partnerships: inter-organisational and cross-sector partnerships. Inter-organisational partnerships are established between public or private actors emerging from structural gaps or needing resources. Partnerships play a complementary role in these gaps (Bazanini *et al.*, 2020). These partnerships can be established through strategic alliances that allow public-private companies to share resources (Anand and Khanna, 2000).

This model goes beyond strategic partnerships, and for social enterprises, it is a model through which they can have complementary advantages, such as ensuring lower operating costs, expanding their networks and knowing their customers (Limeira, 2015). In addition, exchanges between partners can generate value, improving the efficiency of operations and making the business idea possible and profitable (Biggemann and Buttle, 2012).

However, inter-organisational partnerships are based on traditional partnership theory. In this sense, social entrepreneurs must overcome behaviours considered natural to the market,

such as individualism, opportunism, zero-sum games and corporate governance (Bazanini *et al.*, 2020).

Another perspective for inter-organisational collaboration is the cross-sector partnerships that gained attention between 1990 and 2000. Cross-sector partnerships occur between partners of different sectors (Gutiérrez *et al.*, 2016), as to mention: 1) Business, 2) Government, and 3) non-profit (Vogel *et al.*, 2022). According to Selsky and Parker (2005), cross-sector partnerships are formed to address social causes and issues by engaging partners who share the same paradigm (Silva, 2018). Reast *et al.* (2010) define cross-sector partnerships as deliberate collaborations between two or more mutually compromised sectors to solve important social and economic issues. That is, cross-sector partnerships are more than simply partnerships at the organisational level; they are, in fact, a broader system-level change (Clarke and Crane, 2018).

Collaborations between government and public-private partnerships are becoming increasingly common once the engagement of external actors and public politics is combined (Meyer, 2021). The Social Impact Bond is a public-private partnership in which one of the partners is responsible for the financial resources. The alliance between the government and social enterprises benefits both sides. Silva (2021) discusses the government's involvement in increasing the possibility of societal development, in which the state's functions are predominantly the financier of the activities.

As discussed in this chapter, the literature on partnership studies is extensive and provides different points of view on partnerships in social entrepreneur initiatives. However, for this present study, we analyse partnerships through the lens of the crazy quilt principle and social capital. In this sense, in the next section, our discussion will be focused on the effectuation approach and the crazy quilt principle.

2.3 EFFECTUATION AND PARTNERSHIPS DYNAMICS

The effectuation process was first discussed in the entrepreneurship literature by Saras Sarasvathy in 2001 in the *Academy of Management Review* journal. The author came to this subject after empiric research with a sample of 45 entrepreneurs in the USA. The study's objective was to understand the decision-making process of expert entrepreneurs, allowing them to build up a venture with the same idea and face the same context challenges as other entrepreneurs (Sarasvathy, 2008). Sarasvathy (2001) found that expert entrepreneurs started their businesses with who they were, what they knew, and whom they knew, immediately acting and talking with others instead of setting a detailed plan before action (Sarasvathy, 2008).

Central to the discussion of effectuation is the role of the interaction with other people and the embedded commitment of partners that support entrepreneurs in creating value through the constant sharing of ideas and discussion that diminish the risk of the organisation's idea (Chandler *et al.*, 2011; Fisher, 2012; Sarasvathy *et al.*, 2014; Yang *et al.*, 2022). As the process of effectuation is based on flexibility and adaptability, partners are not just investors; they participate in the decision-making and development of the product/service (Sarasvathy, 2008), and this implies confidence in their ability and the other partners' ability to invest in the effectual process (Jiang and Ruling, 2017).

In this chapter, to understand the effectual partnerships within the crazy quilt principle, we will discuss effectuation in three parts. In the first part, we will present the definition and principle of effectuation to situate our discussion. In the second part, we will explore the crazy quilt principle and understand how effective partnerships are formed. In the third part, we will discuss research into social entrepreneurship and effectuation, summarising the main issues in the field through a systematic literature review.

2.3.1 Effectuation and its principles

Research on effectual perspective has grown in the last two decades, particularly regarding value creation (Hensel and Visser, 2020). Effectuation is a decision-making approach that combines knowledge, experience, and deliberate practice (Reyman *et al.*, 2015; Gregoire and Cherchem, 2019). It is a strategy for entrepreneurs in ambiguous environments (Sarasvathy, 2008; Jiang and Rulling, 2019), allowing them to adjust their goals as uncertainties arise (Sarasvathy, 2008; Read *et al.*, 2009; Gregoire and Cherchem, 2019).

The characteristic of the effectuation discussion is the difference between causal and effectual logic. The causal logic is based on the classical thinking of decision-making, where the opportunities/particular effects are given, and the focus is to select the right means to create that effect, just like a recipe (Sarasvathy, 2001; Reymen et al., 2015). Even though the future can be unpredictable, the logic of causation focuses on the predictable aspects to achieve the desired effect, which is based on the premise of causation: “To the extent, we can predict it, we can control it” (Sarasvathy 2008, 17).

On the other hand, the logic of effectuation inverts all aspects of causation logic (Read; Sarasvathy, 2005) when recognising the contingencies and uncertainties inherent in the entrepreneurial process. Nevertheless, unlike the logic of causation, decision-making does not focus on prediction (Sarasvathy, 2001; Karami and McNeill, 2020). Instead, effectuation is a logic of control based on the premise that as far as we “can control it, we do not need to predict it” (Sarasvathy, 2008, p. 17).

Causation logic starts with clear goals and desired effects, ideal for decision-makers needing optimal choices in specific contexts (Sarasvathy, 2008). Entrepreneurs can foresee outcomes due to abundant information and must have the experience to seek it effectively. Thus, a causation model analyses the problem space (Racat *et al.*, 2023). In contrast, effectuation logic applies to design problems where uncertainty exists, objectives are vague, and human actions can influence situations (Sarasvathy, 2008).

According to Sarasvathy (2008, p. 73), the effectuation process “does not begin with a specific goal. Instead, it begins with a given set of means. It allows goals to emerge contingently from the varied imaginations and diverse aspirations of the founders and the people with whom they interact”.

Although the logic of causation and effectuation follow different premises, research has demonstrated that effectuation and causation are not isolated. Indeed, effectuation and causation are complementary (Sarasvathy, 2008; Jiang and Ruling, 2017), but the situational elements will depend on the situation, the entrepreneur's aversion to risk, the context, the abundance of information, and the entrepreneur's element (Racat *et al.*, 2023). Table 1 demonstrates the difference between effectuation and causation logic and the main characteristics of both logics.

Table 1 – Distinction of causation and effectuation

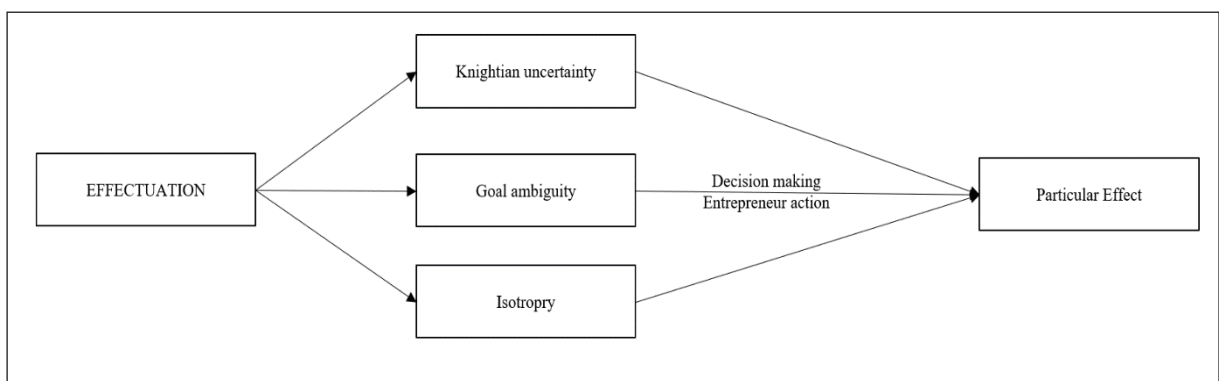
Categories of differentiation	Causation Processes	Effectuation Processes
Givens	The effect is given.	Only some means or tools are given.

Decision-making selection criteria	Help choose between means to achieve the given effect.	Help choose between possible effects that can be created with given means.
	Selection criteria based on expected return.	Selection criteria based on affordable loss or acceptable risk.
	Effect dependent: Choice of means is driven by characteristics of the impact the decision maker wants to create and their knowledge of possible means.	Action dependent: Given specific means, the choice of effect is driven by the actor's characteristics and ability to discover and use contingencies.
Competencies employed	Excellent at exploiting knowledge.	Excellent at exploiting contingencies.
Context of relevance	More ubiquitous.	More ubiquitous in human action.
	It is more useful in static, linear, and independent environments.	Explicit assumption of dynamic, nonlinear, and ecological environments.
Nature of unknowns	Focus on the predictable aspects of an uncertain future.	Focus on the controllable aspects of an unpredictable future.
Underlying logic	To the extent we can predict the future, we can control it.	To the extent we can control the future, we do not need to predict it.
Outcomes	Market share in existent markets through competitive strategies.	New markets are created through alliances and other cooperative strategies.

Source: Sarasvathy (2001, p. 251)

According to Sarasvathy and Botha (2022), the entrepreneurial problem space in the logic of effectuation relies on three essential characteristics: 1) Knightian uncertainty, 2) Goal ambiguity, and 3) Isotropy, as presented in Figure 1. For Knight (1921), the analytic method offers an incomplete and simplified analysis under “ideal” conditions that do not consider other variables existing in the environment.

Figure 1 – Elements of effectual process



Source: Author's own (2025)

Decision-makers often settle for satisfactory rather than optimal choices (Simon, 1967), limiting decisions to acceptable solutions (Sarasvathy and Dew, 2005). From a bounded rationality perspective, decision-makers can only perceive a few environmental factors,

resulting in short planning (Sarasvathy and Dew, 2005). Options are absent in the environment; there is little knowledge of alternatives, and decision-makers may struggle to envision their actions (Simon, 1967). Consequently, their decision-making abilities are significantly restricted, influenced by internal processes, the minds of others, and the external environment (Simon, 1999).

Sarasvathy and Botha (2022) argue that entrepreneurs deal with uncertain spaces where the problem may need to be better defined, and there is no assurance that demand for the product will exist. This might require the entrepreneur some time to test and experiment before the distribution, but even that does not enable the entrepreneur to fully predict the future (Sarasvathy and Botha, 2022).

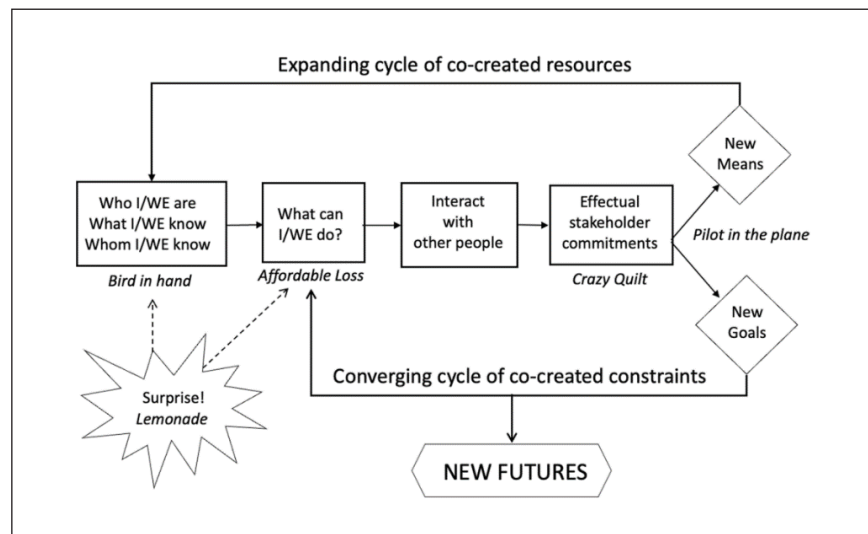
Secondly, their goals are equally ambiguous because entrepreneurs may need to learn or recognise all the opportunities in an environment and have more clarity about the next steps. As entrepreneurs face environmental uncertainty, new markets and enacted opportunities emerge (Karami and McNeill, 2020). Preferences are not given or well ordered; in such cases, it is doubtful if the entrepreneur knew what they wanted to achieve before achieving it (Sarasvathy, 2008).

Given Knightian uncertainty, goal ambiguity, and bounded rationality, entrepreneurs struggle to determine relevant information, highlighting the third aspect of the effectuation process: isotropy (Sarasvathy and Botha, 2022). The consequences of their actions remain unclear, with no *ex-ante* (Sarasvathy, 2008) for decision-making to standardise choices (Simon, 1967). Effectuation relies on the entrepreneur selecting from available resources (Sarasvathy, 2008; Watson and McGowan, 2020) to create a specific effect (Sarasvathy, 2008).

The process of effectuation begins with means currently available, consistent of three categories: 1) who I am (a set of abilities, traits, attributes), 2) what I know (education, experience, and expertise), and 3) who I know (social networks), which are the fundamental resources of entrepreneurs that enable them to create through imagining different possibilities and courses of actions (Sarasvathy, 2011).

Entrepreneur's actions focus on what they can do and what they believe is worth investing in. As demonstrated in Figure 2, interaction with other people is essential to effectuation. Depending on who comes on board and the contingencies of the environment, two contrasting consequences will set new means and goals available to the entrepreneurs: expansion and conversion (Read and Sarasvathy, 2005; Sarasvathy, 2008). Figure 2 represents the process of effectuation.

Figure 2 – The process and principles of effectuation



Source: Sarasvathy (2023, p. 3)

Each stakeholder that comes on board negotiates with the venture as it exists; in other words, the stakeholder makes a commitment to the venture before the transformation of the ideas instead of selecting the future possibilities available to transform the product X in Y (Sarasvathy, 2008). In this sense, the stakeholder is more than a provider of financial investment; they eventually have the power to transform the market and the product. The stakeholders that commit to the venture will also invest in who they know and what they are willing to lose (Sarasvathy, 2008). However, there is no guarantee that the previous commitment will cope with a possible partnership.

As the network grows and strengthens, the external world becomes a variable important to the commitment; it tends to become less effectual and more causal once the market becomes distinct and new for the entrepreneur (Sarasvathy, 2008; Racat *et al.*, 2023). Three factors can impact the stakeholder commitment in the process of effectual network: 1) interactions become a commitment; 2) interactions do not become an embodied commitment as the outer world influences the inner world; and 3) the effectual network changes its nature by an exogenous process that split apart the partnership (Sarasvathy, 2008).

Apart from the effectuation process, important principles can appear or not during each stage. According to Sarasvathy (2001), there are five principles: 1) Bird in hand, 2) Affordable loss, 3) Lemonade, 4) Crazy quilt, and 5) Pilot in the plane.

The first principle is the metaphor “bird in hand,” implying that entrepreneurs utilise their current resources to innovate (Sarasvathy, 2008). Sarasvathy identified that expert entrepreneurs consider three questions: “Who am I?” “What do I know?” and “Who do I

know?”. This principle centres on entrepreneurs using creativity and reflection to analyse and adapt their experiences based on their abilities (Sarasvathy, 2011; Sarasvathy *et al.*, 2014; Hensel and Visser, 2019). Here, goal ambiguity is not problematic as every action is feasible; however, isotropy poses a challenge as expert entrepreneurs must choose between actions (Sarasvathy, Botha, 2022).

“Affordable loss” refers to the entrepreneur's acceptability of the losses of starting a business (Sarasvathy, 2008; Hensel and Visser, 2019). “Risk little, fail cheap” is the watchword of expert entrepreneurs who calculate the downside of opportunity in evaluating what they have financially available and their psychological commitment to the business in a worst-case scenario (Sarasvathy, 2008).

The “lemonade” principle reflects the saying, “When life gives you lemons, make lemonade,” emphasising the tendency to capitalise on contingencies (Emam, 2016). Expert entrepreneurs exploit these situations instead of avoiding unforeseen outcomes, thinking creatively to discover new opportunities (Sarasvathy, 2008; Emam, 2016). This principle is central to the effectuation process, enabling navigation through Knightian uncertainty and goal ambiguity. Experts recognise that surprises often create more opportunities than drawbacks.

The “crazy quilt” principle is key to effectuation, focusing on forming partnerships and commitments. It links to the bird-in-hand principle as new partnerships expand the entrepreneur's connections (Sarasvathy and Botha, 2022). Every stakeholder willing to commit helps develop the venture's idea rather than sticking to a previous vision (Sarasvathy, 2011). These commitments reduce uncertainty in effectuation as stakeholders act on contracts to build and grow the network (Sarasvathy, 2008).

The “pilot on the plane” concept embodies effectuation theory, suggesting that prediction becomes unnecessary if we can control the future (Sarasvathy, 2008, p. 17). This principle merges four key ideas, emphasising non-predictive logic that enhances control over resources, actions, and risks (Emam, 2016). Expert entrepreneurs view the future as a chance to co-create and innovate rather than predict it (Sarasvathy and Botha, 2022). While all five pillars are important, this study will concentrate on the crazy quilt principle, highlighting entrepreneurs' ability to form partnerships.

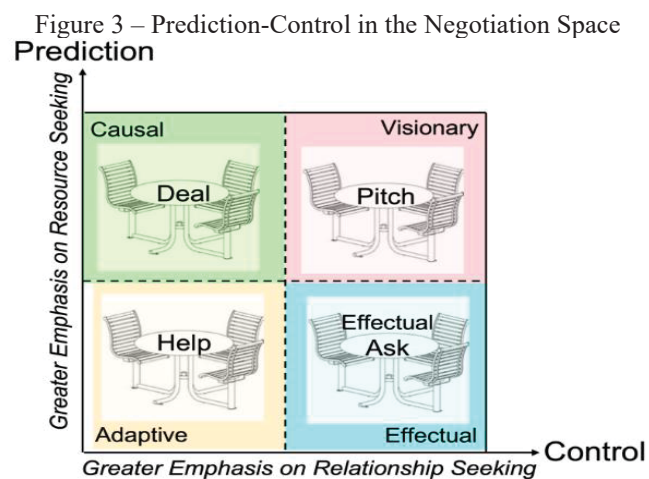
2.3.2 Effectual partnerships: bringing partners to the table in the crazy quilt approach.

The “crazy quilt” is one of the five principles of effectuation that emphasise the flexibility/experimentation to control the future through alliances, pre-commitments, and

networks (Chandler *et al.*, 2011). Even though the importance of partnerships to the process of market co-creation, little research has focused on how and why networks happen in the effectuation process (Kerr and Coviello, 2019; Xu *et al.*, 2021).

Relationships are helpful in contingent commitments both to substitute limited resources (Sarasvathy, Botha, 2022) and to expand resources to reduce uncertainty through sharing responsibility with the stakeholders (Chandler *et al.*, 2011; Fisher, 2012; Sarasvathy *et al.*, 2014; Yang *et al.*, 2022). Expert entrepreneurs look for the face instead of the wallet, not looking for the possible investment they may put in their venture, even if the wallet of the face may be smaller than what causal entrepreneurs would look for (Sarasvathy and Botha, 2022).

Expert entrepreneurs would put effort into developing and strengthening the relationship – and even looking for new partners - rather than on the resources when the negotiation begins. Applying the elements of effectuation, we may find four possible tables in Figure 3 that allow us to visualise how negotiation happens between expert entrepreneurs and stakeholders.



Source: Sarasvathy and Botha (2022)

Novice entrepreneurs start their journey at the help table, seeking stakeholder advice or information. The communication goes from the stakeholder to the entrepreneur, in which the stakeholder is the guide that provides a clearer vision and information about the venture, and in such cases, the resource is the last thing the entrepreneur may look for (Sarasvathy and Botha, 2022). Information and guidance may be an excellent way to recognise and explore the market and acquire information and intellectual and social capital to expand their network (Mengue *et al.*, 2019).

Depending on the entrepreneur, they can move to the pitch or deal tables. In the pitch table, the entrepreneur has a clearer vision of the venture, and the stakeholder will provide the

specific resources required to achieve the entrepreneur's vision (Sarasvathy, 2008). In this way, the entrepreneur may search for an angel investor, and the negotiation develops around formal contracts and a previous alignment with what the investor expects versus what the entrepreneur expects (Mengue *et al.*, 2019). This first alignment is important for both sides to enhance the quality of the communication and improve the trust between the parties involved (Bammens and Collewaert, 2012).

Negotiation in the pitch or deal table is more inclined to prediction logic than control. Entrepreneurs are guided to develop a business plan and, to some extent, sell their ideas to possible stakeholders (Sarasvathy, 2008). However, expert entrepreneurs often apply the logic of control to their negotiations, which is action-oriented and aims to co-create an artefact into something new. In this table, expert entrepreneurs prefer to use the premises of effectuation, such as affordable loss and bird-in-hand.

At the effectual table, the goals are flexible, and there is no assumption of a predetermined market (Sarasvathy, 2008). Given that, expert entrepreneurs might also reach for flexible stakeholders. Because of the absence of goal, in the effectuation approach entrepreneurs will approach new stakeholders by reaching for their trusted base - whom they know – (Kerr and Coviello, 2019), which can be friends, family, co-workers, and even people they happen to meet in their daily routine (Wiltbank *et al.*, 2006; Sarasvathy, 2008; Fisher, 2012; Martin *et al.*, 2023), or engaging in collaboration with other stakeholders in similar/complementary fields (Reyman *et al.*, 2015). Eventually, every stakeholder on the board will compromise only what they can afford to lose. The investment may be small compared to the negotiations on the other tables (Sarasvathy and Botha, 2022).

The negotiation between entrepreneurs and stakeholders in the effectual approach means more than acquiring tangible resources, such as money and funds. The original idea and sketches come from the entrepreneur, but the project does not belong to them anymore; in other words, all the stakeholders involved in the partnership are equally project owners (Guieu, 2019). According to Guieu (2019), networking will improve over time, forcing the dynamic to change whenever there is a lack of resources or knowledge, eventually leading to new opportunities. This interaction does not necessarily lead to a commitment, but re-negotiations are possible (Kerr and Coviello, 2019).

Since the stakeholders are not committing to a future vision of the venture, they cannot predict the 'shape of the pie' (Sarasvathy, 2008). Without goals, the stakeholders might engage in networking given proximity or homophily (Kerr and Coviello, 2019). Stakeholders are

attracted by the chance to participate and get involved in the project (Guieu, 2019), even if the goal needs to be better settled and clear.

In order to convince the stakeholders to commit to the venture, expert entrepreneurs are persuasive (Sarasvahty, 2011), articulating their ideas through metaphors and analogies in their speech that depict familiar scenes in the stakeholder's mind (Cornelissen and Clarke, 2010). Such articulation is one of the most important parts of the earliest negotiation that seeks to influence the future and the behaviour of stakeholders in the beginning; there is no assumption of trust between the parties involved (Sarasvathy and Dew, 2008). Storytelling and gestures that resemble trust and evoke the idea of possible success, even with uncertainty, may affect how the stakeholder feels about the venture (Cornelissen and Clarke, 2010).

As pointed out by Sarasvathy (2008), a network in the productive process can be initiated in three ways: 1) random chance, 2) path dependency, and 3) an existent network that is deliberately activated. Lassalle *et al.*(2020), in studying migrant entrepreneurs, pointed out that the embeddedness of effectual networks may occur in three ways: relational (professional networks), social (community), and structural (formal or informal relations with institutions). At some point in the relationship, the entrepreneurs chose to strengthen or take a distance from the partnership established, changing the dynamic of the network and the opportunity creation (Lassalle *et al.*, 2020).

Previously, our discussion started on the pitch and effectual tables, as if the expert entrepreneur had only one choice in the negotiation. However, both effectuation and causation are important, and they are free to alternate given the context in which the entrepreneur is inserted (Sarasvathy and Botha, 2022). Although the “effectuation” flexibility is essential initially to attract people and possible commitments, as the venture develops, there is an increasing need to set goals and formal contracts (Martin *et al.*, 2023).

The entrepreneur's persuasiveness will always play an important role in the process, as it allows them to increase their network, especially in social entrepreneurship, where resources are scarce. In the next section, our discussion will focus on how social entrepreneurs may benefit from the flexibility and adaptability of the effectuation approach through a literature review conducted for this study.

2.3.3 Social entrepreneurship and effectuation

The social and environmental challenges demand businesses that offer innovative solutions considering the community's needs and environmental problems. However, in the

emergent economy, most of the entrepreneurs who decide to set up a business are faced to face the uncertainty and the constraint of resources (Yang *et al.*2022), which the effectuation approach may be suitable for studying the creation and the implication of nonprofit organisations (Yusuf and Sloan, 2015).

To clarify what has been studied in the literature regarding social entrepreneurship and effectuation, we have conducted a literature review in six databases, as follows: 1) Web of Science (WOS), 2) Scopus, 3) Elsevier, 4) Sage, 5) Emerald and 6) Scielo. The research was conducted in April of 2024 employing the string TS=(("effectuation") AND ("social innovat*" OR "social enterpr*" OR "social enterpr*" OR "social enterpr*" OR "social venture*" OR "social business*" OR "impact business*" OR "hybrid organization*")).

We focused on “Articles” and “Review Articles,” being excluded from the sample conference paper and editorials. The results of this first search can be observed in Table 2.

Table 2 – Strategy of searching.

Sting	Base	Amount
TS=(("effectuation") AND ("social innovat*" OR "social enterpr*" OR "social enterpr*" OR "social enterpr*" OR "social venture*" OR "social business*" OR "impact business*" OR "hybrid organization*"))	(WOS)	28
	Scopus	16
	Elsevier	0
	Sage	0
	Emerald	0
	Scielo	0
	Total	44

Source: The author (2025)

As shown in Table 2, WOS and Scopus were the only bases that returned to the string defined in our search. From the 44 articles and review articles, 12 were duplicated, and one was not open to access, totalling 31 articles for the second analysis. The other 31 articles were reviewed using the following two categories of analysis: 1) the articles should approach the effectuation theory or the principles, and 2) the articles should discuss the subject of social entrepreneurship. In this second phase of the analysis, we noticed that most of the research mentioned bricolage, another theory unrelated to the effectuation approach, which was categorised as unsuitable for the sample. Only 14 articles were within the previously established categories for the research.

Therefore, the 14 articles were read and organised into other categories of analysis: I) topics discussed in the studies (ethic, entrepreneur profile, co-creation, entrepreneurship process, decision making, effectual logic, entrepreneur action, and entrepreneur identity); II) the principle of effectuation; and III) the relation between effectuation and entrepreneurship.

Of the articles selected for this study, only one was a review article, and out of the 14 articles, eight were focused on developed regions, such as the USA, Australia, Northern Switzerland, and Amsterdam, as shown in Table 3. Such a result raises the question of the differences in the concepts and definitions employed in each study. For example, in developed regions, the discussion regarding social entrepreneurship was focused on the growth of social entrepreneurship. In contrast, in the emergent areas, the cases presented were related to social enterprises, in which the perspective was far from the innovation of services and near to the entrepreneurship for necessity discussion (Anderson *et al.*, 2019; Rosca *et al.*, 2020; Yang *et al.*, 2022; Chandra and Paras, 2021; Chandra *et al.*, 2021; Larsen, 2022; Masinamami, 2024).

Table 3 – Articles selected for the review literature

Authors	Context	Journal	Objective	Category of discussion
Yusuf and Sloan, (2015)	USA	American Review of Public Administration	Investigate the decision-making process in social enterprise, focusing mainly on decisions made during its development.	Decision making
Akemu <i>et al.</i> (2016)	Amsterdam	Journal of Management Studies	Investigate how the context of social movement activism and effectual network pre-committed resources are inchoated in the social enterprise to produce a material artefact based on the moral values of the network members.	Entrepreneur Action
York <i>et al.</i> (2016)	USA	Journal of Management Studies	Theorise why and how individuals engage in social entrepreneurship, in which the authors suggest a correlation between effectuation and social entrepreneurs, even though this result was not expected.	Entrepreneur Identity
Dwivedi and Weerawardena (2018)	USA	Journal of Business Research	Propose a theoretical framework unifying the behavioural entrepreneurship concept and effectuation theory.	Entrepreneur Profile
Johannisson (2018)	Northern Switzerland	Entrepreneurship and Regional Development	Propose a longitudinal empirical study to investigate the practice of social entrepreneurship. The results show that effectual logic rules in social enterprise in different forms, in which the author introduces the term “necessity effectuation.”	Effectual Logic
Lubberink <i>et al.</i> (2018)	USA	Journal of Social Entrepreneurship	Investigate the process of innovation and development of social enterprises. The typology proposed by the	Entrepreneurship Process

			study is based on anticipation, reflexivity, stakeholder inclusion and deliberation, responsiveness, and knowledge management.	
Anderson <i>et al.</i> (2019)	Pakistan	SOCIAL ENTERPRISE JOURNAL	The paper investigates an unusual form of social enterprising in a poor Pakistan region. This paper aims to examine a novel form of micro-social enterprise. Their form and functions are considered, and how they conform to what is expected of a social enterprise is reviewed.	Entrepreneurship Process
Weerakoon, Gales, McMurray (2019)	Australia	Social Enterprise Journal	The authors argue that when investigating legitimacy-driven opportunity pursuit in an enterprise's pre-emergence stage, all three perspectives of causation, effectuation, and bricolage are required. The purpose of this paper was to address the research question of how effectuation determines entrepreneurial action in a social enterprise's pre-emergence stage.	Entrepreneurship Process
Chandra and Paras (2020)	Philippines	PUBLIC MANAGEMENT REVIEW	Investigate how social entrepreneurs, in a post-disaster context, develop opportunities and create value.	Value co-creation
Rosca, Agarwal, Brem, (2020)	India and Colombia	Technological Forecasting and Social Change	Investigate the entrepreneurial journal of social women entrepreneurs through the lens of the effectuation approach.	Entrepreneurship Process
Chandra, Teasdale, Tjiptono (2021)	Greater China Region	Journal of Asian Public Policy	This article appraises the intellectual development of social entrepreneurship in the Greater China Region and proposes a new framework for it.	Review of the literature
Yang <i>et al.</i> 2022	China	Journal of Social Entrepreneurship	Examine how the effectuation logic is related to value creation and its impact on the performance of these firms.	Value co-creation
Martin <i>et al.</i> (2023)	USA	Journal of Business Ethics	Investigate how social enterprises pursue the ethical mandate of social impact growth to scale up.	Entrepreneur Profile and Ethics

Masilamani, <i>et al.</i> (2024)	India	Journal of Social Entrepreneurship	Investigate the relevance of effectuation in creating value for social enterprise.	Value co-creation
----------------------------------	-------	------------------------------------	--	-------------------

Source: The author (2025)

As we can see from Table 3, the articles used different methodological approaches to approach the subject of effectuation and social entrepreneurship. The results of the study show that although effectuation is often used in opportunistic environments, the effectuation approach is compatible with social entrepreneurship (Yusuf and Sloan, 2015; Akemu *et al.*; 2016; York *et al.*, 2016; Weerakoon *et al.*, 2019; Martin *et al.*, 2023). However, effectuation and causation studies are interrelated, with effectuation being more used in emerging contexts, such as disasters (Weerakoon *et al.*, 2019; Chandras and Paras, 2020).

Despite this, some studies point out that in the context of social entrepreneurs, effectuation may not be able to explain the initiative of entrepreneurs on its own (Johannisson, 2018; Lubberink *et al.*, 2018; Anderson *et al.*, 2019; Weerakoon *et al.*, 2019). Johannisson (2018); Lubberink *et al.*(2018); Weerakoon *et al.*(2019) discuss that social entrepreneurs also employ elements of causation, effectuation and bricolage. Johannisson (2018) also points out that bricolage is presented semantically in Sarasvathy's study, although the author does not mention it. In this sense, Anderson *et al.*(2019) propose that scholars gain a deeper understanding of the social enterprise framework by considering the elements of effectuation and bricolage. As the business develops, planning and causal logic are needed to maintain the economic development of the social organisation (Martin *et al.*, 2021). Such findings indicate that social entrepreneurs employ rational motivation in causal logic, as Gur *et al.*(2022) discussed. Conversely, ineffectual logic and emotional factors may motivate social entrepreneurs, even though the authors' discussion is not aimed in that direction.

Studies show that effectual logic contributes to value co-creation in product development as partners are its allies, especially in disaster contexts. (Akemu *et al.*, 2016; Chandras and Paras, 2020; Yang *et al.*, 2022; Masilamani, *et al.*, 2024). In collaboration with the findings of Yang *et al.*(2022), Masilamani *et al.*(2024) found a positive impact on the performance given the co-creation. The authors also demonstrate that there is a positive relationship between government support and the development of effectuation because social entrepreneurs in India have the opportunity to learn and “navigate the uncertain environment by better following the effectuation” (Masilamani *et al.*, 2024, 15)

Chandra and Paras (2021) discuss that social entrepreneurs would commit to every stakeholder who provided information and resources for the organisation during a disaster.

However, the data collected from the research revealed that entrepreneurs would choose to use the logic of causation in the context of no catastrophe. Such finding is also supported by studies by Lubberink *et al.*(2018), Rosca *et al.*(2020), and Martin *et al.*(2023). In uncertainty, stakeholders are the key to developing new ideas and solutions.

Weerakoon *et al.*(2019) argue that effectuation influences the mission and vision of the social enterprise. As Akemu *et al.*(2016) conclude that the artefact produced during the relation of the agents means more than the material product produced; in other words, the artefact of the effectuation approach in social enterprise is based on the morals and values of each agent that eventually get involved in the organisation. In this sense, York *et al.*(2016) argue that identity and goal clarity are important, contradicting the argument of Sarasvathy and Dew (2005) that a strong identity substitutes goal clarity. Another point raised by Yang *et al.*(2022) is that it is important to consider whether the stakeholder knows the meaning of social entrepreneurship and share the same vision.

During the partnership approach, social entrepreneurs might benefit from symbolical management approaches to legitimate their ideas (Weerakoon *et al.*, 2019). This can explain why stakeholders are motivated to participate in the initial idea even if they do not see clear objectives and goals, although the study did not conclude this.

Initially, social entrepreneurs search for their trusted base, like family, friends, or colleagues (Rosca *et al.*, 2020). Martin *et al.*(2023) also discuss the charisma and symbology social entrepreneurs use. Johannisson (2018) also points out that social entrepreneurs may benefit from metaphors that evoke the idea of success when approaching their partners. Therefore, social entrepreneurs are persuasive when presenting their ideas, which helps them build large networks and acquire new information and other resources necessary for the co-creation process. Dwivedi and Weerawardena (2018) argue that this context reveals that effectuation is one of the strongest indicators of social entrepreneurship activities.

Considering this entire discussion, although the articles cited the principles of effectuation, none discussed one principle isolated or in a prominent manner. The partnerships were also cited as necessary for the organisation. Still, these articles were not focused on how and why these partnerships were developing through the process of social entrepreneurship, which only the study of Chandra and Paras (2020) and Martin *et al.*(2023) was close to showing the process of effectuation, and the principles, during the development of the social enterprise. This highlights the lack of research regarding the crazy quilt principle and social entrepreneurship.

On the other hand, few studies discussed what motivated social entrepreneurs to form partnerships. Chandra and Paras (2020), for example, argued that these partnerships would occur and be motivated in the face of disaster; the entrepreneurs would only have clear categories to choose the stakeholders if they could provide meaningful resources.

Rosca *et al.*(2020) briefly discuss the motivation for keeping some partnerships. Nevertheless, other elements motivate social entrepreneurs to settle commitments with stakeholders, such as the fact that, in the effectuation process, entrepreneurs are encouraged by creating new means and goals. Because of that, we may discuss other perspectives of partnerships in the literature, including inter-organisational and cross-sector partnerships.

2.4 SOCIAL CAPITAL: DEFINITIONS AND DIMENSIONS

The term ‘social capital’ originally appeared in community studies, which highlighted the importance of social networks for the survival and functioning of city neighbourhoods and gained considerable popularity with the contributions of thinkers and researchers such as Bourdieu (1986) and Coleman (1988) (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998; Terzo, 2020). Despite the topic's popularity, there is still no consensus regarding the definition of social capital (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998; Scrivens and Smith, 2013).

Social capital theory is defined as resources shared or borrowed between individuals, such as wealth, power or reputation, through social resources (Bourdieu, 1986; Lin, 2001; Lin, 2005). The primary principle of social capital is to access and mobilise others who share and control similar resources to preserve existing resources and maximise resources by rationally choosing the best partnership for them (Häuberer, 2011; Lin, 2017). Some resources, such as wealth, can be acquired through economic capital, but other resources, such as reputation, can only be acquired through social relationships or partnership ties - social capital (Häuberer, 2011).

The connections between partnerships, however, are not given by the environment, such as family ties or family names, although these partnerships can sometimes occur. Each partnership, therefore, is characterised by a constant effort to produce and reproduce a feeling of duration among the group and that the partnership is beneficial, either to generate material security or symbolic profit, such as gifts or reputation (Bourdieu, 1986; Häuberer, 2011).

In order to understand social capital, in the first part of this chapter, we will discuss the definitions and evolution of the theory, bringing in the principal elements and discussion of social capital. In the second part, we will focus our discussion on the dimensions of social capital to be used in the analyses of this study.

2.4.1 A brief history of the evolution of social capital

Bourdieu first introduced the concept of social capital and later expanded it by Coleman. However, these authors present different perspectives on social capital. Bourdieu views it as rooted in power (Bourdieu, 1986), while Coleman (1994) defines it as a way of facilitating actors’ actions within a specific social framework, based on their control and interest. Their approaches diverge further, with Bourdieu’s theory grounded in conflict theory, while Coleman’s is based on structural functionalism (RogoÅ and BaranoviÄ, 2016).

For Bourdieu, social capital is the supportive network embedded ties create (Häuberer, 2011)—members of a group exchange resources, which become markers of recognition, reaffirming and reinforcing group boundaries. In this sense, social capital strengthens ties through reciprocal exchanges, creating a sense of belonging that maintains and solidifies the relationship (Bourdieu, 1986).

Coleman (1988) defines social capital by its function, noting it is rooted in a social structure that facilitates actions, allowing actors to meet their interests. Each actor has specific obligations and expectations within this framework based on mutual trust and reliability. Relationships often include ideas like “people do things for each other,” highlighting a reciprocal nature; for instance, favour exchanges strengthen trust (Coleman, 1988). Trust is vital to social capital and is measured by two factors: (i) confidence in fulfilling obligations and (ii) the actor's ability to uphold them.

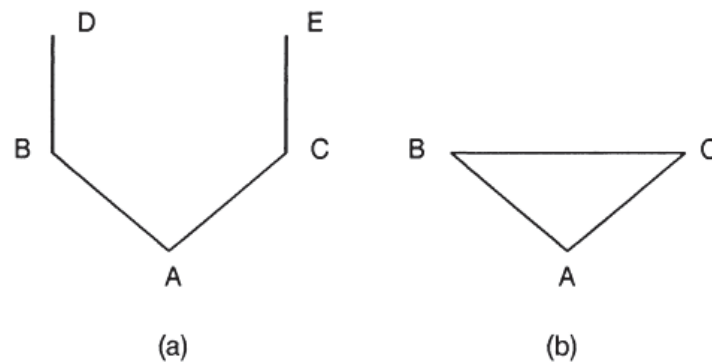
However, the strength and characteristics of these ties vary across groups; for instance, relationships among friends differ from those within a family, where obligations, norms, and needs—in other words, the structure of social capital—are distinct for each group (Bourdieu, 1986).

Coleman (1988) further suggests that actors' accessibility influences their obligations and the value of resources they can provide. Social capital is oriented by exchanging information, constituting a base of action in social capital (Coleman, 1988).

According to Coleman (1988), a cohesive partnership allows actors to combine forces toward a common goal. For example, in Figure 4 (b), actors B and C collaborate by pooling their strengths and ideas to meet A's needs, thereby strengthening their ties. Conversely, in Figure 4 (a), a different scenario unfolds: actors B and C maintain external relationships with D and E, respectively, which reduces their commitment to the central network tie. This lack of closure within the social structure can result in negative externalities and weakening collective forces.

It is important to note that network expansion does not inherently weaken partner relationships. Coleman (1988) argues that the denser and more cohesive a network is, the easier it is to regulate interactions and enforce norms, providing a secure foundation for partners to exchange ideas and cooperate in building social capital. For instance, B and C may be independently strong or vulnerable without necessarily influencing A's actions, highlighting that the quality of connections rather than the quantity of connections tend to drive effective collaboration.

Figure 4 – Network without (a) and with (b) closure



Fonte: Coleman (1988, p. 106)

Bourdieu and Coleman's perspectives on social capital emphasise the individual level and acknowledge the collective dimensions of social networks. In contrast, Putnam broadens the concept to highlight the importance of social capital for both individual and collective benefits, as it fosters information sharing and cooperation within communities (Häuberer, 2010).

For Putnam (2000), social capital is built on networks characterised by reciprocity and trustworthiness within a dense, interconnected social structure closely tied to “civic virtue”, in which a society composed of virtuous but isolated individuals does not necessarily foster robust social capital. In this sense, Putnam's (2000) view of social capital encompasses both individual benefits, serving personal interests, and collective advantages, contributing to the public good. This dual logic aligns well with the approach of social entrepreneurs, who are driven by both market goals and mission-oriented purposes.

Putnam's construction of social capital has been explored in various contexts. In his works, Putnam (2000, 2007, 2015) discusses the impact of social capital on society and the quality of networks, particularly emphasising the role of supportive networks and trust in shaping the future of children and teenagers in situations of social vulnerability. For Putnam (2000, 2007), social capital contributes to a healthy society and the well-being of citizens by collaborating with trusting and supportive civic activities.

In his seminal book *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (2000), Putnam identifies two dimensions of social capital: (i) bonding social capital, which is inclusive, and (ii) bridging social capital, which is exclusive. The form of capital utilised depends on individual choice or necessity. Bonding social capital refers to ties developed through shared norms and identities, such as those among family members, close friends, or

colleagues. In contrast, bridging social capital encompasses connections between individuals from different groups, fostering the exchange of values and ideas that promote innovation (Putnam, 2000).

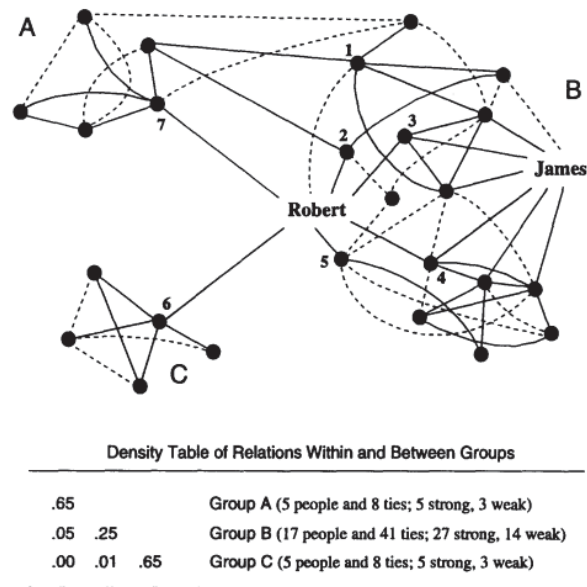
These earlier concepts of social capital did not yet focus on its structural aspects, which Burt and Lin's frameworks help clarify by emphasising the structure and role of networks (Häuberer, 2011). According to Burt (2000), social capital is a metaphor for advantage: people utilise it to exchange goods and services that align with their interests. In the competitive realm of capital, the "player" brings three types of capital: (i) financial capital (credit, cash), (ii) human capital (skills, intelligence), and (iii) social capital (networks) (Burt, 1995). Burt (1995) expands social capital to encompass "new opportunities," suggesting that the relationships formed with other "players" can widen one's prospects.

Financial and human capital differ from social capital. Financial capital is directly convertible to money and owned property, while human capital represents an investment in capabilities serving productive purposes, like functioning in a factory. Social capital, however, lacks a single owner and is shared among partners connected by relationships. As Burt (1995, p. 9) states, "No one player has exclusive ownership rights to social capital."

Burt (1995, 2000; 2002) expands the idea and presents the network structure of social capital, mainly focusing on the structural holes and how they influence access to information and new opportunities. In this sense, Burt's (2000) approach opposes Coleman's approach to network closure, in which the structural holes, as shown in Figure 10, create a competitive advantage by enabling individuals on either side of the hole to connect people from different groups. This structure allows for a flow of information across the holes, facilitating access to unique opportunities while distinguishing between redundant and nonredundant sources of information (Burt, 2000).

To illustrate, in Figure 4 (b), actors B and C share the same information. However, in Figure 5, actors B and C have an added advantage: they are connected to other networks, allowing them access to more diverse information and, therefore, more opportunities than in Figure 4 (b). Each of these connections, or ties, can vary in strength, as shown in Figure 5. According to Burt (2000), weak ties offer a more significant advantage for accessing opportunities, as they connect different groups, facilitating the flow of varied information and ideas. Strong ties, conversely, connect people within the same group and thus are less effective in providing new insights and innovation.

Figure 5 – Social Organization



Fonte: Burt (2000, p. 349)

The actors within the network hold special significance based on their specialisation and aggregation (Burt, 1982). In other words, the relationships among partners can form around specific knowledge related to a particular production chain. An individual's skills can be highly valued within the network, establishing a position of authority and prestige (Burt, 1982).

Burt's early studies (1982, 1995, 2000) empirically support the structural holes approach to social capital. These studies demonstrate that U.S. firms leveraging various structural holes were more profitable than those without such connections. For Burt (2000), the concept of social capital as a "metaphor for advantage" is validated, as firms successfully utilise structural holes to achieve their goals. However, even though Burt's approach has undoubtedly paved the way for empirical studies, such results do not entirely hold up in empirical testing once the approach of Burt is seen to be more effective and beneficial in a context where competition is prevalent (Häuberer, 2011).

Lin's approach to social capital aligns conceptually with Burt's structural perspective, positioning social capital as an entity based on network structure. However, Lin incorporates additional social capital theories to shape his framework (Häuberer, 2011). This view of social capital builds on the classical theory of capital from Marx (1999), which argues that the exchange of value is intended to meet essential needs. Extending this notion, Lin (2001) posits that capital involves investing resources with an expectation of returns. Typically, an actor will invest and mobilise resources (the "capital") to fulfil specific needs or achieve a targeted

outcome, aiming for a profitable return. Therefore, in Lin's (2001) view, social capital is fundamentally an investment in social relationships intended to generate an anticipated return.

Even though social capital mobilisation appears to capture the dynamic process of leveraging resources within a network, access and mobilisation are essential components. Relying on one without the other may lead to an incomplete understanding of social capital's full scope (Lin, 2001).

According to Lin (2017), the closure and density of a network and the existence of bridges within it depend on the actors' needs. Lin (2001, 2017) argues that closed and dense networks support the development of social capital by fostering trust and cooperation among members, which is considered an expressive purpose (to keep and protect resources).

In contrast, bridging networks provide access to a broader range of information and ideas that may be overlooked or inaccessible within closed, dense networks, which is considered an instrumental purpose (to find new resources). This concept aligns with Putnam's (2000) emphasis on the importance of bridges in connecting diverse groups and facilitating the exchange of ideas. Similarly, Burt (2000) highlights that open ties to other actors can enhance competitiveness and create opportunities for collaboration and innovation.

The relationship between the actors within the network must be reciprocal; each participant should feel a sense of belonging and actively contribute to building social capital. According to Lin (2001), when an actor perceives shared characteristics and interests with others, this strengthens their ties—much like the friendships formed in primary school. Collective identity is crucial in maintaining a sense of belonging, even when group members do not interact directly.

This chapter explored social capital's perspectives and conceptions, tracing its evolution from Bourdieu to Lin. This discussion offered insights into how the concept of social capital has developed over time, capturing its key principles and dimensions. Table 4 summarises the main points covered, synthesising core aspects of foundational authors' approaches to provide a concise overview. It highlights definitions, dimensions, and perspectives that shape the interpretation and application of social capital across different theoretical frameworks.

Table 4 – Social capital definitions

Author	Definition	Level of analyses	Principal focus	Discussion principle
Bourdieu (1986)	Resources available through social networks and ties of trust.	Individual	Social Science and Power	They argue that social capital is part of a broader system (economic, cultural, and symbolic) of actors operating in the context of power.

Coleman (1994, 1988)	Social capital as facilitation of actors' actions.	Group/Individual	Education and Social Efficacy	The theory of closure social capital benefits the exchange of information and trust
Putnam (2000)	Social capital is a trust and civic network that promotes the population's well-being.	Group/Individual	Social cohesion and democracy.	Defines the concept of bonding and bridging. Bridging allows the actors to share information between different groups.
Burt (1995)	Social capital as a metaphor for advantage.	Individual	Innovation and opportunity (competitiveness)	Argues that the structural hole of social capital allows the actors to explore new ideas and bring information from different groups, allowing them to visualise new opportunities.
Lin (2000, 2017)	Social capital is an investment in social relationships for expected returns.	Group/Individual	Individual success and social mobilisation	It highlights the significance of accessing and mobilising resources within social capital networks, stressing the role of dense networks in supporting existing resources and open networks in offering new information and growth opportunities.

Source: Author's own (2025)

2.4.2 Social Capital Dimensions

Despite the divergences in the definition of social capital, the literature has pointed to three components of social capital: i) the structural dimension, ii) the relational dimension and iii) the cognitive dimension, which together promote cooperation between individuals (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998; Meek *et al.*, 2019; Jeong *et al.*, 2021; Claridge, 2020; Terzo, 2020). Although these dimensions are treated separately, they do not occur in isolation, each component being an important dimension and interrelated (Nahapiet and Ghoshal 1998).

Furthermore, the structural, relational, and cognitive dimensions can be studied at the micro, meso, and macro levels. In this section, we will explore these three dimensions that have guided the analysis of social capital in this research.

The first structural dimension relates to social capital's impersonal aspects (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998). Structure refers to the configurations and patterns governing social relationships and organisational social structure (Claridge, 2020). The structural dimension is where social interactions take place, and among the dimensions, it is the one that refers to the presence or absence of bonds; of all the dimensions, the structural one refers to how interactions will take place and to whom they will turn (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998; Burt, 1982).

The factors and levels for analysing social capital can be seen in Figure 6.

Figure 6 – Factors relevant to the different dimensions of social capital at different levels of analysis.

Dimension	Structural dimension Configuration and pattern of social relationships including structures of social organisation	Relational dimension Characteristics and qualities of social relationships	Cognitive dimension Shared understandings that provide systems of meaning
Level			
Micro Factors related to, or embedded in, specific social relationships	Social networks Bonding ties Bridging ties Linking ties Network configuration Associational membership <i>Similar to connectedness</i>	Thick trust and trustworthiness Norms and sanctions Obligations and expectations Identity and identification <i>Similar to reputation and goodwill</i>	Shared language, codes, and narratives Shared values, attitudes, and beliefs Shared goals and purpose
Meso Factors that are applicable in the context of a social grouping	Roles (formal and informal) Rules (formalised and informal) Procedures and precedents Networks of institutions	The relational dimension is generally not applicable above the micro level since it relates to the properties of relationships. Factors such as norms and identity operating at higher levels are shared understandings not necessarily embedded in specific relationships but generally understood so are cognitive. An exception could be the relational properties of networks of institutions.	All cognitive micro level factors Thin/generalised trust Norms and sanctions Identity and belonging <i>Similar to group or organisational culture</i>
Macro Factors that are generally relevant and widely applicable to a community or society	Coordinating institutions Law and enforcement Generalised patterns of institutional collaboration Structures and systems that perpetuate social stratification		All cognitive micro level factors Thin/generalised trust Norms and sanctions Identity and belonging Shared understandings that perpetuate social stratification <i>Similar to culture and mores</i>

Source: Claridge (2020, p. 2)

As illustrated in Table 7, structural dimension can be understood from the micro, meso and macro levels. At the micro level of analysis, the focus is on the individual, and in the structural dimension, the focus is on how the individual establishes social interaction (Claridge, 2020). This interaction can be established through bonding ties, relationships within a group or community that already has ties, or bridging ties, which are relationships between different groups to expand knowledge and innovation (Putnam, 2000; Burt, 1995). Bonding ties generally refer to strong ties and can be established with family, friends or close work colleagues, where trust has already been built up, while bridging ties are weak ties with a more fragile configuration of trust (Szreter and Woolcock, 2004).

The characteristics or configurations of partnerships are also allocated to the micro level and refer to the specific and individual factors that separate the relevant groups from the interactions, which may not be the most coherent at that given moment (Cladridge, 2020). These characteristics can be given by density, structural holes, homogeneity, hierarchical position of actors, network location (an actor's position relative to others, influencing network closure or

openness), or the purpose of actions, such as wealth, power, or reputation (Glanville and Bienenstock, 2009; Lin, 2017). On the same level, associational membership refers to formalised participation in a group, such as community associations, social groups or other formal associations.

At the meso level, relationships are studied through the collective context of the group and refer to the roles, the rules, and the procedures, if any, for joining the group; at this level, the rules are formalised and provide a generic trust and a shared understanding of the role and the rules, as well as who the group leader is to turn to in case of problems (Claridge, 2020). More general rules are applied broadly to a community and society at the macro level, referring to laws, institutions acting as coordinators, or structural and systematic institutions (Claridge, 2020).

The second dimension of social capital is relational. It refers to the type of relationship and bond created in partnerships and the characteristics and qualities by which an asset is created and transferred throughout relationships (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998; Claridge, 2020). The relational dimension differs from the structural dimension in that this dimension focuses on the quality of interpersonal relationships, which is why the level of analysis remains micro (Bruni *et al.*, 2019). Thus, in this dimension, we seek to understand the elements of trust, norms and sanctions, obligations and expectations, identity and identification (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998; Claridge, 2020).

Although trust is a component of social capital, it is considered an antecedent element or an effect of the other elements generated in situations of uncertainty (Buskens, 2002). Thus, trust can arise from generalised personal or social trust, and individual cooperative development can increase over time (Lin, 2001; Bruni *et al.*, 2019). However, as actors develop high trust in themselves, their access to knowledge, information and other resources increases (Azevedo *et al.*, 2015).

Norms and obligations, on the other hand, reduce the uncertainty of the exchange between individuals, generating certainty that each actor involved in social capital will receive the resources and cooperation expected (Moran, 2005). Individuals accept Norms and obligations by mutual agreement; if, for some reason, one of the individuals does not fulfil their part, informal or legal sanctions can be placed on the individual (Claridge, 2020). Norms and obligations are not homogeneous, i.e. a norm applied to one group may not be valid for another; for example, the behaviour expected at a party is not the same as that expected in court or at a funeral (Bourdieu, 1986).

Identity and identification are important for personifying and characterising the group for the relational dimension. Bourdieu (1986) argues that identification is a fundamental symbolic power whereby the individual loses their identity and becomes part of the group, in which the representation of the group leader defines their social existence. Identification, therefore, is more complex than norms and obligations, a process linked to all the dimensions of social capital (Pillai *et al.*, 2017).

The third dimension of social capital is cognitive, which refers to the process by which shared understanding, interpretations, and representations form a system of meaning (Cicourel, 1973; Claridge, 2020; Jeong *et al.*, 2019). The cognitive dimension is important in social capital since it can ensure motivation and engagement in exchanges between individuals (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998).

The cognitive dimension can be developed by sharing codes, languages and narratives (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998; Claridge, 2020). Firstly, codes and languages are how information and knowledge are shared; at the first level, codes and languages can facilitate or hinder access to specific groups (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998). Language and codes are complex because, at the same time as they are symbolic, they are also materially active (Bourdieu, 1986). Thus, language and codes can incorporate specific terms only understood by that particular group (Meek *et al.*, 2019). In this way, the cognitive dimension can also contribute to the feeling of belonging, separating those who understand and share the same vision from those who are unaware of it (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001).

In addition to language and shared code, there are shared narratives, which can be myths, stories, and metaphors that carry significant meaning for a particular community or group (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998). Narratives create a sense of identity and belonging, transforming a shared understanding between individuals into a shared vision (Meek *et al.*, 2019; Claridge, 2020). As goals and visions are shared, more norms and obligations are expected of the actors within the social capital (Wegner and Maehler, 2012).

This section discussed the three interrelated dimensions: structural, relational, and cognitive. In the following chapters, we will explore partnerships from the perspective of effectuation and the crazy quilt principle and then understand how social capital is inserted into effective partnerships.

2.5 CONVERGENCE BETWEEN SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP, EFFECTUATION AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

In a search on the Scopus database, utilising the string “social entrepreneurship” AND “effectuation” AND “social capital”, we were able to identify only one study, published in 2021 by Dato-on and Banerjee. In this sense, this chapter will take a closer look at the field based on the information and references we have built up to this chapter. Given the important role of social capital in the effectuation approach and the success of social entrepreneurs' partnerships, in this chapter, we aim to lay the initial foundations that have led us to understand how partners contribute to social entrepreneurs' initiatives in the sustainable fashion sector through the lens of effectuation and social capital.

In social enterprises, especially those operating in emerging contexts, value creation is fundamental (Choi and Majumdar, 2014). The interactions within the crazy quilt do not occur in a vacuum, nor are they isolated, depending on pre-established social factors (Claridge, 2020). Although effectuation focuses on the individual, these relationships go beyond the individual; it is a social process where social entrepreneurs interact with other actors in order to co-create value (Kerr and Coviello, 2020; Engmann and Ngwakwe, 2021; Wegner and Maehler, 2012).

Dato-on and Banerjee (2021) argue that effectuation and social capital play an essential role in determining the success of social entrepreneurship, in which social capital offers the initial support for the development of social entrepreneurship through the exchange of resources, while effectuation provides innovative solutions. However, how these partnerships are initiated and the underlying reflective process remains unclear within effectuation—specifically regarding the crazy quilt principle (Tsotetsi, 2020; Kerr and Coviello, 2020)—and it is in this context that social capital theory can offer valuable insights.

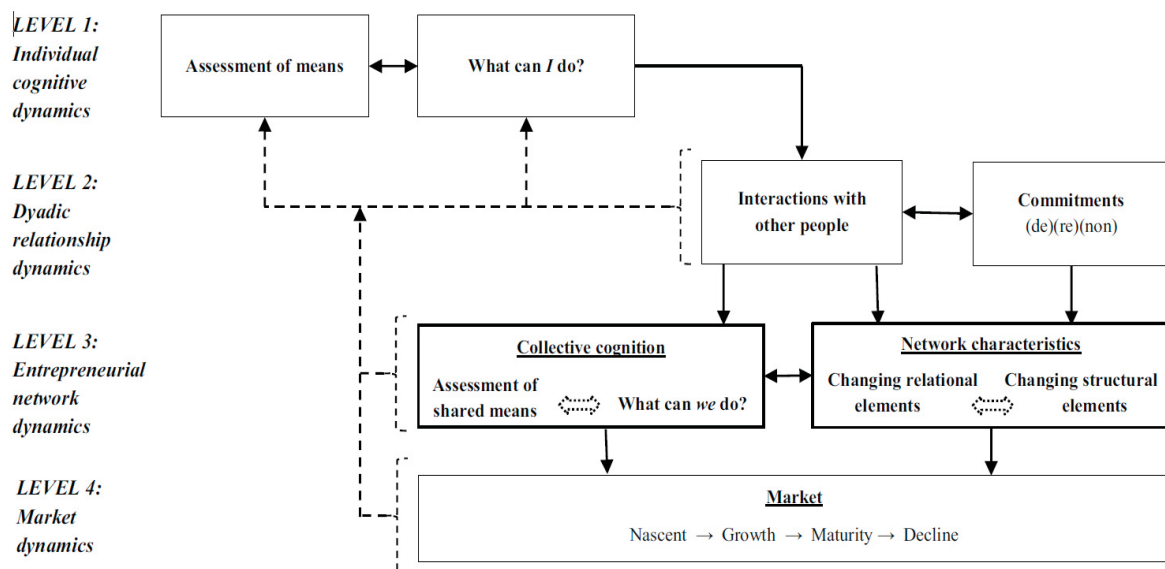
Mikic *et al.* (2020) argue that social capital tends to develop more frequently among entrepreneurs, allowing for greater relationship flexibility. This, in turn, provides entrepreneurs with more opportunities to explore growth possibilities and co-create value. In the case of social entrepreneurs, the focus may be on finding innovative solutions instead of planning all the steps of the organisation (Dato-on and Banerjee, 2021). In this sense, partnerships serve as a crucial means of mobilising resources and acquiring new information, especially in contexts of high uncertainty (Chandra and Paras, 2021). Considering social capital, this flexibility facilitates the mobilisation of networks.

According to the social capital literature, there are three important components to understanding it: i) structural dimension, ii) relational dimension, and iii) cognitive dimension

(Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998; Meek *et al.*, 2019; Jeong *et al.*, 2021; Claridge, 2020; Terzo, 2020). As discussed above, these three dimensions are interrelated, i.e., each is an effect or cause of the three working together (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998). Similarly, we can understand these dimensions from proximity, stability and ideology (Lin, 2017)—however, our study based social capital on structural, relational and cognitive components.

Social capital directly influences “Who I know?”—the third fundamental question at the core of effectuation—and is related to partnership structures and entrepreneurial actions (Tsoetsi, 2020). In a study published in 2020, Kerr and Coviello proposed expanding the partnership model within effectuation by adding social capital and social networks theory. Their model is presented in Figure 7.

Figure 7 – A multi-level reconceptualisation of the dynamics of effectuation



Source: Kerr and Coviello (2020, p. 6)

According to their model, entrepreneurs establish partnerships based on the “who I know” network to expand creation opportunities (Kerr and Coviello, 2020). Following the model proposed by Kerr and Coviello (2020) and insights of Mikic *et al.* (2020) study, the initial step in forming partnerships occurs through the pre-established “who I know” network. This first level of the dynamic reflects the first principle of effectuation (bird-in-hand): identity, knowledge, and what they can do in the initial commitment phase.

This first foundation is called bonding ties (Putnam, 2000). It provides entrepreneurs with support and access to existing resources, but not necessarily new ideas, since this network consists of a group that shares the same languages and narratives, where ideas and opinions are often a repetition of what is already known (Putnam, 2000; Burt, 1995; Lin, 2017). For this

reason, at this early stage, social entrepreneur tends to rely on people they already know—such as family and friends, with whom they have strong ties—instead of forming new partnerships based on weak ties and limited initial interaction (Kerr and Coviello, 2020; Rosca *et al.*, 2020).

However, effectual partnerships are based on flexibility and adaptability (Mikic *et al.*, 2020; Sarasvathy and Botha, 2022). In this sense, entrepreneurs may benefit more from bridging ties, which are considered weaker connections but tend to provide new information and growth opportunities (Burt, 1995; Lin, 2017). This leads us to the second level, referring to the crazy quilt, where interactions with other people lead to an input of new knowledge, identity, and social capital in the process (Kerr and Coviello, 2020).

For example, a social entrepreneur in the fashion sector may count on the support of his family and colleagues at the beginning, in other words, their bonding ties. These bonding ties may also offer resources such as knowledge, experience, and advice to the fashion sector. In the first month, the bonding ties provide the support and help needed. However, as the social enterprise grows, more partners are needed to find new resources, such as raw materials or valuable connections that put the social entrepreneur's project in evidence. Unlike the bonding ties, the bridging ties do not offer initial support. They offer advice, connections with others, or ideas for innovation but will not necessarily commit to social entrepreneurs' mission and vision.

The initial motivation for establishing partnerships lies in proximity and status since the primary objective is maximising resource utilisation (Lin, 2017). However, it is important to remember that effectual partnerships emerge from the engagement of partners with the idea itself, an embedded commitment that facilitates the discussion and transformation of new means and new goals (Sarasvathy, 2008). Thus, the more committed the partners are to the idea, the greater the chances of success.

Within the crazy quilt principle, negotiations prioritise flexibility and adaptability, as previously mentioned. In these initial negotiations, the objectives are not yet clearly defined, and early partners commit to the idea rather than to a concrete expectation of profits (Sarasvathy, 2011). However, social entrepreneurs have a clear goal and mission (Akemu *et al.*, 2016; York *et al.*, 2016). In this sense, social capital's proximity and status dimensions might significantly influence partnerships, as clear objectives lead to partnerships based on strategic alliances and resource mobilisation (Lin, 2017; Mikic *et al.*, 2020). Therefore, we may infer that the cognitive dimension plays a more significant role for social entrepreneurs regarding shared vision and goal alignment.

At the start of negotiations, entrepreneurs—especially social entrepreneurs—can use storytelling to evoke the idea or symbol of success (Weerakoon *et al.*, 2019). Likewise, the

cognitive dimension relies on language, codes, and narratives to increase engagement, alignment, and a sense of belonging among partners, distinguishing between those who understand and share the same language and those who do not (Nahapiet and Ghoshal 1998; Meek *et al.*, 2019; Claridge, 2020).

In the case of social entrepreneurs, the cognitive dimension may be linked to the mission and values embedded in social enterprises. This distinction helps differentiate partners who align with this code, language, and narrative created by social entrepreneurs in their discourse (Yang *et al.*, 2022).

The entrepreneurial network happens at the third level of Kerr and Coviello's model (2020). Partnerships within social capital have the following characteristics: 1) allow the exploitation of partnership resources; 2) allow the coordination of actions, and 3) enrich the society capital in promoting the investment in opportunities (Daskalopoulou *et al.*, 2023). At first, it is necessary to comprehend that social capital is not limited to monetary exchanges between partners; it also involves the exchange of ideas and the necessary support for sustaining long-term partnerships (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1994; Häuberer, 2011). In this sense, social entrepreneurs and their partners use and exchange their information and knowledge to collaborate in the partnership (Daskalopoulou *et al.*, 2023).

Second, the actors facilitate the coordination of actions. These interactions occur as mutual support and help; in other words, the idea is not individual but a product of the commitment between the partners, where every partner collaborates with the process of value creation (Coleman, 1994; Häuberer, 2011). In this interaction, the exchange of information and knowledge tends to increase the means of both parts, as the social capital is not based on the number of interactions or the resources of partners, but social capital within partnerships is combined and increased over time, enriching the society capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Daskalopoulou *et al.*, 2023).

Trust in the partner's ability is essential to effectuation and social capital in this process (Jiang and Rüling, 2017). Although trust can be built through the exchange of favours throughout a partnership (Coleman, 1994), in some cases, it is so deeply embedded in the relationship between the social entrepreneur and their partners that the simple statement "I trust because I know them" is sufficient to express it. In this context, trust ceases to be the central factor, and other elements become more important for maintaining the partnership (Bourdieu, 1986).

The external world at the beginning of the negotiations, in other words, the pre-existing patterns, may not affect the internal interaction between partners (Saravathy, 2008). However,

as the partnerships develop, obligations and expectations increase as vision and goals align within partnerships (Wegner and Maehler, 2012). With more expectations and responsibilities, the relationship between partners may develop around set accords, becoming an embedded commitment (Sarasvathy, 2008). As new interactions occur, these interactions may lead to maturity, growth, and decline. The previous network structure set may face three consequences in this situation:

- a) Interactions become an embodied commitment – partners set accords between them, meaning every time a new stakeholder comes on board, they must commit to the previous accords set by the first stakeholders. However, less room is available for innovation.
- b) Interactions do not become an embodied commitment, maintaining their flexibility and adaptability, leaving three alternatives: a) ignore the contingencies and transform the negotiation, b) explore the alternatives available to grow the networking, or c) exploit and compete in alternative markets that resemble or not to the initial one; and
- c) The effectual network changes its nature through an exogenous process that splits apart the partnership, which could lead to partnership failure.

In the first situation, social entrepreneurs may seek to reduce the uncertainty of the exchange by defining rules, norms, and obligations that ensure the involvement of both parties (Moran, 2005). The partnership gains form and is shaped by the identity and identification of its members (Bourdieu, 1986). The partner may be excluded from the group discussions if he is not committed to sustainable thoughts. In this dynamic, the social entrepreneur plays a central role in the partnerships, defining the partners and making decisions, defining the social existence of the group and collaboration (Bourdieu, 1986).

In a study published by Mikic, Horvatinovic and Dronjak (2020), the authors argue that the dimensions of social capital are directly linked to effectuation. This is because effectuation emphasises more strategic relationships, focused on collaboration, flexibility, and adaptation (Mikic, Horvatinovic, Dronjak, 2020; Sarasvathy and Botha, 2022). The study by Mikic, Horvatinovic, and Dronjak (2020) provides important insights into how the dimension of social capital directly impacts effectuation, as observed in Table 5.

Table 5 – Effectual dynamic impact on social capital

Social capital dimension	Effectuation's dynamic impact
--------------------------	-------------------------------

Structural	Effective partnerships tend to create wider networks once they are based on collaboration and flexible resources.
Relational	Effectuation relies on trust and co-creation with stakeholders, which result in embedded commitment.
Cognitive	Effectuation facilitates the formation of communities with values and objectives aligned.

Source: Adapted from Mikic *et al.* (2020). Adapted by summarising the main points presented in the article.

As demonstrated in Table 5, the effectuation approach underlies the three aspects of social capital. In the structural aspect, the effectuation approach's flexibility helps expand its partners. This can occur through the bonding ties or the bridging ties of social capital, depending on the needs of social entrepreneurs in this process (Lin, 2007). As we mentioned, bonding ties may be more suitable where social entrepreneurs need support, while bridging ties may be suitable in a context where new information is required to mobilise new means and access new market opportunities (Lin, 2007).

As Mikic *et al.* (2020) argue, embedded commitment may occur in the relational dimension. However, norms and expectations also arise in this dimension, reducing the initial flexibility of effectuation partnerships. Conversely, the cognitive dimension allows partners to share the same vision and purpose, mobilising resources to achieve the same goal and objective.

In practice, as the study of Dato-on and Banerjee (2021) shows, social entrepreneurs benefit from both approaches, especially in contexts where adaptability is more important than detailed planning. Indeed, the effectuation approach can provide advantages in decision-making and innovation, but social capital allows both parties access to resources without financial resources (Tsotetsi, 2020).

In this chapter, we discussed how social capital influences the effectuation approach, relying on what we have built up in both theories, considering social entrepreneurship. This analysis is important for auxiliary social entrepreneurs' mechanisms to explore and mobilise their resources, mainly for new means and opportunities. In this sense, exploring social capital from the effectuation perspective may allow us to advance in the theoretical debates, giving insight into how partnerships develop and expand strategically. The aspects of social capital and effectuation will be explored in greater depth in the theoretical field and the analyses of this study.

3 METHODOLOGY PROCEEDINGS

This section will discuss the methodological aspects of this qualitative multiple-case study.

3.1 SPECIFICATION OF PROBLEM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Lakatos (2003) argues that the problem points to a challenge or difficulty that is desired to be answered. These problems or issues begin with the willingness to approach something that calls the scholar's attention, followed by the questions: how, whom, and why (Van de Ven, 2007). However, such a problem ought to be “resolved” by the available knowledge that can be produced to solve the puzzle (Laville and Dionne, 1999).

In this study, we aim to Analyse how partnerships contribute to social entrepreneurs' initiatives in the sustainable fashion sector through the lenses of effectuation and social capital. Therefore, this present research is formulated around the following problem:

How do the partnerships influence social entrepreneurs' initiatives according to the sustainable fashion sector through the lens of effectuation and social capital?

Based on that, the objectives delineated for this study were elaborated the following questions:

- a) How is the crazy quilt principle of effectuation present in partnerships established by social entrepreneurs?
- b) What motivates social entrepreneurs to establish their partnerships?
- c) How does social capital contribute to the formation of effective partnerships?
- d) How do partnerships influence the initiatives of social entrepreneurs?

3.2 ANALYTICAL CATEGORIES OF THE STUDY

This section will discuss the conceptual and operational definitions of the categories chosen for this research. According to Laville and Dionne (1999), the conceptual definition is based on the mental representation that comes from the experience and observations of the scholar. In contrast, the operational definition translates from the abstract to the substantial

definition. The Conceptual Definition (CD) defines the words and the constructs (Kerling, 1980). The Operational Definition (OD) is a form of thinking aimed at measuring and manipulating the data (Kerling, 1980).

Table 6 presents the conceptual and operational definitions of this study's themes.

Table 6 – Conceptual and Operation Definition

Concept	Conceptual Definition	Operational Definition
Effectual partnerships (crazy quilt principle)	Emphasise the flexibility and experimentation needed to control the future through alliances, pre-commitments, and networks (Chandler <i>et al.</i> , 2011).	Identify the "crazy quilt" principles regarding flexibility, adaptability to new means, and experimentation with new objectives. Operationalised in Section VI.
Causation partnership	Causation logic starts with clear goals and desired effects, ideal for decision-makers needing optimal choices in specific contexts (Sarasvathy, 2008).	Identify clear goal and desired effects contributing to forming partnerships operationalised in Section VI.
Motivation	Motivation can be understood as a driving force that propels individuals in a direction, having its internal pre-existence (Vernon, 1973)	Identify the intrinsic or extrinsic factors contributing to forming partnerships operationalised in Section V.
Social capital	Social capital is the aggregate resources accessed and mobilised through embedded social networks, which offer each member a "credential" that signifies trustworthiness (Bourdieu, 1986; Lin, 2001).	Identified based on three components: structural, relational, and cognitive (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998; Claridge, 2020). Operationalised through Sections II and IV of the semi-structured questionnaire.
Structural dimension	Structure refers to the configurations and patterns governing social relationships and the organisational social structure (Claridge, 2020).	Identification of the patterns governing social relationships. Operationalised through Section II.
Relational dimension	In this dimension, we aim to understand the elements of trust, norms and sanctions, obligations and expectations, identity and identification (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998; Claridge, 2020).	Identifying proximity ties, norms and sanctions, obligations and expectations, identity, and identification (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998; Claridge, 2020) through interviews; operationalised through Section III.
Cognitive dimension	The process by which shared understanding, interpretations, and representations form a system of meaning (Cicourel, 1973; Claridge, 2020; Jeong <i>et al.</i> , 2019).	Identification of the values, attitude, beliefs, purpose, codes, and narrative from the cognitive dimension operationalised in Section IV.
Effectuation Output	New means and goals converge depending on who comes on board (Read, Sarasvathy, 2005; Sarasvathy, 2008). Means are the basis that provides new opportunities in the effectuation process: a) who I am, b) what I know, and c) whom I know, whereas the goals emerge from contingencies over time (Sarasvathy, 2011)	Identified as new means and objectives that expand resources and provide opportunities (Sarasvathy, 2011). Operationalised in Section VII.

Source: The author (2025)

Other terms important for this research are presented as follows:

- 1) **Social entrepreneurship (DC)**— Social entrepreneurship creates social value by combining resources to effect social change or meet social needs (Mair; Martí, 2006).
- 2) **Fashion-based enterprises (DC)**— Balance their social mission, prioritising sustainability as a means to empower and promote conscious consumption (Parker; McQuilter; Bigolin, 2024).
- 3) **Effectuation (DC)**— Effectuation is an approach to the decision-making process (Reymen et al., 2015; Grégoire, Cherchem, 2019; Hensel, Visser, 2020) in which the entrepreneur can relate not just knowledge and experience but also deliberate practice (Sarasvathy, 2005).

3.3 STUDY CATEGORISATION AND DESIGN

The analysis of the interview is based on a qualitative study that aims to comprehend how actors, through social interaction, built and applied meaning to their experience within a context (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015). Regarding the nature of this study, it is characterised as descriptive-exploratory, relying on exploring new themes and perceptions of a phenomenon and explaining the relationship between the variables proposed in this study (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). As far as the time frame of this study is concerned, it is characterised as a cross-sectional study, in which the aim is to study a strictly particular situation (Richardson, 2008).

The research strategy chosen for this research is a case study because it allows us to investigate a contemporary case in depth, especially to study the boundaries of the phenomenon and the context within the real world (Yin, 2018). Minayo (2008) argues that the case study is appropriate for broadening the knowledge about an event or situation and benefiting from developing theoretical prepositions to guide design and data collection (Yin, 2018). According to Yin (2018), the multiple-case study follows a replication logic, in which the cases chosen for the study must serve as contrasting or similar experiments that offer a general perspective of the phenomenon. In this research, we consider that saturation was reached, as similarities emerged across cases, and the field began to exhibit information redundancy, indicating that data saturation had been achieved, as advised by Eisenhardt (1989) the information of the 04 and 10 cases starts to reply, given that, the 12 studies' cases provide a general view of the phenomenon and possible similarities or differences within the cases.

3.4 CASES SELECTION

This research was conducted with 12 social entrepreneurs in the fashion sector located in Brazil through the PIPE Social (2024) database. Initially, we searched for social enterprises on the PIPE Social website in the Greentech section. We then filtered the cases, selecting organisations in the "Business Organization" and "Scalable" phases, as these were enterprises with more than three years of operation. After this selection, we compiled a list of social entrepreneurs and their respective contact details, available on PIPE Social or the companies' websites. At the end of each interview, we asked the social entrepreneurs if they could refer us to other entrepreneurs in the same sector who shared similar socio-environmental objectives. This approach allowed us to reach additional social entrepreneurs not listed on PIPE Social.

We did not impose regional limitations for this study, as the PIPE Social database contained only a small number of available cases, making it impractical to define a specific region based on the sample size. Since this study follows a multiple case study approach, the selected enterprises are in Brazil's South, Northeast, and Central-West regions. Further details about the companies can be found in the data analysis section.

Despite being located in different regions, the social entrepreneurs shared similar challenges and visions, aligning with the following predefined criteria: i) Their mission was directly linked to sustainability; ii) They aimed to generate socio-environmental impact through their actions; iii) They had been in the market for over three years. Thus, this study focuses on social entrepreneurs operating within **fashion-based enterprises (FSEs)** whose mission and objectives are directly connected to **socio-environmental impact**.

For this research, we chose to keep the names of the entrepreneurs and their social enterprises anonymous, replacing them in the analysis with "EX," where X represents the case number. However, when presenting the cases, we opted to use fictitious names to enhance the connection between the cases and the narratives shared by the entrepreneurs during the interviews and the information collected from the organisations' websites. The following section outlines the data collection technique.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE

This research used primary data obtained through interviews and secondary data gathered from organisational websites. The secondary data, originating from external sources,

were collected from the institutional websites of social entrepreneurs and used to reconstruct the social enterprises' history, objectives, and mission.

The primary data were collected through semi-structured interviews, which serve as a guide but allow for additional questions emerging during the interview (Corbetta, 2003). The semi-structured interview provides a more in-depth understanding of the case, adapted to each organisation's context. Some questions may be omitted (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill, 2009). Our interview guide covered the characteristics of social entrepreneurs and the social enterprise, social capital - encompassing the structural, relational, and cognitive dimensions - the crazy quilt principle and the effectuation output, as outlined in APPENDIX A.

The interview is the most crucial part of a case study, as it allows for capturing not only the interviewees' perceptions but also their reactions (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, we opted to conduct interviews in person or via videoconference. However, we were only able to conduct one in-person interview. Due to the entrepreneurs' busy schedules and geographic distance (some were in other countries), videoconferencing was preferred.

In total, 12 interviews were conducted between July and November 2024, following the interview script. The interviews lasted an average of one hour, with the longest lasting 1 hour and 30 minutes and the shortest lasting 30 minutes. All interviews were recorded with the interviewees' permission, except for one, where the participant declined to have the session recorded.

To minimise risks to participants, we submitted the semi-structured interview to the Ethics Committee, which was approved on 8th October. In this sense, we adopted the following privacy and ethical protection measures: i) Written or audio-recorded consent from the interviewees; ii) Anonymity protection, with cases being replaced by "EX" or fictitious names when applicable; iii) Ensuring that no details could directly link the cases to specific companies; iv) Right to withdraw from the interview at any time, with proper notification via written or audio format.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE

After the interviews, the collected data were transcribed and organised in ATLAS.ti, where data analysis and coding occurred. According to Walter and Bach (2015), ATLAS allows researchers to analyse and manage documents, texts, and images more quickly than manual analysis. However, this tool does not replace the primary researcher's responsibility for the analysis (Merriam and Tiedell, 2019).

After entering the data into ATLAS, we followed the Gioia *et al.* (2013) method. This method is based on the construction of concepts derived from participants' reports, structured into two levels of analysis: i) Codes based on the interviewees' terms; ii) Researcher interpretation, leading to the creation of concepts and theoretical dimensions. Combining these two levels results in a third-order analysis, called the aggregated dimension, which enables the visualisation of a structure that connects the first-order data to the emerging theory. Thus, the data analysis process followed these steps:

a) In the first stage, the narratives provided by social entrepreneurs were analysed to translate their statements into elements relevant to the present study.

b) In the second stage, the social entrepreneurs' statements, previously organised in the first stage, were grouped into broader themes to identify patterns and establish standardised explanations for the phenomena observed in the field.

c) In the third stage, the identified themes were integrated into broader dimensions, and the emerging theory was discussed.

The first two stages closely followed interviewees' statements, aiding in constructing the aggregated dimension. Each data analysis section concludes with a Gioia table of codes, themes, and aggregated dimensions. This study analyses individual partnerships formed by social entrepreneurs through effectuation and social capital, while the unit of analysis is organizational, focusing on their initiatives.

3.7 METHODOLOGICAL SYNTHESIS

To summarise the methodology section, Table 7 has been drawn up to summarise the methodology adopted for this study.

Table 7 – Methodological Synthesis

Methodological aspects	Classification
Approach	Qualitative
Method	Multiple case study
Nature of study	Descriptive-exploratory
Time Frame	Transversal
Level of analyse	Relational: partnerships established by social entrepreneurs are examined through effectuation and social capital.
Unity of analysis	Organisational: focused on social entrepreneurs' initiatives
Data collection technique	Semi-structured interviews and secondary documents from the organisation in the presentation of the cases
Data analysis technique	Analysis by Gioia <i>et al.</i> (2013)

Source: Author's own (2025).

3.8 TYING MATRIX

Table 8 was created to synthesise the problem, the objectives of this study, and the analysis approach discussed throughout this dissertation.

Table 8 – Research tying matrix

Research Problem	General Objective	Specific Objective	Research questions	Data collection	Questionary questions	Data analyse
How do partnerships contribute to social entrepreneurs' initiatives, considering the perspectives of effectuation and social capital?	Analyse how partnerships contribute to social entrepreneur's initiatives in the sustainable fashion sector through the lenses of effectuation and social capital.	Analyse the crazy quilt principle of effectuation in partnerships established by social entrepreneurs.	How is the crazy quilt principle of effectuation present in partnerships established by social entrepreneurs?	Semi-structured interview and document/ files	APPENDIX A – Section VI	Analysis by Gioia <i>et al.</i> (2013)/ATLAS.ti
		Identify the motivators for social entrepreneurs to establish partnerships.	What motivates social entrepreneurs to establish their partnerships?		APPENDIX A- Section V	
		Analyse how social capital contributes to the formation of effectual partnerships by social entrepreneurs.	How does social capital contribute to the formation of effective partnerships?		APPENDIX A – Sections II and IV of the semi-structured questionnaire	
		Analyse how partnerships influence the initiatives of social entrepreneurs.	How do partnerships influence the initiatives of social entrepreneurs?		APPENDIX A- Section VII	

Source: Author's own (2025)

4 DATA ANALYSIS

In this section, as outlined in the methodology of this study, we will analyse the data from the 12 social entrepreneurs interviewed for this study. Thus, we will divide this section into two parts. We will present the analysed cases in the first part, followed by a summary table. In the second part, we will present the data collected focusing on the specific objectives of this study.

4.1 PRESENTATION OF THE CASES ANALYSED

We have presented the cases using fictitious names for social entrepreneurs and enterprises. At the end of each case, we will briefly describe the organisation based on the interviews and the information provided on their institutional websites.

4.1.1 Interviewed A: The case of Sir Filandra and the Silk Mosaic

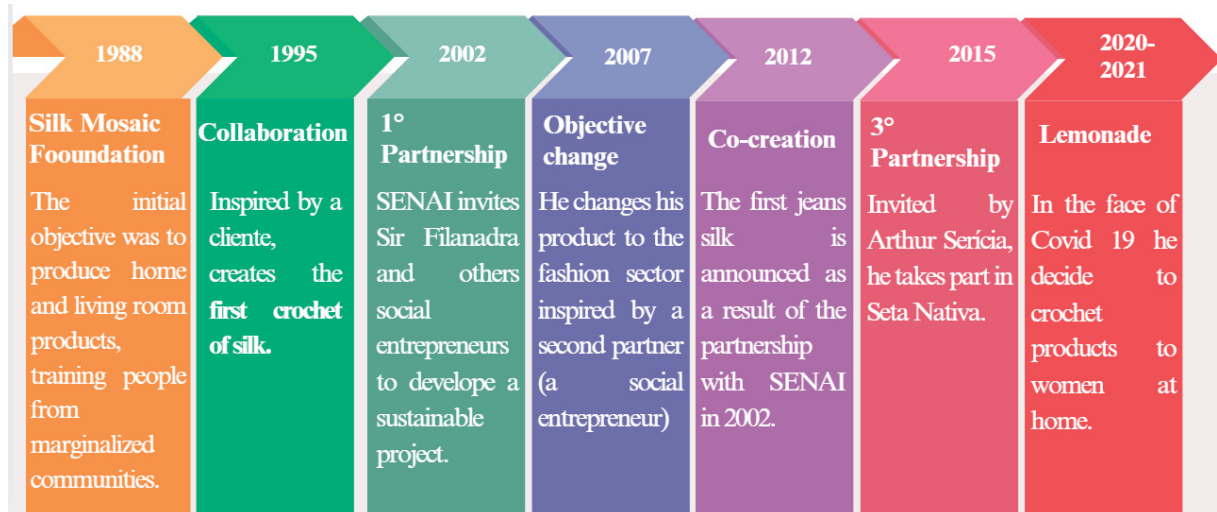
Inspired by the art of handmade craftsmanship, Silk Mosaic (SK), a small enterprise with approximately 10 employees, was established in 1988 in Maringá, a city in Paraná in southern Brazil. Founded by Sir Filandra, the company was driven by a singular vision: to elevate silk thread to an unparalleled level of luxury while maintaining the social aspect of the business.

The Silk Mosaic is built on three foundational pillars: 1) environmental stewardship, 2) social responsibility, and 3) economic viability. Before establishing Silk Mosaic, Sir Filandra was a professor of agricultural sciences at a reputable university in Maringá, focusing on the lifecycle of cocoons. The concept for the venture emerged from a class discussion regarding defective cocoons and their possibilities. Driven by a commitment to support marginalised communities, he launched the business in a newly developed area established through a government defaulting program. He trained residents in traditional and manual silk thread production techniques in this community. Over 36 years, Silk Mosaic thrived, transforming the region from one of Maringá's most perilous to a highly sought-after neighbourhood.

The first partnership came in 2002 with SENAI (National Service of Industrial Learning) and SEBRAE (Brazilian Service of Support to Micro and Small Enterprises). This collaboration led to the first jeans made from PET and silk in 2012. In 2007, inspired by advice from a renowned Brazilian social entrepreneur in the fashion industry—who remains a key

partner to this day—Silk Mosaic shifted its focus to fashion. In 2015, Silk Mosaic formed another significant partnership, this time with Mr. Arthur Serícia (social entrepreneur), further solidifying its presence in the market. Figure 8 shows the organisation's timeline focusing on partnerships, based on the interview and the data collected from the organisations' institutional websites.

Figure 8 – Silk Mosaic's Timeline



Source: Author's own (2025)

4.1.2 Interviewed B: The case of Arthur Serícia and the Seta Nativa

In 2009, inspired by Italy's silk export model, Arthur Serícia launched the Seta Nativa project to organise small companies into a network to compete internationally. The mission of Seta Nativa was to promote ethical consumption in regional development. Operating until June 2024 as a small enterprise in Maringá, a city in Paraná in southern Brazil, the project has since evolved under Serícia's continued leadership, though in a new direction.

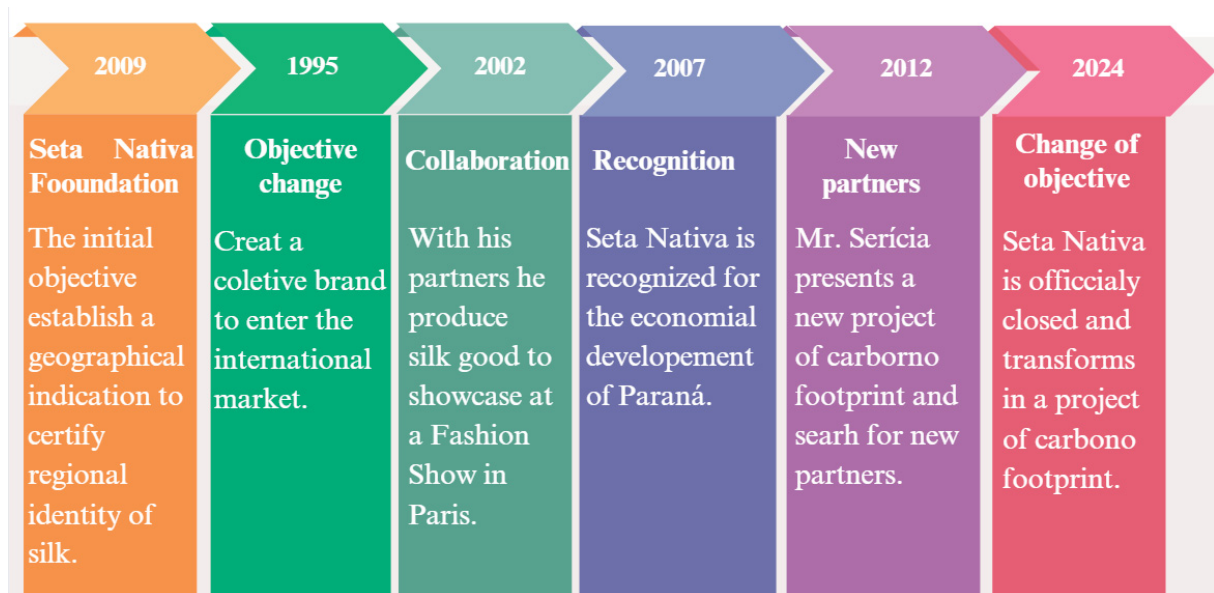
Serícia's connection to silk began in 1992 when he worked in the trade before relocating to Como, Italy, in 1999, where he observed a partnership-based export model. Returning to Brazil in 2002, he aimed to replicate this system by uniting local producers to boost Brazilian silk internationally. Initially, he sought to establish a geographical indication to certify regional identity but faced challenges, including limited infrastructure and control over production. However, in 2014, he shifted his strategy toward creating a collective brand to enter the international market.

Through this initiative, he forged five partnerships with enterprises, including Silk Mosaic. By 2016, the collective brand under Seta Nativa had produced silk goods and

showcased them at a fashion show in Paris. While the collective brand did not achieve significant sales figures, it demonstrated the potential of uniting companies to tackle the international market collaboratively. From 2016 to 2024, Mr. Serícia tried to develop the Seta Nativa project and forge partnerships, totalling seven years. However, the product did not reach the final consumers, despite the attempts of Mr. Serícia. “It was a dream too big! For big dreams, you need many people involved. Moreover, it was lacking!” he reflected on the history of Seta Nativa with disappointment. Despite that, Mr Serícia reflects that Seta Nativa took part in various fashion events, especially announcing the work of small producers, an opportunity to show their products and their experience to people who did not even know how silk was produced.

Mr. Serícia is dedicated to a new sustainability-focused project, distinct from his work with silk. However, he continues to collaborate on a reimagined version of the Seta Nativa project, now centred on the principles of the circular economy and developed partnerships with others. While the startup remains linked to silk, it has shifted its focus and adopted a new name. He shared that his new carbon project allows him to continue his passion for Seta Nativa. Figure 9 shows the organisation's timeline focusing on partnerships, based on the interview and the data collected from the organisations' institutional websites.

Figure 9 – Seta native's Timeline



Source: Author's own (2025)

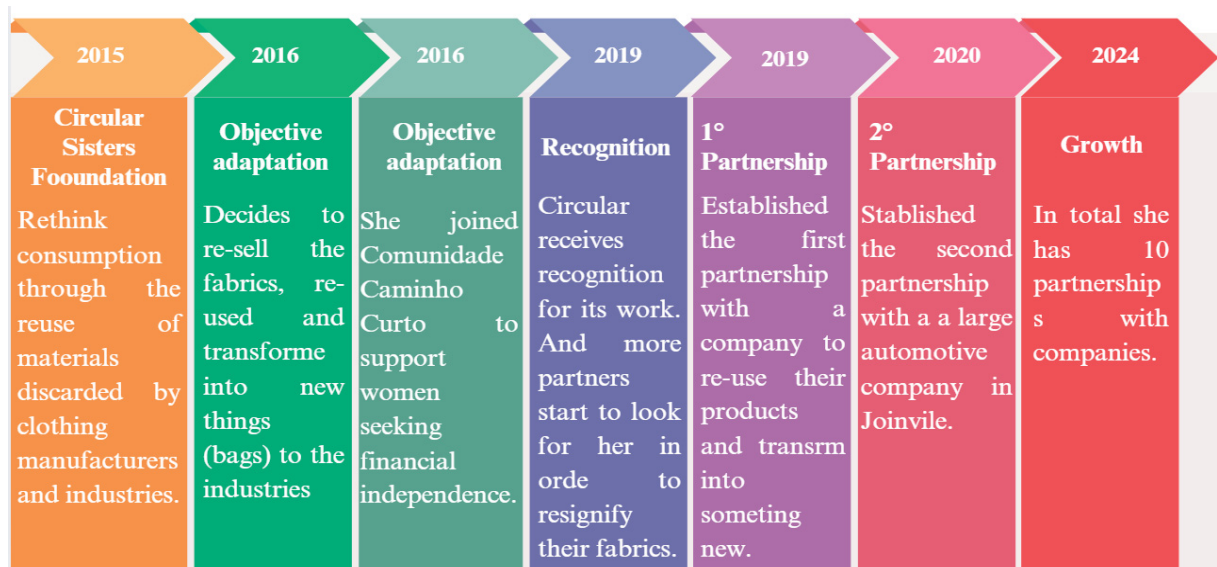
4.1.3 Interviewed C: The case of Marina Everlace and the Circular Sisters

The story of Circular Sisters, a small business in Joinville, in Santa Catarina, southern Brazil, began in 2015 when Marina Everlace and her mother were invited to participate in a university outreach project for design students. The original idea of the university extension project was to help artisans from the city of Joinville add cultural identity to their products by offering classes once a week in biology, anthropology, and history. Discussing with her mother and studying the history of Joinville, an industrial centre, the Everlaces first came up with the idea of reusing uniforms from the post office, but such a project already existed.

Marina Everlace recognised the potential of surplus fabrics instead of discarding them. She transformed these materials into bags and gifts and sold them to industries for employee and visitor use. This initiative reduced waste and promoted mindful material usage, inspiring internal reuse projects with the Circular Sisters. Committed to empowering women facing similar challenges, she connected with Comunidade Caminho Curto, a quilombola community where women sought financial independence but were constrained by family duties. Eventually, these women reentered the market, working independently yet influenced by the Circular Sisters initiative.

The Circular Sisters gained recognition and built partnerships over the project's nine years. In 2020, she partnered with a large automotive company in Joinville, helping them rethink discarded materials. Currently, she collaborates with 10 small and several large companies that value the products and mission of Circular Sisters. Figure 10 shows the organisation's partnership timeline based on the interview and data from their websites.

Figure 10 – Circular Sisters' Timeline



Source: Author's own (2025)

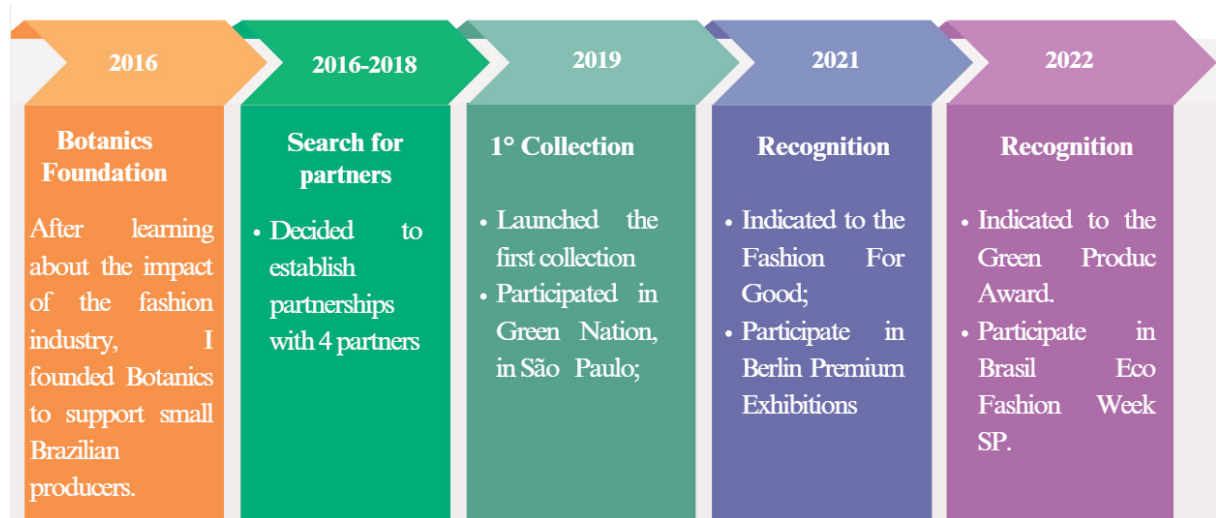
4.1.4 Interviewed D: The case of Theresa Flores and the Botanics

In 2016, Theresa Flores funded Botanics, a small company based in Rio de Janeiro, to resignify clothing through fair fashion and sustainability. Despite the year it was founded, Theresa Flores took two years of study and research to get Botanics up and running, as she wanted to ensure it was as sustainable as possible.

The concept of Botanic emerged after Theresa learned about the impact of the fashion industry, which is one of the most polluting sectors. Intrigued, she explored the topic further. She discovered that Botanic offered the opportunity to create garments exclusively from organic and sustainable fabrics dyed by hand using native plant pigments, putting into practice what she had learned. Thus, from the outset, Theresa Flores aimed to collaborate with Brazilian natural raw materials and local producers, supporting small-scale farmers and regional markets and contributing to the increased income of families and communities, all while preserving the relationship between culture, tradition, and nature.

For this reason, Theresa Flores spent two years looking for the best partners to align with Botanic's purpose. Since Botanic's mission is based on sustainability, Theresa believes that her partners must also seek the same. However, finding partners aligned with such a mission was difficult, especially in 2016 and 2018. She only prioritised those fully committed to the agenda, totalling four partners she works with. Figure 11 shows the organisation's timeline focusing on partnerships, based on the interview and the data collected from the organisations' institutional websites.

Figure 11 – Botanics's Timeline



Source: Author's own (2025)

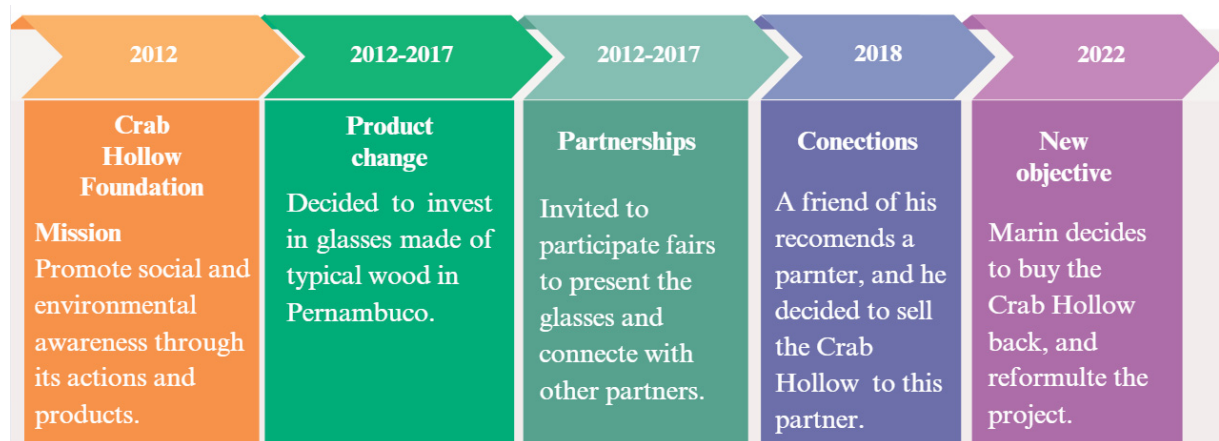
4.1.5 Interviewed E: The case of Gael Marin and the Crab Hollow

Before founding Crab Hollow in 2012, Gael Marin worked in a large market intelligence firm, where he prioritised sustainability. He noticed employees used plastic coffee cups despite the company's sustainability focus. Marin proposed a project to provide personalised mugs, which was approved, but that was just the start for Crab Hollow. Months later, he established the business to promote social and environmental awareness through its products and actions.

Initially, Marin produced T-shirts from cotton wool without the industrial process usually applied to cotton to make it as sustainable as possible. Industrial partners made the T-shirts, and the shirt scraps were sent to a marginalised community in Curitiba, where the scraps were made into dolls for children. Over the years, Marin changed the Crab Hollow product to glasses made from a specific type of wood in Pernambuco. The idea was to use a raw material typical of Pernambuco, valuing the region's culture and natural resources without losing sight of the mission to educate consumers towards a more sustainable world.

Marin attended trade fairs to promote his products and meet potential investors and customers for Crab Hollow. In 2018, he sold it to a partner introduced by a friend. From 2018 to 2021, his partner managed Crab Hollow from Curitiba-Paraná until Marin repurchased the company. Figure 12 shows the organisation's timeline of partnerships based on interviews and data from the institutional websites.

Figure 12 – Crab Hollow's Timeline



Source: Author's own (2025)

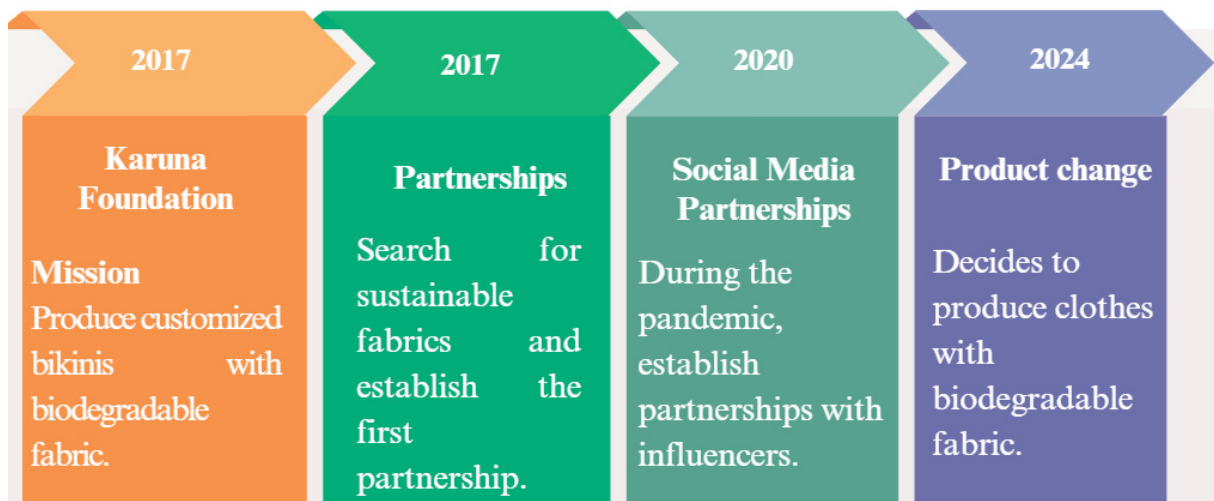
4.1.6 Interviewed E: The case of Amara Metta and the Karuna

In 2016, Amara Metta left her public position after four years to pursue new dreams. Interested in nature and hiking, she joked about selling bikinis. Months later, she enrolled in a swimwear course, leading to the creation of Karuna in 2017, a small swimwear business in Brasília offering customised bikinis made from biodegradable fabric. The name reflects Metta's beliefs inspired by Buddhist traditions and her backpacking journey in Asia in 2017.

Metta aimed to create a sustainable swimwear brand for women of all sizes. Concerned about the fashion sector's impact, she invested in 100% sustainable raw materials, minimised plastic use, and prioritised a sustainable production chain. She sought biodegradable fabric to shorten the production time but, unsatisfied, designed a double-sided product to extend its lifespan and reduce landfill waste.

The biodegradable fabric is Metta's first partnership with a producer. The garments are made in her Brasília atelier with a seamstress's assistance. Since the start, her family and friends have supported her, especially a friend who helped promote Karuna's product during waterfall hikes. Metta frequently partners with influencers aligned with Karuna's audience, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Figure 13 shows the organisation's timeline focusing on partnerships, based on the interview and the data collected from the organisations' institutional websites.

Figure 13 – Karuna's Timeline



Source: Author's own (2025)

4.1.7 Interviewed F: The case of the Novaes ladies and the HarmonyMove

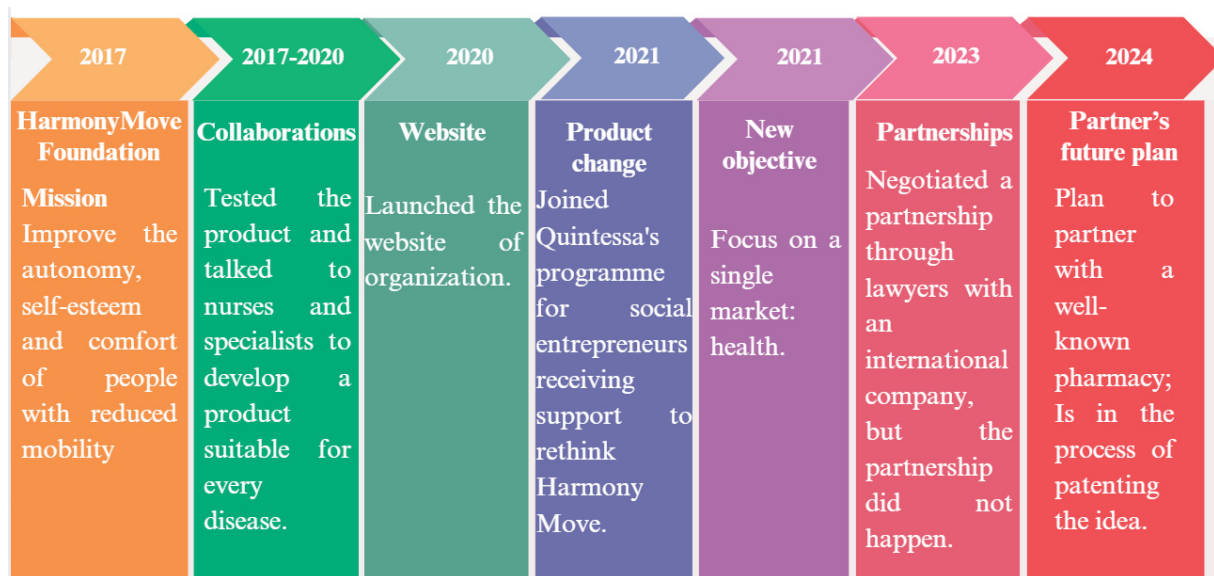
Harmony Move is a small company founded in 2017 in Belo Horizonte - Minas Gerais by Venuza and Livia Novaes. From the beginning, Harmony Move's goal was to create products

that improve the mobility of people with low mobility due to diseases that limit the body's movement. Therefore, HarmonyMove was born to enhance the autonomy, self-esteem and comfort of people with reduced mobility and bring more peace of mind to their families.

Venuza Novaes was inspired to help her seven-year-old nephew, diagnosed with a degenerative disease affecting his movements. With her fashion degree, she realised how challenging it was for nurses and parents to dress him. She designed clothes to simplify the dressing process, and when they first tried them, her nephew could be dressed without health complications, aiding both nurses and parents. This led to a partnership with Livia Novaes, who managed HarmonyMove, while Venuza focused on design, collaborating with nurses and specialists to create suitable products for various conditions.

HarmonyMove launched its website in 2020, coinciding with the pandemic. They partnered with influencers to promote products and attract customers. In 2021, they joined Quintessa's program for social entrepreneurs, receiving support to focus on health and connect with angel investors, though they chose not to sign with them. In 2023, they negotiated a partnership with an international investor but withdrew when the contract did not align with their values. Figure 14 shows the organisation's timeline focusing on partnerships, based on the interview and the data collected from the organisations' institutional websites.

Figure 14 – HarmonyMove's Timeline



Source: Author's own (2025)

4.1.8 Interviewed G: The case of the Thomas Maia and the Trazza

Trazza was founded in 2019 by Thomas Maia in São Paulo. It is a small enterprise focused on producing sustainable footwear. The brand creates unique shoes using discarded fabrics from the fashion industry.

Thomas Maia's lifelong passion for creation led him to a three-year architecture course, though he did not find his calling there. He later studied administration and worked at a bank, yet felt unfulfilled. While searching for shoes, he became curious about the shoemaking process, prompting him to take a shoe design course. During this time, he noticed a significant issue in the industry: unwanted fabrics often went to waste due to outdated styles or dirt. Maia recognised their potential and repurposed these materials for his designs, merging his creative passion with purposeful intent. Thus, Trazza's mission became transforming discarded fabrics into unique, sustainable shoes, giving new life to what many deemed unusable.

Due to Trazza's purpose and the shoemaking process, Maia took time to find the right partners. Collaborating with insole partners was immediate and productive, utilising defective insoles in his creations. In contrast, establishing shoe modelling partnerships was more challenging. Maia has ten loyal partners, including a shoe designer, with whom he maintains ongoing dialogue about each project. Figure 15 shows the organisation's timeline focusing on partnerships, based on the interview and the data collected from the organisations' institutional websites.

Figure 15 – Trazza's Timeline



Source: Author's own (2025)

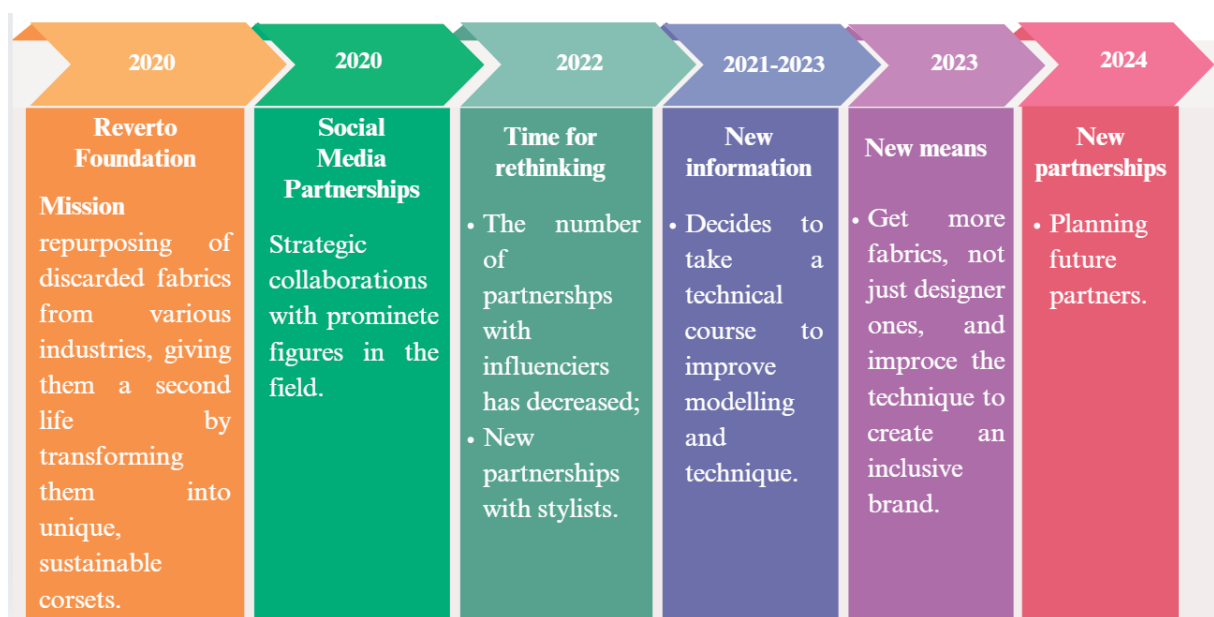
4.1.9 Interviewed H: The case of the Grace Rivers and the Revertio

Reverto was established in 2020 by Grace Rivers in São Paulo as a small, family-run enterprise specialising in upcycling and renewal. The brand specialises in repurposing discarded fabrics from various industries. It gives them a second life by transforming them into unique, sustainable corsets that reflect a new purpose for materials that would otherwise be wasted.

Before founding Reverto, Grace Rivers studied Geography in São Paulo and sold thrift store clothes at her university. When the COVID-19 pandemic began, she returned to her hometown in the countryside, where she invested in her passion for fashion and created her first upcycled corset designs. During the pandemic, she sold her corsets through Instagram, establishing partnerships with influencers to showcase her work. Reverto's mission is rooted in sustainability, a value Grace Rivers profoundly believes in and embodies in her brand.

The foundation year was pivotal for Grace Rivers, marking her strategic collaborations with key figures in the field who supported Reverto's development. She has cultivated partnerships with stylists in four years, demonstrating her ability to forge meaningful connections. She aims to expand her network by engaging new partners to foster organisational growth and innovation. A key objective is to partner with governmental institutions to promote blood donation, enhance public awareness, and improve understanding of sustainable fashion. Figure 16 illustrates the organisation's partnership timeline from the interview.

Figure 16 – Reverto's Timeline



Source: Author's own (2025)

4.1.10 Interviewed I: The case of Clara Hart and the HolistiQ

HolistiQ was founded in 2010 by Clara Hart in Arara, Petropolis, as a small enterprise focused on organic fashion. The brand specialises in integrating fashion, health, and sustainability, creating garments made from organic fabrics through sustainable management and fair production.

Clara Hart is a fashion graduate who has long been interested in organic fabrics and sustainable fashion. After noticing ethical issues in the industry, she re-evaluated her sustainable project, which led to the HolistiQ project, transforming garment consumption by prioritising sustainability and promoting skin health with organic materials. The project aims to be ethical and sustainable, to make people aware of their bodies and sustainability through durable garments, comfort and well-being.

In her fourteen years of operation, Hart has chosen to collaborate with artists who can deepen the meaning of each collection and genuinely reflect the essence of HolistiQ. Initially, she sought international organic fabrics, as there were few local producers of such materials in Brazil. However, she has partnered with local producers, strengthening the brand's connection to its roots. Hart also collaborates with influencers, carefully selecting those whose values align fully with the purpose of HolistiQ. Figure 17 shows the organisation's timeline focusing on partnerships, based on the interview and the data collected from the organisations' institutional websites.

Figure 17 – HolistiQ's Timeline



Source: Author's own (2025)

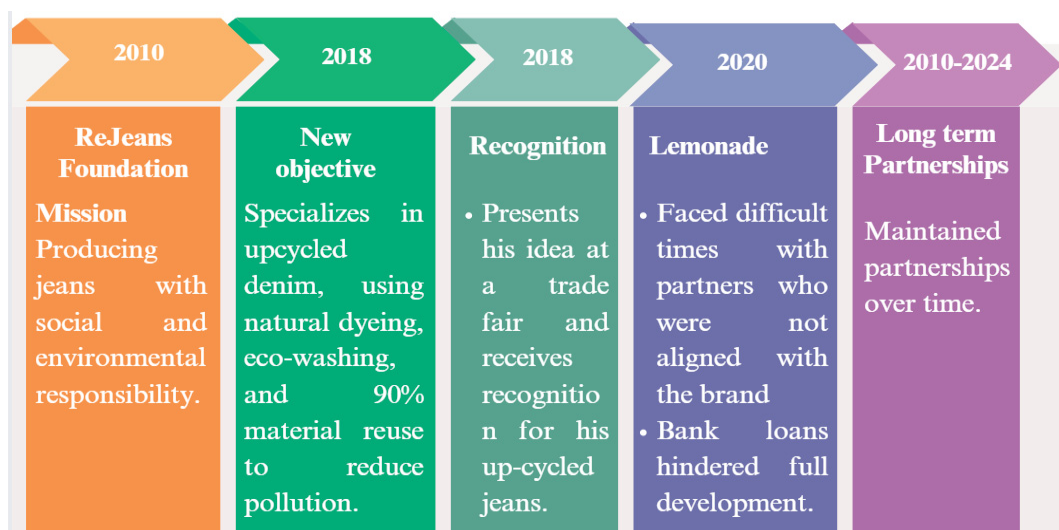
4.1.11 Interviewed J: The case of Zoe Brixton and the ReJeans

Zoe Brixton founded ReJeans in 2010 in Rio de Janeiro, driven by a sustainability mission. Initially focused on producing jeans, the brand transitioned in 2018 to specialise in sustainable and upcycled denim, incorporating natural dyeing, ecological washing, and 90% reuse of materials—tackling one of the most polluting fabrics in the industry. Each year, ReJeans adopts a guiding theme that reflects its principles: starting with "reduction" to minimise waste, followed by "reason" with natural dyeing, "expansion" during the pandemic, "resilience," "regeneration," and now "presence," celebrating mindfulness and sustainability.

“After four years working in the industry, I had much leftover fabric (...) What would I do with that? I would not burn it!” Inspired by this, Ms Brixton decided to invest in a new way of producing jeans, combining her extensive field knowledge with her passion for sustainability. She launched the first jeans made with sustainable and conscious practices at a fair, where she connected with others who shared her values and vision. Therefore, ReJeans was established to demonstrate the feasibility of producing denim in a manner that is both sustainable and environmentally responsible.

Before ReJeans was created, Ms Brixton led with unfair contracts and partnerships in the fashion industry, which disappointed her. Despite that, they maintained a partnership with a fabric laundry, which not only collaborated by lending its space for washing fabrics but also became partners in exchanging ideas and information. Figure 18 shows the organisation's timeline focusing on partnerships, based on the interview and the data collected from the organisations' institutional websites.

Figure 18 – ReJeans’s Timeline



Source: Author’s own (2025)

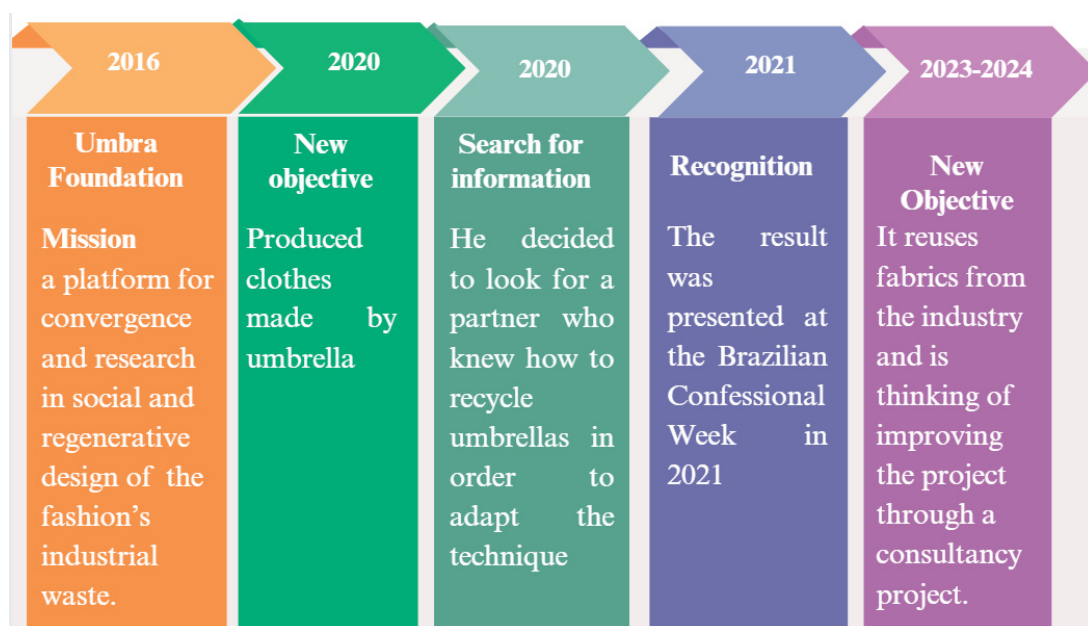
4.1.12 Interviewed K: The case of Noah Canopy and the Umbra

Umbra, founded in São Paulo in 2016, aimed to recycle waste from a Brazilian fashion company, serving as a social and regenerative design platform. In 2020, Umbra suspended classes due to the pandemic, prompting the team to rethink the project and maintain its concept by creating garments from umbrellas, a material that takes 30 years to decompose.

The idea was born after some discussions when they decided to make clothes from umbrellas as an alternative to keep the Umbra project alive; Canopy shares the decision process. One of the group members had already studied the possibility of making clothes with the raw material of the umbrella. However, they needed more information, and in the same year, they decided to seek the help of a company called Entitled, which had been working with this material since 2013. Over time, Umbra developed a methodology specific to its project, collaborating with the rubbish collectors and helping women in the favelas of São Paulo so they do not leave their children at the mercy of crime. The result was presented at the Brazilian Confessional Week in 2021.

Umbra maintains partnerships with Entitled and Brazilian companies, though less frequently than before. Over the year, it collaborated with other brands supporting the project and donated materials to Confession of Clothes. Canopy states that Umbra's goal is not to manage industrial waste but to repurpose raw materials. Figure 19 presents a timeline of these partnerships based on interviews and institutional data.

Figure 19 – Umbra's Timeline



Source: Author's own (2025)

4.1.1.13 Case Overview

In Table 9, we summarise the presented cases, highlighting key information about the location, the organisation's focus, and the way they will be discussed throughout the analysis. The aim of this table is to provide an overall framework for the cases discussed in the previous chapters.

Table 9 – Cases's synthesis

Case	Social Entrepreneur	Gender	Social Enterprise	Year of Foundation	Location	Social Enterprise Focus/Business	Social Enterprise Business Model	Amount of partnerships identified	Form of citation in the analyse
E1	Sir Filandra	M	Silk Mosaic	1988	Maringá – Pr	Sustainable fashion	Production of pieces of silk from damaged cocoons and industry waste	5	E1
E2	Arthur Serícia	M	Seta Nativa	2009	Maringá – Pr	Sustainable fashion	Organise small businesses to network and compete like a large international company.	7	E2
E3	Marina Everlace	F	Circular Sisters	2015	Joinville - SC	Circular economy	Reuse and transform discarded materials from local industry	10	E3
E4	Theresa Flores	F	Botanics	2016	Rio de Janeiro - RJ	Sustainable fashion	Producing clothes with organic and sustainable fabrics dyed by hand with native plant pigments.	4	E4
E5	Gael Marin	M	Crab Hollow	2012	Pernambuco - PE	Sustainable fashion	Promote social and environmental awareness through its actions and products.	3	E5
E6	Amara Metta	F	Karuna	2017	Brasília - DF	Sustainable fashion	Build a sustainable brand unified with fashion so women of all sizes feel comfortable in swimwear.	2	E6
E7	Novaes	F	HarmonyMove	2017	Belo Horizonte - MG	Inclusive fashion	Improve the autonomy, self-esteem and comfort of people with reduced mobility.	4	E7

E8	Thomas Maia	M	Trazza	2019	São Paulo - SP	Circular economy	Produce shoes using discarded fabrics from the fashion industry.	10	E8
E9	Grace Rivers	F	Reverto	2020	São Paulo - SP	Circular economy	Transforming discarded fabrics from various industries into unique, sustainable corsets gives the materials a second life.	30	E9
E10	Clara Hart	F	HolistiQ	2010	Petropolis - RJ	Sustainable fashion	Integrate fashion, health, and sustainability, crafting garments from organic fabrics with sustainable practices and fair production.	3	E10
E11	Zoe Brixton	F	ReJeans	2010	Rio de Janeiro - RJ	Sustainable fashion and Circular economy	Producing denim sustainably and with environmental responsibility.	5	E11
E12	Noah Canopy	M	Umbra	2016	São Paulo - SP	Circular economy	A platform for courses and reuse of industrial waste.	4	E12

Source: Author's own (2025)

4.2 INITIATIVES OF PARTNERSHIPS IN THE CRAZY QUILT: EFFECTUAL PARTNERSHIPS

In this section, we will explore the dynamic of partnerships within the effectuation approach. In this sense, at the beginning, we tried to divide causal partnerships into effectual partnerships. Partnerships were considered effectual when the negotiation happened in a more flexible space, allowing the partners to collaborate and express their ideas based on the embedded commitment instead of formal contracts. Effectual partnerships focus on experimentation and adaptability, while partners are chosen more for vision alignment than from previously set criteria.

On the other hand, causal partnerships are considered previously planned with well-defined contracts and objectives. Partners are chosen carefully based on their abilities and become less flexible over time. Causal partnerships are based on contracts instead of trust and adaptability.

Two of the 12 cases analysed could be classified as causal due to their emphasis on prior planning and contractual agreements. Cases E4 and E12, for instance, focus on the sustainability commitment of their partners and are more thoughtful when approaching a partner, as highlighted in E4: “I spent 2 years looking for partners”. In the case of E12, most contracts are with private companies, which are more formalised; it also participates in public tenders, which require more formalisation of how the material goods will be managed.

However, even these partnerships exhibited effectual elements over time, such as embedded commitment and collaboration, tended to become more flexible, although they mainly remained causal. The same happens in cases E10 and E12; between their group, they are flexible with new ideas, but the negotiation dynamic is set in a place of planning and searching for the right partner.

The other cases tended towards a more effectual approach, seeking flexibility and adaptation with their partners, even if the initial objectives were clear and inflexible. Some did not feel the need to establish formal contracts with every partner at the beginning (E2 and E9). As stated by interviewee E2, contracts should be based on existent metrics; however, what he was trying to do in his organisation was different from a traditional business, so there was no existent metric, and consequently, no formal contract was set between partners.

Rather than fitting neatly into a single model—effectual or causal—we observed that partnerships varied in the degree to which they embodied effectual characteristics. Over time, partnerships tended to evolve in response to relational and cognitive elements. As trust and

closeness grew, collaboration and mutual commitment often increased, leading to a relaxation of specific rules or sanctions. Conversely, causal characteristics were sometimes more prominent at the outset, ensuring role alignment and establishing initial expectations. On the other hand, some partnerships began effectually and, as they matured, incorporated more structured, causal elements; as interviewee E9 shares, she is now thinking more seriously about contracts to protect herself from possible damages or defaults.

This fluidity suggests that partnerships do not remain fixed within a single approach but instead adapt dynamically based on the evolving nature of relationships and the context in which they operate. Table 10 presents how the partnerships evolved.

Table 10 – Effectual and Causal Partnerships

Case	Initial nature of the partnership	Partnership Evolution	Impact on the organisation
E1	<i>Effectual</i> - partnerships were established based on vision alignment and identification.	Partnerships remained <i>effective and developed into more flexible and adaptable entities based more on collaboration and embedded commitment.</i>	The flexibility allowed innovation that was aligned with causal characteristics.
E2	<i>Effectual</i> - partnerships were established based on vision alignment and identification.	Partnerships have not evolved.	The flexibility allowed the organisation to adapt, but partnerships did not have the potential to develop over time.
E3	<i>Effectual</i> – partnerships were established because of the importance of the project, based on the flexibility with no contractual requirement,	It has remained <i>effective with more interactions</i> but has incorporated some <i>causal</i> elements, such as defining roles and less rigid contracts.	Flexibility has allowed for more significant mobilisation of networks, but causal characteristics are likely to increase in the future as a form of organisation and predictability while the organisation stabilises.
E4	<i>Causal</i> - partnerships began with the search for partners who fit in with the company's mission, with the presence of defined rules.	It remained <i>causal</i> but incorporated <i>effectual</i> elements, such as collaboration and discussing ideas between the partners.	Contracts provided greater security in supply; however, the lack of flexibility limited the expansion and adaptability of partner networks.
E5	<i>Effectual</i> – partnerships were established based on vision alignment and identification.	It has remained <i>effectual</i> with more interactions and has tried incorporating causal characteristics over time.	Flexibility allowed the mobilisation of networks and improved the innovation of the organisation.
E6	<i>Causal</i> - partnerships began with the search for partners who fit in with the company's mission.	It has remained <i>effectually</i> focused on the vision alignment.	Contracts provide greater security in supply, and even though they incorporate some elements of effectuation, they tend to be more casual.
E7	<i>Effectual</i> – partnerships began the mobilisation of the network, with no necessity for formal contracts.	It has remained <i>effectual</i> , with a tendency to change over time as new partnerships are established.	The flexibility allowed for innovation and adaptability of the product. However, case E7 is starting to show causal characteristics by setting partnership criteria.
E8	<i>Causal</i> - based on standardised agreements and processes.	With the presence of contracts, it has remained	Contracts ensured production security and flexibility, allowing for

		causal over time but has evolved into a more flexible partnership.	greater adaptability and partner participation.
E9	<i>Effectual</i> - partnerships began the mobilisation of the network, with no necessity for formal contracts.	It has remained <i>effectual</i> and tends to incorporate <i>causal</i> characteristics over time as new partnerships are established.	In the beginning, the flexibility allowed for more significant innovation and mobilisation of networks, but not all partnerships were aligned with their purpose, which led to the gradual establishment of contracts and defined criteria.
E10	<i>Causal</i> - based on standardised agreements and processes.	Partnerships evolve toward more <i>effectual</i> characteristics while maintaining contractual agreements.	Causation increased the security of relationships, preventing partners who were not aligned with the organisation from entering the partnership.
E11	<i>Causal</i> - based on standardised agreements and processes.	Partnerships evolve toward more <i>effectual</i> characteristics while maintaining contractual agreements.	Causation increased the security of relationships, preventing partners who were not aligned with the organisation from entering the partnership.
E12	<i>Causal</i> - partnerships began with the search for partners who fit in with the company's mission, with the presence of defined rules.	It remained <i>causal</i> but incorporated <i>effectual</i> elements, such as collaboration and discussing ideas between the partners.	Contracts provided greater security in supply; however, the lack of flexibility limited the expansion and adaptability of partner networks.

Source: Author's own (2025)

As Table 10 shows, some social entrepreneurs have changed their approach over time, being more inclined to incorporate the causal approach in their relationships. This might happen because of the increased necessity to predict the relationship over time and co-create value through the partnership. Within the effectuation approach, effectual partnerships are developed based on factors such as value co-creation, relational dynamics, and resource mobilisation. These factors may lead to a more flexible and adaptable relationship between partners.

Within the process of effectuation, through collaboration between partners, co-creation takes part (Hensel and Visser, 2010). In this sense, we tried to approach how the partnership between partners led to the value co-creation. **Value co-creation** was identified as the interviewee's ability to collaborate with others. The interviewees expressed the desire to create value through collaboration with other brands and companies. Collaboration is understood in this research as two or more individuals collaborating to find a solution or make an integrative product.

From the 12 cases, we identified collaboration in 9 cases (E1, E2, E3, E4, E6, E7, E8, E10, E11 and E12). Cases E1, E2 and E6 mentioned collaborating less than the remaining respondents; their innovative process was more independent from their partners; in other words, partners tended to influence less in the idea's development, even though they had their space to

share. As E1 stated, partners shared their ideas, but not all were considered, given differences in vision or economic unviability.

In cases E3, E12, and E10, partnerships in which partners actively participated and collaborated by contributing ideas were more prevalent. In these cases, partners shared their knowledge, experience and resources, which influenced the development of new products. For instance, in E12, one partner had expertise in producing clothes from umbrellas, a skill that the social entrepreneurs did not possess at the time. In the case of E8, on the other hand, he relied on defective, pigmented shoe soles—typically discarded by his partner—as a key material for his product.

Collaboration between the partners always consists of mutual exchange and sharing of ideas and knowledge, which is one of the strongest motivators for maintaining the partnership (E8 and E7). Usually, these partners have specific knowledge that helps with product development, such as the feasibility of producing footwear (E8) or the suitability of clothes for older people with low mobility (E7). In the E3 and E12 cases, collaboration was based on solving industrial problems (E3 and E12) and creating a collaborative project to reuse waste (E12).

The theme of collaboration also extends to the desire of the social entrepreneur to unify the force to achieve social inclusion, as in the case of E3 and E12. In these cases, collaboration created value for the Community of women seamstresses, the Community of Quilombolas, and the waste pickers by advertising and demonstrating the work behind the product. For E3, for example, in getting to know her work, some of her partners and clients decided to help the Quilombolas community directly.

The relational dynamic became even more important as the partnership developed within the effectuation process. For example, the embedded commitment of partners supported the organisation's and the idea's development. Social entrepreneurs searched for partners committed to the organisation's purpose, as it was part of their identity. However, when social entrepreneurs did not find this kind of support, the partnership did not progress to an embedded commitment, as in cases E6 and E9 when establishing partnerships with social influencers through social media did not convert into a productive interaction, once both interviewed did not achieve what was expected through the partnership.

Failure to establish commitment may affect the relationship in the long term. If the social entrepreneur cannot find commitment in partners, the organisation's purpose will also lose its initial force. For instance, E2 had difficulties constructing an embedded commitment with other

partners, culminating in exploiting an alternative market that resembled the initial one but with other partners.

The embedded commitment depends on relational and cognitive factors that help to strengthen the partnership, as we will explore in the social capital section. In the crazy quilt principle, embedded commitment is based on intrinsic motivation, such as fidelity/trust (E1, E8, E12), support for their ideas (E1, E2, and E7), identification to the project (E3), proximity (E3, E8, E9, E11 and E12), know-how (E7 and E8) and reputation/status. As discussed in Table 11.

Table 11 – Factors Contributing to Embedded Commitment

Factor	Definition	Data examples
Fidelity/Trust	Trust and loyalty shown to the partner help to increase commitment between partners.	“So we believe you have to have the story, and for me to have that story, the client has to trust me. I must have a story they trust, trust, and believe in. My best partner, my employees and my clients”. (E1)
Support	Support for developing the idea improves the relationship and strengthens the bond.	“Whoever supported me, I would go there, and we'd be together trying to do something better”. (E2)
Identification of the project	Relationships become stronger as the partner understands and identifies with the project.	“If he buys my idea, he'll understand this: that my work is handmade, that we need time for production because the material does not come new, so we have to sanitise it, we have to dismantle the whole process”. (E3)
Proximity	Relationships are strengthened through ongoing contact and shared experiences.	“I have seen their growth. Over the last 20 years, they have grown a lot, and I've been able to follow that growth closely. In reality, being there and watching the company grow creates a bond—it almost feels like a friendship, right?” (E11)
Know-how	The extent to which the partner helps develop the product based on their knowledge strengthens the bond.	“And these geriatric specialists were also very important in our research process. So, they would take our clothes to the nurses; they would call us in for discussions, working groups (...) who were essential to our research as they are very experienced figures who are recognised here in the Minas Gerais market (...).” (E7)
Reputation/Status	The importance of the partner in the market and his relevance to the project	“For example, the design of the shoe's sole is essential for me. Even more to a sole that is not available in the market. So, I have to take care of this partner making my shoe's sole”. (E8)

Source: Author's own (2025)

Fidelity/Trust, proximity, and reputation/status are part of the relational dimension of social capital, which we will explore further. The role of social capital in fostering embedded

commitment suggests that partnerships within the crazy quilt are more complex than flexibility and vision alignment, as we previously stated.

At the beginning of the partnership, what drives social entrepreneurs to search for a partner is the reputation/status that the partners have. While reputation may fade over time, the partner will always have an outstanding position in the partnership, shaped by the level of proximity developed through ongoing contact and shared experiences. This, in turn, strengthens trust between partners. Therefore, embedded commitment is a relationship cultivated over time, deeply rooted in meaningful exchanges and mutual trust, hardly achieved without proximity and sustained interaction between partners.

Part of the relational dynamic is the ability of the partners to discuss ideas, a way of connecting the expertise of both partners. From the data, 11 cases were open to discuss ideas with their partners (E1, E2, E3, E4, E5, E6, E7, E8, E10, E11 and E12). The discussion of ideas was kept in the field of expertise, in other words, the partner's know-how. In some cases, the discussion of ideas, especially in the academic field, leads to creating a new product or other directions to the organisation that eventually raises the product's value.

(...) We told this story to a friend of mine who is a geriatrician and another who is a gerontologist. They were touched and said there are no clothes for older people with reduced mobility (...). We began to study these diseases (...), and the other clothes studied these diseases and showed these people we have contact with: gerontologists and geriatricians. They approved and said, 'That is it!' 'Change it'. (Interviewee E7, 2025)

(...) This is how it works: I come up with the problem, and he (my partner) comes up with the solution. (...) I prefer to come up with the problem, and he comes up with the solution, and we develop together, focusing on the problem rather than thinking about the design. (...) That is one place I do not allow him to go, so it does not affect the design. (Interviewee E8, 2025)

However, not all discussions led to the co-creation of value. A possible reason is that social entrepreneurs usually look for partners with a previous idea and design in mind, as in case E8, in which the interviewer shared that he was careful in allowing his partner to change the product or the original idea once the design was well established.

Another factor observed in the crazy quilt partnerships was the capacity of social entrepreneurs to mobilise their networks. **Network mobilisation** is an important factor for the effectuation process because it is through partnerships that social entrepreneurs can find new partners and mobilise resources. Resources, in this case, can be understood as material and

know-how once the transformation of these resources depends on the purpose or the needs of partners or social entrepreneurs.

Network mobilisation was identified in six primary forms during the analysis: (a) alternative networks, (b) events, (c) expansion through referrals, (d) personal contacts, (e) support from institutions and incubators, and (f) social media. Each network mobilisation type can occur deliberately, strategically, or organically, depending on the context and the entrepreneur's approach.

In some cases, social entrepreneurs expanded their networks in search of new or alternative knowledge and techniques that their existing networks could not provide—referred to as alternative networks. Case E8, for example, is developing products in 3D printing, a technique and knowledge not available in his previous partnerships, emerging from an opportunity he identified. Similarly, in case E12, new partners were sought when they expanded Umbra's objective to include clothing made from umbrella material.

Events were also mentioned as important places to get to know new partners and especially to foster contact with the target public. As social entrepreneurs received more recognition, they were invited to more local events to share their history, and consequently, their work was put into evidence, expanding their networks.

I used to go to these fairs and meet people and customers aligned with the brand. That was the best part of these fairs because I had the opportunity to meet potential investors and people who were my target customers. (Interviewee E5, 2025)

Networks could also be expanded by referrals of existent partnerships when they recommended the project to their networks. The case of E3 shows that the mobilisation of her initial network—mainly through connections with incubators, educational institutions, and participation in Sebrae and Senai projects—evolved into a self-sustaining network where partnerships form effortlessly. She explains, “Today, I do not look for partners” (Interviewee E3, 2025).

Similarly, case E7 shares that participating in Quintessa projects helped them expand their networks and attract angel investors. They also shared that a law firm familiar with their work helped them contact an international partner. This partnership, however, was unsuccessful because the contract was not aligned with the organisation's ethical values and mission.

Personal contacts played a crucial role for social entrepreneurs in the early stages of the organisation and in supporting managerial activities. For instance, E9 relied on her sister for

administrative matters, while in E8, the entrepreneur's wife was responsible for overseeing administrative activities and decision-making.

Family, friends, and colleagues sometimes contributed to idea development by offering their expertise and raw materials. For example, in case E7, the social entrepreneur mobilised friends with backgrounds in the health sector to support the development of new products, providing valuable knowledge and guidance throughout the process.

On the other hand, in case E11, the entrepreneur had known her partners since she worked at a denim factory. Their friendship remained strong even after she shifted her focus to sustainable and upcycled jeans. Over time, both partners refined their techniques, investing in more sustainable fabric production methods. This ongoing collaboration enhanced their shared history and strengthened their partnership.

Support from institutions and incubators also played an important role in connecting social entrepreneurs to new partners, even though many of these partnerships did not reach the embedded commitment. In some cases, partnerships with these institutions were maintained even on an informal basis, with the social entrepreneurs participating in the catalogue of these institutions, which helps to publicise the organisation.

I looked for partnerships with the government, Sebrae, and Tex Brazil. We took the initiative to participate in a fair in France, financed by Tex Brazil (...). I got partnerships with the university, Sebrae, and international organisations. (Interviewee E2, 2025)

Networks could also be mobilised through social media, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, E9 connected with partners via social media, forming collaborations with digital influencers, while E10 expanded her network by seeking partners with a similar target audience.

Social media partnerships are typically casual and short-term, often lacking alignment with the organisation's mission. E10 approached these partnerships straightforwardly, focusing on immediate collaboration instead of long-term ties. Table 12 summarises partner mobilisation types and cases. Social entrepreneurs initially used their contacts from previous private or public roles; their networks later grew through incubator participation and increased recognition in their fields.

Table 12 – Network mobilisation in the crazy quilt principle

Type of mobilisation	Definition	Driving factors	Case
Alternative networks	It arises from the current partnership's lack of	Lack of knowledge, necessity of resources, flexibility	E8, E12

	innovative resources and knowledge.		
Events	Invitations to events and fairs help mobilise networks.	Connecting with the target audience meeting partners aligned with the same purpose	E3, E5
Expansion through referrals	Acquaintances and partners help to publicise the network.	Work recognition	E3, E5, E6, E7
Personal contacts	Network partnerships established through personal contact (friends, family, colleagues)	Proximity, partnership historic	E2, E3, E6, E7, E8, E9, E10, E11
Social Media	Network partnerships established through social media (influencers)	Reputation, Influence	E6, E7, E9, E10
Support from institutions and incubators	Contact with institutions (universities) and incubators increases networks.	Access to financial resources, technical and strategic expertise	E1, E2, E3, E7

Source: Author's own (2025)

As mentioned in the methodology procedures, Table 13 was created to present the analysis structure followed regarding the motivations for establishing partnerships based on the Gioia method.

Table 13 – Effectual Partnerships Gioia Table Dynamics

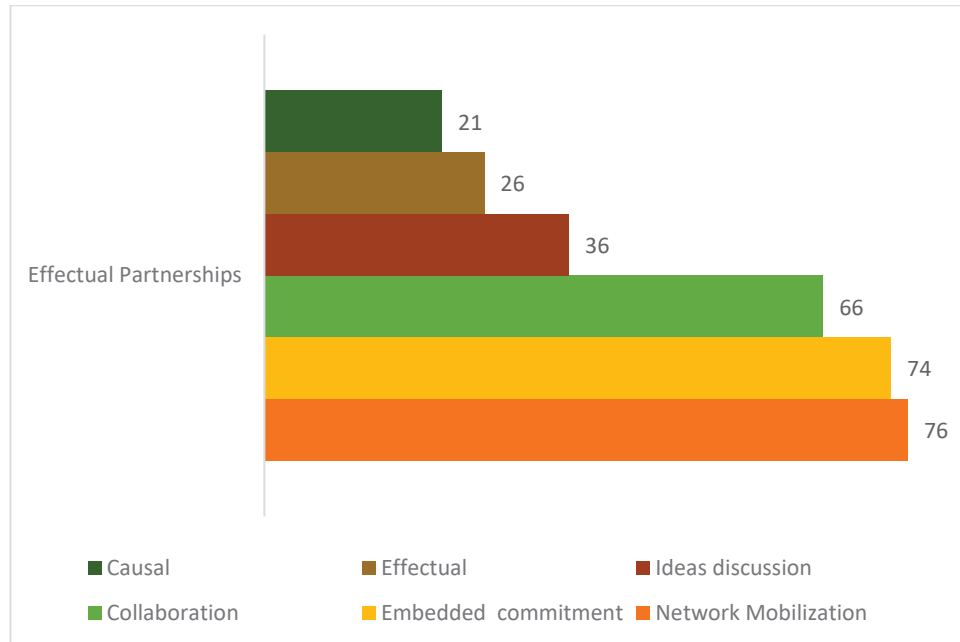
1° Orden (code)	2° Concept (theme)	Aggregated dimension
Expertise and know-how	Collaboration	Value co-creation
Mutual support		
Resources sharing		
Co-creation of ideas and solutions	Ideas discussion	Relational dynamic
Shared expertise	Embedded commitment	
Fair exchange		
Sense of community		
Proximity (friendship)	People interaction	Network Mobilization
Trustworthiness		
Expansion through referrals		
Support from institutions and incubators	Effectual	Partnerships dynamic
Events		
Alternative networks	Causal	
Flexibility		
Adaptability		
Planned partnership		
Contracts		

Source: Author's own (2025)

An overview of the cases demonstrates that social entrepreneurs were good at mobilising their networks within the crazy quilt principle. As we can observe in Graphic 1, not

all network mobilisation evolved to an embedded commitment, but overall, social entrepreneurs were able to transform their networks into valuable connections.

Graphic 1 – Frequency of themes Effectual partnerships



Source: Author's own (2025)

It is important to highlight that collaboration and idea discussion did not seem as connected as we thought. Collaboration, on the one hand, was related to the actual product of the relationship and how social entrepreneurs could transform the raw materials and knowledge provided by their partners into new means. However, the discussion was about the actual involvement of partners in giving ideas and influencing the means and objectives of the organisation, which, compared to other codes, were less mentioned during the interview. Therefore, partners have less influence on idea discussions, playing a more passive role in the partnership.

The mixed nature of partnership dynamics can explain such a result, alternating between effectual and causal approaches. As discussed in this section, few cases remained effectual throughout their partnerships. The causal approach created more secure and predictable relationships even without strict rules or contracts. Over time, as organisations stabilised, it was natural for social entrepreneurs to opt for more structured relationships, incorporating contracts and formal agreements. However, it is important to highlight that organisations that initially adopted a more effectual approach demonstrated greater capacity for innovation and network mobilisation—an aspect less evident in partnerships that followed a purely causal approach.

4.3 MOTIVATION FOR PARTNERING: ELEMENTS CONTRIBUTING TO THE PARTNERSHIP

In the previous discussion, we focused on how partnerships evolved within the effectual approach, where we identified some dimensions of partnership motivators. This section will explore the key factors that motivated and contributed to establishing partnerships.

We found that the motivators for establishing partnerships can be categorised into **intrinsic** and **extrinsic** motivations. Intrinsic motivations refer to the desire to enter into a partnership out of self-interest or for the satisfaction it provides internally without depending on external rewards or pressures. These motivators were related to the internal world of social entrepreneurs and how they perceived the partnership. Additionally, intrinsic motivators were linked to personal values and purpose, being more intangible than extrinsic motivators.

On the other hand, extrinsic motivators refer to external rewards and pressures that influence the search for partners. Extrinsic motivators are tangible, such as resources and the partner's position, that can influence the organisation directly. If intrinsic motivators were linked to personal values, extrinsic motivators are driven by external factors, such as financial gains, status, or strategic advances achieved through the partnership. Table 14 presents examples of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators observed during the interview.

Table 14 – Intrinsic and extrinsic motivators

Intrinsic Motivators			
-	Definition	Example	Nº of cases
Alignment of purpose	Purpose and sustainable objective alignment collaborate to establish partnerships.	“My organisation is an extension of myself. The purpose of my organisation is environmental education; this is the value purpose. So, none of my partners will join if they are not aligned with that, and I do not allow them to interfere with the purpose either.” (Interviewee E5, 2025)	8
Shared values	Similar personal values.	“I tell myself that I need to pay attention to the women, and I value that, these values. It is similar to mine—family comes first, right?” (Interviewee E3, 2025)	11
Social inclusion	Partnerships that can achieve marginalised social groups.	“But we understand that this approach we have been taking from the beginning involves participating in projects supported by the São Paulo State Department of Culture, right? The structure of the state of Ceará also strengthened it. However, it happens within the scope of public calls for funding and incentives for cultural projects. Not specifically within a leadership role—we have had this	5

		contact, but unfortunately, not yet within a leadership position in public policy.” (Interviewee E12, 2025)	
Valuing collaboration	Recognition of the value of partnerships.	“That is why I consider a partnership more when it involves the desire to achieve a common goal, right? So, that is how I see it. I want to reach a goal but cannot do it alone. Who is the partner that can help me with that?” (Interviewee E10, 2025)	5
Extrinsic Motivators			
-	Definition	Example	Cases
Promotion	The extent to which partners can help to reach the target public.	“There are certain moments I will have. I will have a photo, I will have content, I will have the image of that person wearing it.” (Interviewee E9, 2025)	6
Partner Relevance	The extent to which the public position of the partner can influence their target public.	“(…) then this a woman who had always worked in Hering's communications, knew me from other projects I had done in Santa Catarina, and she reached out to me.” (Interviewee E12, 2025)	8
Raw Material	Materials needed for product development.	“I do not see it in terms of priority, but it is like this: there is no clothing if you do not have raw materials. So I think the most important thing is my suppliers, who have this social and environmental approach. They are essential. If they did not exist, probably nothing else would.” (Interviewee E4, 2025)	7
Lack of Suppliers	Refers to the difficulty of finding partners committed to sustainability who can provide the raw materials.	“So, those of us who truly want to work with sustainable organic products are somewhat tied up unless the person decides to open doors and source from other countries—which is not my case.” (Interviewee E4, 2025)	1
Market Strategy	Market positioning and competitive advantage.	“Strategy influenced the partnerships” (Interviewee E5, 2025)	4
Financial support	The capacity of the partner to invest in the organisation	We sought and looked for various types of partners, right, for investment, and for resources that could come in. I think that might be the biggest problem because HarmonyMove is in a place where it has already been tested, right? It has tested the prototypes and models; we have about twenty clothing models, right? We get excellent feedback, but we do not have the resources to invest in marketing or production and distribution, which are crucial points to boost the market, right? (Interviewee E7, 2025)	3

Source: Author's own (2025)

As shown in Table 14, interviewees emphasised that alignment of purpose and shared values played a crucial role in establishing partnerships. It is important to note that the social enterprises in our study operated within the fashion sector, which inherently limited their choice of partners. Moreover, their core mission was to transform consumption habits and raise

customer awareness about responsible consumption. Given this, ensuring that partners were aligned with the organisation's purpose was essential—without this alignment, there would be little reason to form a partnership.

Overall, social entrepreneurs valued collaboration and saw partnerships as a way of achieving their goals. As discussed in the last section, social entrepreneurs were keen on mobilising their networks, achieving other partners, and reaching their target public. Some of them saw social inclusion as their mission and understood that the only way to achieve this purpose was through aligned partnerships.

Regarding extrinsic motivations, social entrepreneurs were driven by the relevance of the partner, the raw materials and promotion, as shown in Table 17. However, the relevance of the partner can be perceived as the partner's position, power to influence others, and know-how, which we will explore more in competencies necessities. The partner's position and power to influence others are connected with reputation/status and guide social entrepreneurs in establishing the first contact with the partner. In some cases, the partner's position can take the project out of the paper or even connect the social entrepreneurs to other partners, as it happened in case E7, where the partners, who were a lawyer, established the first contact with an international partner.

The partner's relevance affects extrinsic motivation's other elements: raw materials and promotion. In this case, the relevance of the partner may be connected with the sustainable and organic materials, which are essential to the development of the product. On the other hand, in cases where social entrepreneurs establish partnerships with social influencers, the relevance of the partner is in the extent to which they can influence and reach their target public. Therefore, partner relevance is intrinsically connected with the other motivators to establish a partnership.

The lack of suppliers was also considered as extrinsic motivation because it directly affected the decision to establish the partnership. However, this factor was cited for just one interviewee and the same case where we identified a more causal approach to partnerships. Interviewee E4 demonstrated that the criteria regarding the partner were more well-established than in other cases, which may have affected the option of partnerships. In other cases, social entrepreneurs tended to be more flexible with raw materials once their organisation was focused on upcycling.

The market strategy also influenced the decision to establish new partnerships, mainly to position the organisation in the market. Market strategy may or may not be related to financial resources, even though social entrepreneurs want to reach new markets and reach their target public or other partners more aligned with their purpose. As E8 (2025) stated,

I want a partnership that brings knowledge and adds value, someone who works alongside me, takes over the commercial aspect so I can focus on the product, and helps boost the business with their expertise, investment, and overall support.

The financial resources were mentioned, and the importance of establishing partnerships was highlighted, especially with interviewee E7, which highlighted the importance of receiving financial support, given that since the organisation's inception, it has been self-financed. Now that they aspire to achieve market expansion and establish a strong position, they anticipate securing a partner to invest in the organisation.

Interviewee E11 also recognised the significance of financial support, particularly in facilitating further organisational development. For interviewee E12, partnerships with private companies and public calls for proposals contributed to bringing the project out of the conceptual phase, and they anticipate the formation of additional partnerships that can provide financial support for the project.

As we can observe from Table 17, financial support is not mentioned frequently, even though, by the relevance of the partners, they can gather financial support for their projects. Nevertheless, financial support seems essential to develop their ideas and products, especially if they want to be independent from donations.

Besides intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, another dimension identified as a motivator was **competencies necessities**, understood by the search for complementary skills of the social entrepreneur with their partners. The primary motivator for establishing a partnership in competencies necessities was their knowledge and how it could contribute to product development. Unlike raw materials, knowledge is considered a tacit resource within the organisation. We identified three types of competencies necessities: i) know-how, ii) knowledge, and iii) ideas/innovation, as presented in Table 15.

Table 15 – Types of Competencies Necessities

Competencies necessities	Examples	N° of cases
Know-how	“And the thing is, I do not understand anything about programming. So I had to partner with someone” (Interviewee E2, 2025).	9
Knowledge	“We spent over three hours there, but they did not show the process. They only showed the results and the constraints. For me, that alone was already a lesson, you know? That moment was the beginning of a powerful partnership that truly took off”. (Interviewee E4, 2025)	5
Idea/innovation	“So, they found this biodegradable thread, which is different from regular polyamide, because when we discard a bikini, we throw it away, right? (...)” (Interviewee E6, 2025)	8

Source: Author’s own (2025)

For this study, know-how was mentioned in 9 cases and is comprehended as the practical and technical ability; the interviewees mentioned the know-how as the capacity of the partner to collaborate with practical ability regarding both the fashion field and the organisation's strategy. When they needed a specific operational competence, and in the case of the umbrella project of Umbra (E12) and the 3D printing (E8), they searched for partners that could provide them with know-how. Interviewee E8 also explained that his partners had important roles in producing the parts of the shoes, explaining that the operational part of the project was discussed with them before making the shoes once the final idea could be different from the previous design.

One factor contributing to the continuation of the partnership is the partners' competence to suggest interventions and ideas. Interviewed E7 also sees the potential of their partners in their know-how, explaining that the motivation for setting partnerships nowadays is the organisation's strategy and how their know-how can contribute to the organisation's development.

“(...) Someone that collaborates with the mechanical part of the project” (Interviewee E1, 2025).

“(...) Without the know-how of my partner, we would not exist!” (Interviewee E11, 2025).

Knowledge, on the other hand, refers to theoretical knowledge linked to study and learning. It is highlighted in the interviews, mainly when partners engaged in post-class interactions. In this context, the interviewees expressed a keen interest in acquiring knowledge about the process and concept of enhancing organisational sustainability.

They acknowledged the partner's expertise as a significant motivator for establishing a partnership, as recounted by interviewee E12 when they sought to partner with an entity capable of imparting the intricacies of umbrella up-cycling. "We looked for this woman who was a designer (...) who had been working with the up-cycling umbrella since 2013, so we asked her to be incubated by her project, so she could teach us how the methodology was". Therefore, the partner's primary interest lies in acquiring un readily available knowledge. However, they continue to collaborate with the designer on various projects.

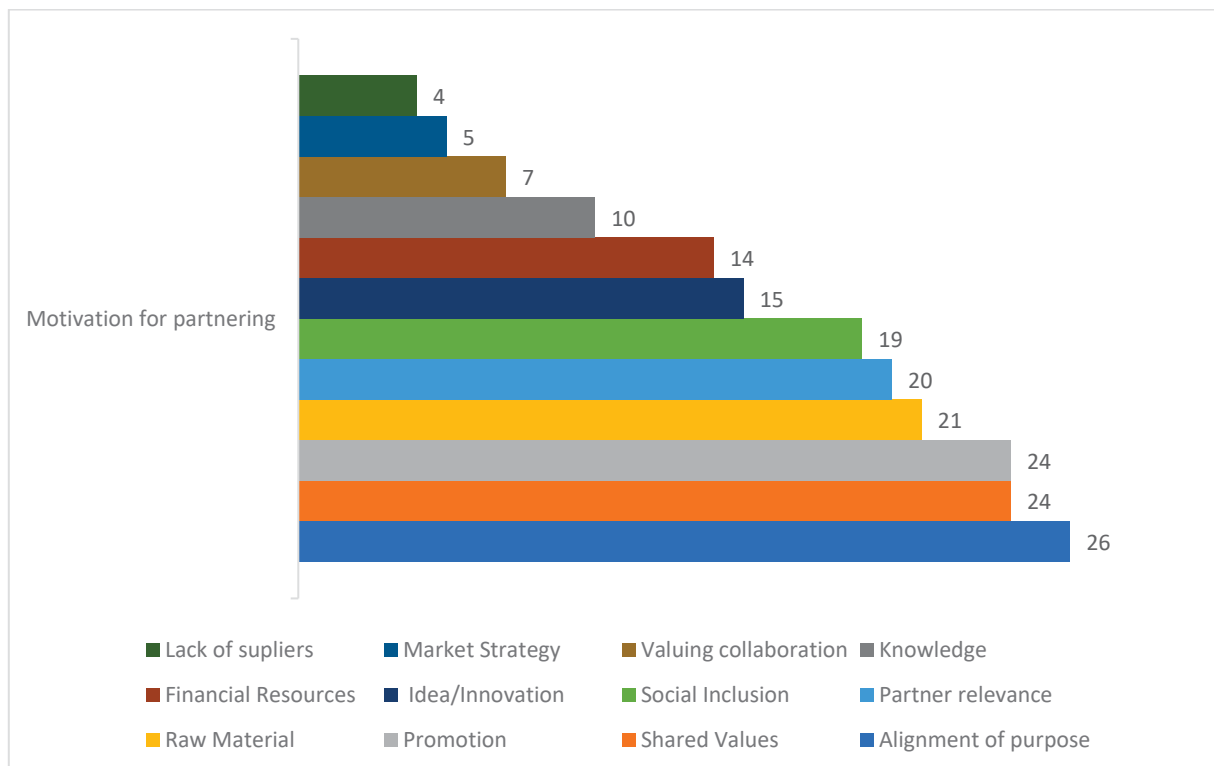
Idea/innovation was identified as a catalyst for establishing novel partnerships, particularly in sourcing sustainable raw materials. In the case of Interview E6, the innovation of her partner's biodegradable product played a pivotal role in initiating the partnership. For

Interviewees E4 and E11, the partner's innovative initiatives in the sustainable field were also viewed as a positive indicator, leading to the continuation of the partnership.

Conversely, Interview E1 regarded innovation as a pivotal aspect of the partnership, positing that increased innovation on the partner's part indicated a more substantial alignment with their vision. This, in turn, facilitated a more effective visualisation of the idea and the development of practical, innovative solutions.

Graphic 2 shows how often the interviewees cited a theme when asked about the motivators for establishing partnerships. Intrinsic motivators are represented in red, extrinsic motivators in blue, and competencies necessities in orange.

Graphic 2 – Frequency of themes Motivation for partnering



Source: Author's own (2025)

As demonstrated in Graphic 2, know-how is frequently mentioned by interviewees, which implies that social entrepreneurs are motivated to establish a new partnership because they are interested in understanding how they should best develop their actions from the point of view of a partner with greater experience. In these cases, partners assume an executor role; in other words, they are responsible for executing the social entrepreneur's idea.

However, social entrepreneurs carefully choose partners, favouring those aligned with their purpose and shared values. It is important to highlight that shared values were the most

mentioned motivators to establish a partnership, recognising the organisation's values and mission as an extension of its identity. Therefore, partners not aligned in purpose and values could not recognise the organisation's mission and, consequently, would diminish the achievement of purpose. Two scenarios were available if this happened: the dual logic would transform into a market logic, or the partnership would be terminated.

Even though these factors were mentioned more, each case is a particular case, especially given the context in which they are inserted and how long the organisation has been established. Younger social entrepreneurs, for example, were more inclined to the partner's reputation. Over time, as the partnerships developed, they realised that the position of the partner and the power of their influence depended on could not maintain the partnership in the long term, redefining their motivators.

On the other hand, social entrepreneurs who had been in the market for a long time were often more attached to their values and purpose instead of looking for a partner's reputation. Over time, they experienced partnerships where partners were not aligned with their purpose and could not value the idea.

As in the first section, Table 16 was created to present the analysis structure followed regarding the motivations for establishing partnerships based on the Gioia method.

Table 16 – Motivation Gioia Table Dynamics

1° Orden concept (code)	2° Concept (theme)	Aggregated dimension
Similar purpose	Alignment of purpose	Intrinsic Motivation
Shared vision		
Understand and collaborate with the mission.		
Similar thoughts	Shared values	
A shared vision of life		
Seeking the same values		
Social initiative	Social Inclusion	
Achieve marginalised groups		
Give voice to marginalised groups.		
Recognition of partner's importance	Valuing collaboration	
Strategy support	Promotion	Extrinsic Motivation
Influencing capacity	Partner relevance	
Partner's reputation		
Partner's relevant position		
Exchange of material	Raw Material	

Reuse of materials		
Limitation of partners	Lack of suppliers	
Niche market		
Difficulties in finding partners		
Strategy influence	Market strategy	
Investment	Financial Support	
Technique	Know-how	Competencies necessities
Operational knowledge of the project		
Tacit knowledge	Knowledge	
Learning		
Entrepreneurial vision	ideas/innovation	
Innovative initiatives		

Source: Author's own (2025)

4.4 THE ROLE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL IN EFFECTUAL PARTNERSHIPS

In the previous section, we investigated the motivators for establishing partnerships. In the present section, we analysed the partnership dynamics and how it occurred in the cases involved in this study. In order to capture the social capital, this section is divided into four subsections, as follows: i) structural dimension, which refers to the configuration and pattern established in the networks; ii) relational dimension, referring to the characteristics and qualities of social relationships, and iii) cognitive dimension, referring to the shared understanding that provides a system of meanings and iv) the social capital within the effectual partnerships approach.

4.4.1 Structural dimension: the role of partners

In this subsection, we will explore how the structural dimension of social capital influences the relationship within partnerships. The structural dimension is the tangible dimension of social capital related to the configuration of partnerships, such as formalisation, rules, and roles that partners must follow to become part of the partnership.

During the data analysis, we observed that social entrepreneurs consider criteria to decide whether a partner suits them. The criteria are part of the network configuration, which guides social entrepreneurs in their interactions with their partners. In the analyses, we identified 7 criteria organised in 5 dimensions, as shown in Table 17.

Table 17 – Criteria to Establish Partnerships

Criteria	Criteria Dimension	Definition	Cases	N° of cases
Commitment to Sustainability	Behavioural criteria	Refers to how committed partners are to sustainability in their actions and projects.	E4, E6, E7, E9, E10, E11, E12	7
Ethical practices		Fair and ethical practices refer to how partners can fulfil agreements and how they behave towards their partners and employees.	E3, E4, E5, E6, E7, E8, E9, E10, E11, E12	10
Honesty		Refers to the level of transparency expected in the partnership exchange.	E2, E3, E4, E7, E8, E10, E11, E12	8
Mutual Exchange		It refers to a balanced, mutual and respectful exchange in which both parties can win.	E1, E3, E4, E5, E7, E8, E10, E11, E12	9

Political Position	Ideological criteria	The partner's political position affects their entry into the partnership.	E9, E12	2
Quality of work	Technical criteria	The partner's ability to deliver quality on time.	E3, E4, E6, E11	4
Strategy Alignment	Strategic criteria	The ability of the partner to contribute to the achievement of the social, environmental and economic objectives.	E1, E4, E6, E9, E10	5

Source: Author's own (2025)

As we can observe from Table 17, behavioural criteria, which refers to partners' behaviour towards social entrepreneurs and their employees, were the most frequent when social entrepreneurs were asked about partner's criteria. Social entrepreneurs tended to pay attention to the partner's behaviour during the partnerships; they even inspected their partners' premises to check that there was no slave labour and how their employees were treated (cases E4, E5 and E8).

Similarly, interviewees emphasised the importance of verifying a partner's commitment to sustainability and sustainable initiatives before forming partnerships, aligning with the organisation's values and purpose. Social entrepreneurs were attentive to their partners and were committed to sustainability, whether they were greenwashing. Interviewee E12, as a journalist, gathered information about the partner even before establishing the partnership. If any irregularities were identified, the partnership would be cancelled, so this criterion was important for developing the partnership.

Honesty - relationship transparency -was also considered important for social entrepreneurs. Being honest and open about their difficulties or what they could do for their partner at the time was essential and was seen as a way of showing real commitment to their partner. Case E8, for example, valued transparency in their relationships, the freedom of their partners to share whether the partnership was going well, and the difficulties. For him, this sharing translated into a sense of belonging, and from this transparency, he knew whether his partner was committed to him. Furthermore, as E3 stated, the level of transparency also collaborates to achieve their social purpose: "I want to be transparent with you so that, yes, we can truly keep transforming the lives of these women and their families more and more" (Interviewee E3, 2025).

Moreover, social entrepreneurs favoured partnerships with a mutual and balanced exchange between the parties as an essential way to maintain a good relationship. In this sense, partnerships can only be beneficial if both parties gain tangible resources (e.g. market positioning) and achieve the organisation's social purpose. As stated by interviewee E10, "

Well, I think that when we talk about partnerships, they need to be profitable for everyone, right? So, I believe the gain is exactly that—when everyone benefits financially” and complemented by E12 “It is for everyone, for both projects—we drew from the same source, collaborated, and gave back”.

Strategic alignment was important for social entrepreneurs but was less mentioned as a criterion. However, the pillars of sustainability were considered very important to them, as they were a way of achieving a change in consumption. In this case, partners were chosen with a view to how they would help achieve this goal, as interviewee E4 shared, “So, it is always about thinking of how I can make a greater impact on all pillars of sustainability”.

The quality of the partner's work was also mentioned as a criterion, referring more to how the partner delivered what they promised on time and to the agreed quality. For interviewee E11, for example, the quality of his partner's work had to be exceptional; otherwise, the partnership would not work, and the chances of continuity would be reduced.

One of the explanations for this is the need to have the product delivered at that time, especially for fashion fairs and events. The product will not be offered if there is no raw material or a delay in some process. In the case of interviewees E3 and E12, who partner with companies to reuse the material, the delivery needs to be formalised on both sides, especially as it is a private company, and in the case of interviewee E12, a public company, which needs to be accounted for at the end of each service.

Ideological criteria were the least mentioned during the interview and related to behaviour or similarity of political thought. If the partner was at odds with the social entrepreneurs' ideologies, there was a good chance that the partnership would not continue.

In three months, the team made, I do not know, 300 corsets and many influencers wanted them because of the World Cup—but they had an utterly pro-Bolsonaro stance at the time. Moreover, I stand for sustainable fashion in Brazil. There was no way I could support that. (Interviewee E9, 2025)

If it was a fascist right-wing government, then we are very clear about taking this precaution, right? (Interviewee E12, 2025).

Based on these criteria, social entrepreneurs sought to expand their social networks. As we explored in the previous sections, social entrepreneurs mobilised their network in the crazy quilt principle through alternative networks, events, expansion through referrals, personal contacts, social media, and support from institutions and incubators. In the structural dimension of social capital, we named these initiatives as **social networks**, which refer to bonding - strong

ties, often between friends, colleagues or family - and bridging ties - weak ties, encompassing between partners from different groups, often with no previous connection.

Friendship and family support were identified as bonding ties because of the partnership's nature and the support these partners provided. Initially, the interviewees showed difficulty recognising the ties as a possible partnership, although they recognised that the organisation's history would have been different without this support.

Such support was not financial but emotional, in which the bonds help develop the idea through excitement and incentive, as seen in cases E6 and E7, with the support of friends and family for the organisation's development. In case E3, the family supported the development of the organisation's first years and even participated in elaborating the idea. On the other hand, in case E11, a well-known work colleague facilitated the initial phase of the organisation because of their previous contact and partnership history.

The support of friends and family was even more complex because, more than emotional support, they provided their expertise and know-how, especially regarding organisation administration. In case E5, a friend of his is responsible for reimagining the organisation. In contrast, in cases E8 and E9, the family helps to administrate the organisation, while the interviewees can concentrate on the design part of the project.

Partnerships between social entrepreneurs often begin through bridging ties, which leverage networks to create initial connections. These ties are frequently formed online, via social media, or during events where social entrepreneurs meet. As the relationships develop, some bridging ties deepen into liking ties, strengthened by mutual admiration and shared goals.

We elaborated on Table 19 based on Table 13 and the data analysis of bonding and bridging ties. Table 18 also presents some phrases of social entrepreneurs that help to elucidate how the partners collaborated in mobilising their network.

Table 18 – Evidence of bonding and bridging ties

Type of social network	Case	Type of mobilisation	Data Example
Bonding	E2, E3, E6, E7, E8, E9, E10, E11	Friends	My friend lives in Chapada dos Veadeiros, which is close to Brasília. (...) She helps me a lot. She even tells me, "Amara, come to Chapada dos Veadeiros, bring a suitcase full of bikinis—everyone here wants bikinis!" (E6)
			Some of my partners lived there, and since I also studied and knew many people, some became my friends. Of course, they are my suppliers and partners" (E8)
		Family	So I went to my mother's house, which had a garage and a mezzanine that was not being used. I started using that space, which is about 100 m ² , but it is already getting too small. (E3)
			My sister also helps me with some tasks related to the brand. (E9)

		Colleagues	One of the partners I met was in 1988. He is an investor partner. Back then, he was a university professor. Now we already work together. (E2)
Bridging Ties	E3, E5	Events	In 2017, we participated in São Paulo Fashion Week at the invitation of the event's organisers, as part of the "Seta Nativa" initiative, where we showcased several looks. (...) We also partnered with Ronaldo Fraga at São Paulo Fashion Week in 2015. (E2)
			I met them at the moment of the partnership. I went to the Blue Brasil studio, a branch of ethnobotany focused on natural dyeing. They sell dyeing products and fabrics. So I visited their studio in São Paulo and talked to Letra, a well-known dyer in the market. We talked for over three hours, and she showed me the entire process. (E4)
	E3, E5, E6, E7	Expansion through referrals	This girl started searching online for fabric waste and discovered that Univille—the university where we studied—had something related. She contacted a professor there, and the professor referred her to me. Then she reached out to me, which is how the process started. (E3)
			Regarding the partner who bought Crab Hollow in the beginning, he says he met the buyer through a friend in Canada. The friend spoke highly of him, and since he intended to sell the brand, he decided to go through with it. (E5)
E6, E7, E9, E10	Social Media	I started making these pieces, and many people got interested. That is when I began reaching out to influencers who talked about sustainability, but at that time, there were not as many upcycling brands as there are today. (E9)	
E1, E2, E3, E7	Institutions and incubators	Quintessa opened up some possibilities for us, including the chance to think about angel investors and similar opportunities.	

Source: Author's own (2025)

Institutions and incubators played an important role in expanding the social networks of social entrepreneurs. However, institutions and incubators can be identified as associational membership and institutional networks within the social capital.

Associational membership focuses on formalised systems that connect entrepreneurs with critical resources, such as investors. Table 18 shows that these systems also play an important role in expanding networks. In this case, Quintessa and Sebrae contributed to achieving new partners and investors in case E7.

However, the paper on associational membership provided a structured framework for partnerships, collaborating to access resources and management techniques, refining governance practices and tailoring market strategy. E5, for example, shared that during the initial phase of the Crab Hollow, he frequented Sebrae. For him, Sebrae was a place where he could talk and discuss his ideas with others, which helped him improve his ideas and the market strategy during these discussions. Therefore, the associational membership created a secure

space where social entrepreneurs could share their ideas, narrow their niche and clarify their business direction.

Different from associational membership, **institutional networks** emphasise collaborative efforts to generate innovation. These institutions can be identified as universities, but the main difference is the paper that they play in the partnership. For example, institutional networks collaborate actively in the project, sharing their know-how or knowledge to add to the development of the product. A good example of institutional partnerships is the established partnership between fashion industries and universities, where, in these cases, the universities have specific knowledge in the production of biodegradable materials, which is the result of academic research that has not yet been tested on the market. In this case, the social entrepreneurs come in to learn and assimilate this knowledge, investing equally in research.

In the data analysis, we identified the institutional networks in case E3 when they first collaborated with a local university to add cultural identity to their products. Interviewee E2, for instance, worked with universities to develop sustainable clothing production methods and also collaborated on articles, presenting the results at USP and in China, where the interviewee participates in research forums.

The relationship between institutional networks was more evident in case E2 than in other cases. The background of social entrepreneur E2 may have helped him recognise the importance and strength of these networks, although the organisation's primary focus influenced his partnership decisions more significantly. Despite this, institutional networks did not play a decisive role in his partnerships, as he led the initiatives at Seta Nativa, built its path independently, and invested his resources. Although interviewee E2 could mobilise his networks, he could not align his partners' actions towards his organisational objectives.

So, this project is not just mine—it is public policy because it involves different institutions. I got involved with Sebrae and was part of the technology incubator in Maringá, a city government partner. I worked on two projects with Sebrae—one of them was in collaboration with Sebrae and UEM, where master's students in chemical engineering conducted tests on natural dyeing at an industrial scale, following metamerism control standards (such a fancy word), ensuring consistency in dyeing and the persistence of the dye against light exposure. I did this as part of a Sebrae-funded project. The students were scholarship recipients under a Sebrae initiative. My project for the "Seta Nativa" brand kiosk, where I sold silk accessories, was also funded by SebraeTech. I went there, presented the project, and said, "Look, this is how it will be. I plan to test this business model for use in major cities. However, I am in Maringá, so I will test it first. If it works, I will expand to major cities around the world. It did not work!" (Interviewee E2, 2025)

Structure and governance—the roles and rules established between partners—can analyse how partnerships develop. These two aspects are interconnected and reflect the level of formality or informality in the partnership.

Role, for example, refers to what is expected from the partner in the collaboration, which can be formalised (e.g., through a specific title or position) or informalised (e.g., in more casual exchanges). On the other hand, the **rules** are external mechanisms of regulation and protection, which can also be formalised by the presence of contracts or specific rules that define the partners of the relationship set by the partners. Generally, bonding ties rarely require formal rules, while bridging ties may necessitate formal agreements to foster trust.

The interviewees often clearly defined the role of the partners because even before setting the partnership, they set criteria for what they expected from a partner. Another point is the niche market the interviewees are in, which limits their search for new partners. They often established rules to manage these partnerships better to prevent future conflicts. Even in the case of bonding ties, expectations were often formalised, except when involving family or friends who provided more emotional support.

Regarding rules, social entrepreneurs generally preferred to establish formal agreements, although the rules were informal for some of their partners. In other cases, the rules were formalised due to their partners' impositions. As seen in cases E6, E9, and E10, partnerships developed through social media only occurred with the backing of contracts. In E10's case, while the contract was not formally registered, she clearly outlined the rules to ensure mutual understanding and safety for both parties.

Almost all the negotiators have their advisory. So, there is already a contract to sign. (Interviewee E6, 2025)

However, I will promote your brand there, which has an extensive reach. For example, you'll pay me 8,000 BRL if you want me to post about you for three months. So, I do not necessarily need to tag you in every post. I can also go there, and after my trip, I will post the content. It is not a "gift" but a promotion. (Interviewee E9, 2025)

Now, when it is with people we do not know yet, there is an agreement. It is not exactly a formal signed contract, but the person has to give an OK. So, it is clear, like, "Look, here is what you need to do—this and this. Are you on board?" "Yes, I am." However, there has to be clarity so that later there is no confusion, like, "But that was not the deal," or "I did not know that..." Both sides need to be clear about it, you know? (Interviewee E10, 2025)

In cases where we identified a more causal approach (E4 and E12), they established the contracts at the beginning of the partnership. In case E12, the rules were formalised, mainly

because they usually established partnerships with industries or public institutions through public calls.

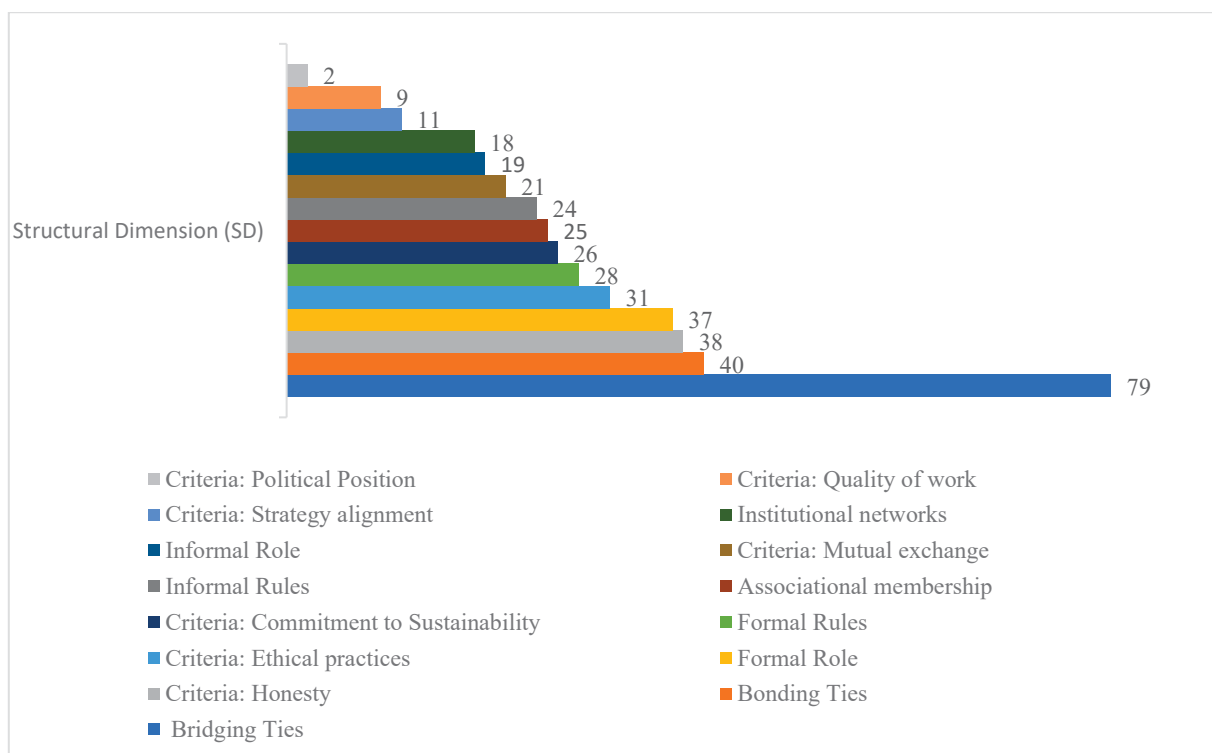
For example, I dedicate a certain amount of my monthly tax funds to this project's execution because when law projects, specifically law-based projects, support you, you have a severe accountability process to the government. (Interviewee E12, 2025)

On the other hand, some social entrepreneurs preferred to maintain informal rules, allowing the flexibility and adaptability of the partnerships. This also depended on the development of the organisation. For example, in the beginning, when there was no metric of outcome or predictability of the idea, social entrepreneurs opted for informal rules, prospecting to establish formal rules in the future to coordinate the partnership, as in the case of E2.

Informal and formal rules relate to a causal approach. We noted that social entrepreneurs may adopt more formal rules for future partnerships. Formal roles did not impact partnership flexibility; as shown in Graphic 3, they mobilised bridging ties effectively. However, rules may influence partnership progression and relational dynamics, which will be discussed next.

Graphic three shows how often the interviewees cited a theme when asked about the partnership's structure.

Graphic 3 – Frequency of themes Structural dimension



Source: Author's own (2025)

An overview of the cases shows that social entrepreneurs mobilise their networks through bridging ties. These networks connect them to new ideas, innovations, and opportunities for collaboration with other partners.

However, as the data analysis indicates, social entrepreneurs do not establish partnerships indiscriminately but carefully consider the roles and criteria of potential partners. Even with existing partners, social entrepreneurs remain vigilant, paying close attention to their partners' actions. This suggests that, despite partnerships' flexibility and adaptability, they are developed within specific patterns that help refine and strengthen them.

As illustrated in Graphic 3, honesty and ethical practices are key expectations for partners. If a partner fails to meet these established standards, there is no reason to continue the partnership. Social entrepreneurs are deeply committed to their beliefs and mission. If a partner is not aligned with these values, they can hinder the social entrepreneur's ability to achieve their goals.

Furthermore, the data analysis reveals the mixed nature of social entrepreneurs' approach. The structural dimension demonstrates that, although relationships within the crazy quilt principle may appear flexible and informal, interactions between partners are often more complex. Over time, social entrepreneurs are expected to establish more formal rules to coordinate and structure these interactions, ensuring that their partners remain aligned with the organisation's purpose and mission. The following section will explore how interactions within these partnerships unfold within the relational dimension.

As in other sections, Table 19 presents the analysis structure followed regarding the motivations for establishing partnerships based on the Gioia method.

Table 19 – Structural Dimension Gioia Table Dynamics

1° Orden concept (code)	2° Concept (theme)	Aggregated dimension
Family bonds	Bonding Ties	Social Networks
Friends and colleagues support		
Referees of partners	Bridging Ties	
Partners from events and fairs		
Recognition		
Mentor and Support	Incubators	Associational Memberships
Facilitated contact with investors	Networks expansion	
Strategy support	Structure support	
Learning and expertise	Product development	Institutional networks
Idea development	University and Sebrae	
Contracts	Role	Structure and Governance

Commercial agreements	Rule		
Fulfilling agreements			
Establishing deadlines			
Influence			
Responsibility for the agreement			
Awareness of responsibility			
Confidence in the fulfilment of the agreement			
Commitment to Sustainability	Behavioural criteria	Configuration of network	
Ethical practices			
Honesty			
Mutual Exchange			
Political Position			Ideological criteria
Quality of work			Technical criteria
Strategic alignment	Strategy criteria		

Source: Author's own (2025)

4.4.2 Relational dimension: Trust and reciprocity

This section will discuss the relational aspects of social entrepreneurs' partnerships within the relational dimension of social capital. The relational dimension refers to the characteristics and qualities of social capital networks, such as trust and expectations of a partner. It shows how interactions occur within partners, often based on non-patible aspects of the relationship between partners.

Firstly, we identified the need for **trust**, an essential element that allows partnerships to develop over time. Because of the organisation's mission and the flexibility at the beginning of partnerships, the relational structure demanded partners who could assimilate the organisation's mission without second agendas or the idea that any partner could be opportunistic. This kind of thinking could reduce the chances of developing a long-term partnership.

Another thing that I think is important in this kind of relationship is trust, you know? Some people come with expectations and think everybody will pull a fast one on them, and they are suspicious that it will not work. (Interviewee E10, 2025)

In some cases, trust was intrinsic to the relationship between partners, reflected in how respondents referred to their partners and the confidence that their partners would deliver what was promised, even putting small tasks into their partners' hands or trusting that the production process would be delivered on time.

When you do not have trust, the operation stops. You have to check before you take the next step because the shoe is a construction. You are going to work the mats for it (the shoes). So, what happened when you did not have much trust at the beginning was a process of stopping and checking, and doing another process (...) (Interviewee E8, 2025)

In the interaction of the partners, it was possible to gain insight into how interviewees perceived trust within the interaction. For them, trust meant mutual support for the development of the idea and sustainable commitment. In this case, it was common to hear from the interviewees how they wanted/expected their partners to support their ideas and collaborate on the project. The partnership experience, such as the partner's willingness to always help and participate in fairs and events, contributed to the interviewees seeing the partnership as reliable.

It is the exchange. It is the livingness. There are people that I'm affectionate with, who have been there since the beginning, helped me a lot, and believed in my work. (Interviewee E9, 2025)

Regarding **loyalty**, interviewees also mentioned fidelity, although this factor is more related to how respondents manage their partnerships. For example, they value maintaining a certain level of fidelity in their interactions to reduce the number of swapping partners. For the interviewees, it is challenging to change partners once a few partners are aligned with sustainability and social impact, a non-negotiable criterion.

(...) So, I am loyal to my suppliers, and I am loyal to the partners I have. A few of my clients are partners, mainly, you know? I do it the other way around: sometimes, it is more expensive economically, but in the future, it pays off. (Interviewee E1, 2025)

This issue of loyalty is important to me (...). For example, the design of the shoe's sole is essential to me, even more so for a sole that is not available in the market. So, I must take care of this partner making my shoe's sole. (Interviewee E8, 2025)

Beyond trustworthiness and loyalty, the partnership presented mechanisms of controls that govern partnership interactions, called **norms and sanctions**. Even though social entrepreneurs were inclined to be more flexible at the beginning of the partnership, the interactions were based on implicit and explicit norms over time.

Implicit norms are not explicitly communicated (e.g., code of conduct) but are accepted by everyone, such as bringing a gift for the party's host. These implicit norms relate to the ability of partners to share knowledge, share the same political positions, and behave ethically. On the other hand, explicit norms can be previously established by contract or code of conduct and can be related to legal norms. These norms are legal because they can involve commercial contracts and sometimes lead to legal actions.

As we explored the motivation and structure dimension, interviewees were interested in collaborating with the partner by sharing knowledge and know-how. Regarding norms and sanctions, the partner's ability to share knowledge is important and tends to increase as communication between the partners develops. If the partner cannot share expertise, or his expert becomes obsolete or unnecessary due to a change in objectives or the product, the partnership ends. For example, in case E2, the social entrepreneur changed his objectives and looked for new partners to fund a new organisation, breaking up his initial partnership. In the same case, the first partnerships did not lead to an embedded commitment, as expected, and led to the end of the partnership.

Ethical behaviour can be seen as an implicit social norm, although it is not based on a contract or a code of conduct. However, it is essential that the partners have a good relationship with their workers, treat them well and maintain a fair exchange with them. In addition, ethical

behaviour refers not only to the partners' behaviour towards their workers but also to greenwashing, which is contrary to what is expected of a company that claims to be sustainable. As the interviewees are looking for a fair exchange, the partner has to follow the same criteria. Otherwise, the exchange between the partners ends before it even starts, which can be seen as a sanction by the group.

It makes no sense for a brand that I know to be greenwashing, you know? I will hand over the keys and say, "Here, use my name and everything I have built up in these 20 years." No, it is not like that. I prefer to close and leave five to leave it in the hands of someone who can ... you know? To drag my good name through the mud, I do not want that. (Interviewee E11, 2025)

Another point, although cited by a few interviewees, is now aligned with the political position of the partner. For some, the political position was negotiable once the knowledge shared between partners was important to the product's development and difficult to replace. Even though not established in a contract, cases where the political position was a norm involved partnerships with influencers or partners through social media. In such cases, the partner's position could positively or negatively influence the organisation's image. If the partner disagrees with the interviewee's political position, there is no space for a partnership.

So, I consider personal matters, such as the person's substance. Even if they are fashion influencers, that is fine, but what about their political stance—do they have one? Because I believe that when you are a content creator, it is impossible to separate yourself from that. We need to consider it. (Interviewee E9, 2025)

Table 20 summarises the implicit norms and their sanctions observed in the analyses.

Table 20 – Implicit norms and sanctions

Implicit norms	Definition	Sanctions
Sharing of knowledge	Partner's ability to share knowledge and expertise.	Partner gradually loses their position, culminating in the end of partnerships and searching for new partners.
Ethical behaviour	Partners must prioritise ethical practice and balance in their actions.	
Political Positioning	Partners must share similar political views.	

Source: Author's own (2025)

On the other hand, there are also explicit norms, which, in this context, sustainable certifications are established as a pattern to establish partnerships that are expected to be followed by all partners. Sometimes, it is an exception, but only if the partner gives his word that will accomplish the established pattern. Without sustainable certifications, the partnership does not occur or occur in limited aspects of the partnership.

Reliability is also considered an explicit norm communicated from commercial contracts to prevent damages to people involved in the project, who depend on payments to maintain their families. When this norm is not accomplished, each case's sanctions vary. For example, some interviewees said that they would reduce or stop delivering the products in this case. However, to maintain loyalty with their partner, they would opt for an open conversation without involving legal actions, except if it was extremely necessary.

Most respondents would choose this position, but in the case of E11, for example, the situation between the partners was exacerbated by the pandemic and a breach of contract that eroded trust and led to a lawsuit. This situation arose after E11 delivered the products on time, but the company refused to pay and receive the product on the previously agreed date, postponing the deadline. E11 relied on the payment to pay its internal staff and maintain the organisation. It had to take out a loan from the bank to cover the most urgent expenses, which also put the organisation into debt. Furthermore, the legal action was not just a sanction but led to the end of the partnership.

(...) I spent everything I had to finance this operation. When it was done, I told them, and they said, "Oh, you know what happened? Our marketing team has been delayed, and we will only launch in June." (...) 'The broth has been spilt', (...) and so it was done. I received it a month later, and I got a loan. However, it was a breach of contract. (Interviewee E11, 2025)

The third explicit norm is deadline fulfilment, which interviewees emphasise as essential for maintaining good relationships. It is clearly outlined in contracts, and failing to meet deadlines can result in terminated partnerships or lost trust. However, close relationships may mitigate this norm's impact. Table 21 summarises the implicit norms and associated sanctions observed in the analyses.

Table 21 – Explicit norms and sanctions

Explicit norms	Definition	Sanction
Sustainable certifications	The partner must obtain all regularisations and certifications for sustainable behaviour and practices.	Partnership does not occur or occur in limited aspects of the partnership.
Reliability	The partner must pay attention to commercial contracts, ensuring compliance without affecting the organisation's development.	Reduce or stop supplying the products or use.
Deadline fulfilment	The partner must stick to commercial contracts and fulfil them on time.	End of the partnership or loss of trust

Source: Author's own (2025)

Obligations and expectations are different from norms and sanctions. Norms and sanctions are patterns that govern the relationship and dictate who can enter the group or not. Obligations and expectations are more relational, referring to the expectation that social entrepreneurs want to receive within the interaction. However, there are no rules and no sanctions in the relationship, except in some cases when the obligation is not fulfilled, and it is essential to maintain the relationship as effective communication. In obligations and expectations, we identified understanding, support, and camaraderie.

Understanding refers to the empathy and compassion partners show in comprehending the organisation's challenges and purpose. For instance, interviewee E3 explained that the women she works with are homemakers who face various challenges, sometimes impacting product delivery. In such cases, contracts are structured with realistic deadlines that account for these difficulties.

This sense of understanding is something E3 actively practices in her relationships with her workers and expects in return. For example, her relationship with her partners improved significantly when they experienced similar situations faced by these women—such as having babies while managing work responsibilities and struggling to find time for their children. These experiences helped her partners genuinely appreciate the organisation's value and purpose.

Supporting each other in the project is also seen as an obligation and expectation that did not directly affect the relationship but was present in the respondents' expectations of their partners and how they treated them by supporting the events and the idea. The feeling of being supported by their partners also created a sense of belonging or a strong tie with the partner, as it was common to hear that the partner helped them from the beginning.

The sense of camaraderie refers to the freedom to openly share challenges, knowledge, and personal aspects of their lives—positive or negative—regarding one another, creating a safe space for dialogue. Interviewees E1, E3, and E8 tried to maintain a safe space for sharing and communication, showing great sensitivity towards the partner's emotions (e.g. frustration, anger, overload). For interviewee E8, communication was a way of finding out whether the partner was committed to him, and if not, the **sanction** would be the end of the partnership. In this sense, communication fosters trust and strengthens the relationship.

Proximity in social capital relationships can be seen as interpersonal dynamics that reflect the feeling of affection, bond, friendliness, familiarity, and reciprocity; in other words, the profound aspect of human exchanges. Unlike other codes of relational dimension, proximity is an inductive code identified, even literally expressed, by the interviewee.

For interviewees, proximity is expressed as being friends with their partner (friendliness). In some cases, the partners were friends before establishing the partnership – familiarity (Case E2, E3, E5, E6, E7, E8, E9, E10, E12); however, in other cases, these partnerships developed over time (E1, E3, E4, E9, E11). What we identified as a supportive factor to friendliness for bonding and bridging ties was the shared experience, in other words, how many events and experiences the partners experienced together, such as difficulty, organisational victories or failures, and the partners' growth over time. In some cases, it was a perception of the affectional bond these experiences gave to the partners, a feeling that could be experienced by a friend, for example.

In the case of E5, familiarity can also be understood as a norm or sanction because, given experience with opportunistic partners, he needed to have familiarity with the partners with whom he was establishing the partnership. Familiarity, on the other hand, can also be developed over time, as it happened in the case E4, in which the social entrepreneurs had no acquaintance with the partners, but over the partnership developed a sense of reciprocity, in other words, a feeling of affection or trust.

Another inductive code identified during the interview was **Reputation/Status**, which refers to a feeling of admiration or the capacity to influence the partner's reputation/status (position, number of followers on social media) or the proximity of their partner. The interviewees frequently mentioned reputation/status; for some, the admiration for the partner's ethical behaviour was a plus to maintaining the partnership.

I am not only focused on his actions towards the environment but also his relationships with people, right? So, he has always been kind. They helped their employees during the pandemic, making a real difference. Meanwhile, I do not know other companies that fired people, said goodbye and hired young people who did not understand anything about the business to save costs. They did not devalue their employees. So, this increased my admiration for them and strengthened our partnership. My priority is always to work with them. (Interviewee E11, 2025)

To others, the partner's position was important to establish the partnerships, in the sense of mobilising networks and positioning the organisation, even though this kind of reputation did not strengthen the partnership. In the same way, the number of followers on social media, in the first place, made the partner gain some reputation in the partnership – importance and priority - but as the relationship developed between partners, they realised that they were not aligned with the values and the public that they wanted to achieve, as it happened with case E7.

Take followers into account. Only relevant people, you know? Real people with actual content. (Interviewee E9, 2025)

If I partner with an influencer who does not care about sustainability, their audience will not care either. So, for me, it is not worth it, right? That is why I always try to build partnerships like that. (Interviewee E6, 2025)

We believed it would happen, and we spent a year negotiating with this law firm, which had direct contact with this international investor in hospitals. And then things went completely the opposite way to what we had imagined. (Interviewee E7, 2025)

Proximity may also influence reputation/status since, in some cases, the longer the partners knew each other, the identification between them created a sense of priority and importance for the partner.

I have known my partner since I was 13. She is hard-working and has values. I like her work, trust her, and all the profit, 100 per cent, goes to her.' (Interviewee E5, 2025)

Identity and identification appeared less frequently than proximity and status, for example. The aggregated dimension was identified throughout the interviews regarding shared values and behaviours, with phrases like, 'she liked the way I think and act' (interviewee E12, 2025), or more subjectively, 'we hit it off' (interviewee E8, 2025). Although identity and identification were not mentioned frequently during the interviews, they can be related to proximity. Over time, the development of proximity strengthens the ties between partners, enhancing their identity and identification.

What I noticed is that there is this guy who makes food and these beautiful videos on the internet. Moreover, it is exciting because he is always present in a certain way. He barely shows himself, but his wife appears. He has a large female audience, and watching how he interacts with people, I thought, 'This is the kind of person I'd have as a friend, and this is the kind of person I want as a partner.'

In Table 22, we present a summarisation of the relational dimension and the drivers.

Table 22 – Driven factors to relational dimension

Relational dimension	Driven factors	Cases	N° of cases
Identity and identification	Proximity, similar thoughts and actions	E3, E5, E9, E10, E12	5
Loyalty	Commitment	E1, E3, E4, E6, E8, E9, E11	7
Trust	Integrity, sincerity	-	12
Norms and sanctions	Ethical behaviour, sustainable certifications	E1, E3, E4, E5, E6, E7, E8, E9, E10, E12	11

Obligation and expectations	Mutual Support, Effective Communication	E1, E3, E6, E7, E8, E9, E10, E11, E12	9
Proximity	Shared experience, reciprocity	familiarity,	-
Reputation/Status	Admiration		-

Source: Author's own (2025)

As we can observe in Table 22, trust, proximity, and reputation/status are the most important elements in developing a positive relationship over time. It is important to highlight the importance of reputation/status for the interviewees, as, in the first place, this element was considered the superficial reputation of partners, such as their position. However, as the partnerships develop, partners do not shade in their importance; on the contrary, they can maintain their reputation.

A reason for that may be explained by what drives social entrepreneurs to look for a partnership in the first place; as we mentioned before, know-how was one of the motivators mentioned by social entrepreneurs. Consequently, the partner's sustainable commitment, a criterion cited in the structural dimension, may contribute to maintaining the partner's image even through time. Both elements may be crucial to the social entrepreneur feeling proud or developing a feeling of admiration towards their partners.

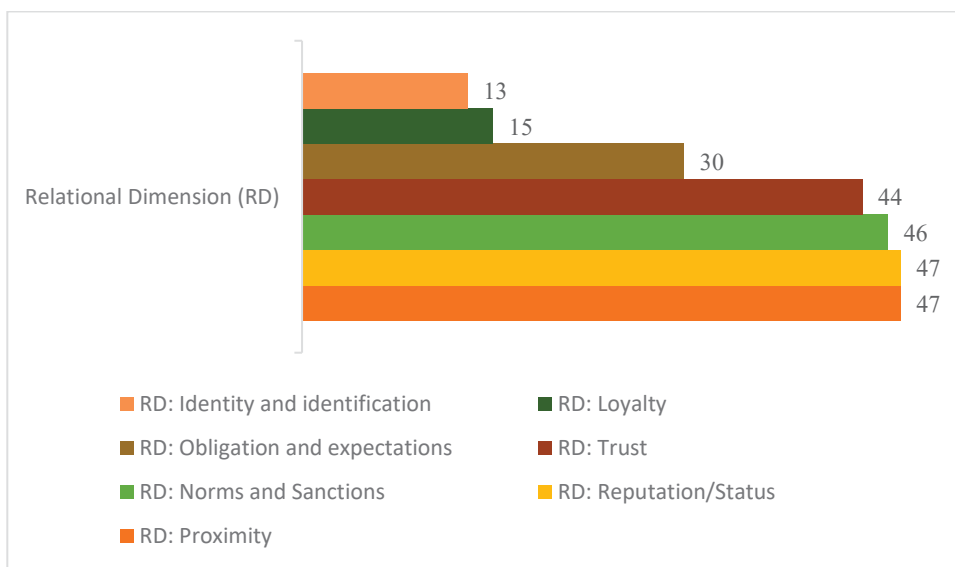
Crucial in this relationship is the proximity with their partners, which was also mentioned in the interview. As the partners can share their experiences and go through difficult times, accompanying each other, the feeling of proximity develops the partnership into a place of familiarity and friendship.

Even in these proximity relationships, implicit norms are possible; after all, what drives these entrepreneurs to approach these partners are similar values, beliefs, and behaviours, which create a harmonious interaction. Without these factors, the relationship tends to become superficial, more of a network mobilisation than a partnership with strong ties, liable to be discontinued at any time.

As discussed in this section, social entrepreneurs tend to settle formal contracts through commercial contracts that protect people involved in the project. Because of that, we can see that trust between partners increases. This result is interesting because it demonstrates that relations between partners, even though some claimed they liked to be more informal with their partners, are based on commonly agreed-upon social norms. These explicit or implicit norms create a harmonious pattern between the partners, which does not allow the entry of dissenting partners.

Graphic 4 shows how often the interviewees cited a theme when asked about the relational dimension of their partnerships.

Graphic 4 – Frequency of themes Relational dimension



Source: Author's own (2025)

As in other sections, Table 23 presents the structure of analysis regarding the relational dimension of social capita based on the Gioia method.

Table 23 – Relational Dimension Gioia Table Dynamics

1° Orden concept (code)	2° Concept (theme)	Aggregated dimension
Trust in the exchange	Trustworthiness	Trust
Integrity		
Sincerity		
Relationship security	Fidelity	Loyalty
Commitment		
Knowledge sharing	Implicit social norms	Norms and sanctions
Political Positioning		
Ethical behaviour		
Sustainable certifications	Explicit social norms	
Deadline Fulfilment		
Reliability		
Empathy/Compassion	Understanding	Obligation and expectations
Mutual Support	Supporting	
Effective Communication	Camaraderie	
Friendliness	Interpersonal Dynamics	Proximity

Affectional bond		
Shared experience		
Familiarity		
Reciprocity		
	Admiration Respect	
Influence of the partner		
Position	Power and Authority	Reputation/Status
Number of followers on social media		
Proximity	Interpersonal tie	
Similar thoughts and actions	shared values and behaviours	Identity and identification
Hit if off	Intuitive relation	

Source: Author's own (2025)

This section discussed the relational elements of social capital in partnerships. In the next section, we will discuss the cognitive elements of social entrepreneurship within social capital.

4.4.3 Cognitive dimension: shared values

The cognitive dimension can be understood as a shared understating that provides meaning in partnership. Its nature is subjective and often difficult to capture in the interview, given that it is less tangible than the relational dimension. Despite this, we could observe in the field some aspects of the cognitive dimension, which were organised in four deductive codes in the aggregated dimension: i) codes, language and narrative (CLN), ii) goal and purpose (GP), iii) belonging (BL), and iv) values, attitudes and beliefs (VAB).

CLNs are internal aspects of the relationship between partners that can be identified as shared codes, languages, and narratives. The shared CLN strengthens the relationship and unites the group, even facing challenges.

The codes identified directly impacted communication, such as training workers to familiarise them with the organisation's vision and language. In the fashion sector, it is common to encounter diverse vocabularies, particularly among shoemakers. In this context, codes and language were deeply interconnected. For instance, interviewee E2, while attempting to establish partnerships with local silk producers, noticed that many were unaware of the value of silk or how it differed from other fabrics. E2 realised he had to educate the producers about silk so they could share a common language. This shared understanding became an internal code; partners needed to recognise and appreciate the differences in fabric to facilitate effective communication. Without this alignment, communication barriers could emerge, potentially distancing partners. Conversely, the partnership became stronger when partners understood these codes and shared the same language.

Similarly, political positioning, discussed in the relational dimension, can also function as an internal code, even if it does not directly impact the partnership dynamics. Additionally, sustainable behaviours were noted as factors that strengthened relationships between partners. These behaviours are particularly significant as they shape how social entrepreneurs perceive their partners, ultimately influencing their reputation or status within the network.

Look, people, I disagree with such views and positions. I am not going to go along with these people because my brand is a reflection of me. So, of course, there are things you have to give up, fortunately, because you cannot make everything look pretty. However, there are things I take very literally. (Interviewee E9, 2025)

On the other hand, narratives were identified as shared histories and experiences that partners had in common. For example, interviewee E3 shared that her partners only began to

recognise the product's value and the work done by the women involved in the project after experiencing a similar situation. E3, a mother of two children who must balance work with limited time for her family, noted that this shared narrative helped foster stronger connections. Experiencing these challenges firsthand allowed her partners to relate to her situation on a deeper, more informal level, ultimately strengthening their relationship.

In E3's case, narratives also played a crucial role in connecting with the seamstresses—women who work from home to help create the product. She recounted three instances where sewists were seriously ill and unable to complete their work. These experiences, while challenging, helped build empathy and reinforced the importance of mutual understanding within the partnership.

So, when these women started working in the company, they began to understand how I functioned—as a professional within the company, as a mother, as a wife, and as an entrepreneur, you know? They thought, 'Wow, that is amazing. Marina's story is connected to everything she values.' (...) It differed from what I imagined with people who started the project but were not mothers. I would talk about my daughters, show them pictures, and say, 'Oh, I cannot do it on that day because I have something planned with my daughter, right?' My priority is my daughters and my family. Moreover, when one of them became a mother, she started to understand the whole process I was going through. She realised, 'Oh, is it like this to return to work after becoming a mother? I understand what you said when you hired the seamstress, but you needed her to work from home.' You know? (Interviewee E3, 2025)

Shared narratives help break down language barriers and reduce formalities between partners, creating a more informal and friendly dynamic. As these barriers dissolve, communication naturally becomes more casual, often extending to channels like phone calls or conversations over a pub table. In these settings, formal titles like 'sir' or 'ma'am' are replaced with a more relaxed tone, fostering a relationship that feels more like a conversation between friends.

Some of my partners lived there, studied there, and knew many people, so some of them were my friends. Of course, they are also my suppliers and partners, but I will be like, 'Hey, what is up?' you know? Not 'Good afternoon, sir,' there is no place for that. Of course, it is not a bar; it is business, money, and deadlines. (Interviewee E8, 2025)

The narratives varied in each case, with some partners expressing pride in witnessing their counterparts' achievements from the beginning. Others reported the feeling of affection they developed for their partners because they had followed the organisation's history from the beginning. These shared stories strengthened the relationship between partners, elevating the connection to one of friendship before anything else.

I have seen their growth. Over the last 20 years, they have grown a lot, and I have been able to follow that growth closely. In reality, being there and watching the company grow creates a bond—it almost feels like a friendship, right? It is a big company, but I know it well, you know? The directors, for example—we have come a long way together. Of course, things have changed a lot recently. The company has grown significantly; it now operates in other parts of Brazil and is one of the largest producers in the country. However, despite all this growth, the connection remains the same. The representative is still the same. The marketing person is still the same. Moreover, the person committed to environmental concerns is still the same. The people I talk to have not changed; that continuity keeps the relationship strong. (Interviewee E11, 2025)

Ah, an actual exchange. The experience is like that; there are people I am very fond of because, in the beginning, they helped me a lot, and they believed in my work. (Interviewee E9, 2025)

Given the mission of social enterprises, goals and purpose (GP) were frequently highlighted during the interviews. While value alignment was mentioned as a motivator, within GP, it can also be seen as a factor that strengthens the relationship between partners, creating a sense of “together, we can achieve more.” As discussed earlier, a sustainable commitment was another recurring theme, with interviewees expressing pride in seeing their partners develop sustainable behaviours over time.

The motivators and criteria explored in previous sections are closely connected to goals and purpose. Operating within the sustainable fashion sector presents constant challenges, as not all partners fully understand the value of the products, the production processes—limited by materials and production timelines—or share the same narrative. This alignment—or lack thereof—plays a significant role over time. Consequently, having partners aligned with the enterprise’s purpose, who understand and are committed to sustainability, improves the trust that the product and raw material will be developed with the same values, diminishing the necessity of control.

Right? So, I tell the story. I want to be transparent with you so that we can genuinely continue transforming these women's lives and their families more and more. (Interviewee E3, 2025)

Moreover, even though it is cheaper, I preferred to stick with him, who has a perfect structure with plenty of lighting and ventilation. The sewists' work chairs are comfortable, and the equipment is better. So, I will not always prioritise price—I will always think about the pillars of sustainability first. Even though they improved, I would not leave a place that serves me so well and lets me sleep peacefully just to close a partnership where I would not have much control. (Interviewee E4, 2025)

Similarly, **values, attitudes, and beliefs (VAB)** are closely connected to the motivations for establishing a partnership. For the interviewees, VAB included their commitment to sustainability and the social vision they uphold within their organisations. Political position was also considered an integral part of this aggregated dimension, as it aligns with each interviewee's internal beliefs and values. It is important to note that for interviewees E6 and E9, the political stance of their partners directly impacted the partnership, especially as they were forming collaborations with influencers. On the other hand, for E8, the organisation's purpose from the outset was rooted in giving voice to communities and expressing democracy through the theme of shoes.

For E6 and E9, political position played a key role in establishing and maintaining partnerships, as it helped preserve their shared values, attitudes, and beliefs. For E8, the political position was part of the organisation's overall purpose and goals. However, it was not expected that their partners would align politically in the same way as long as they respected the organisation's values.

The partner did not need the same values, attitude, and behaviour. However, similar values helped to strengthen the partnership, as demonstrated in the case E3, in which the relationship improved when the partners experienced the same situation and consequently changed their behaviour towards the organisation.

I tell myself I must pay attention to women and value these values. It is similar to mine—family comes first, right? So, these women are there with their children, their grandchildren, you know? I also value that. I tell my clients, “Oh, you want a certain quantity of material, but I will need more time because my work is artisanal; I work with these women at home,” and they understand. That is why... (...) So, the client understands, and I prioritise ensuring that all of them share values similar to mine. (Interviewee E3, 2025)

So, the social impact often goes unchecked—we do not verify how that company works with the specific product being supplied. That is why we have always prioritised working with Brazilian suppliers. We have also observed the evolution of the market in terms of suppliers and manufacturers of raw materials, moving towards sustainability over the years. (Interviewee E4, 2025)

Belonging (BL) can be understood as the junction of CLN, GP and VAB once it carries personal substance that improves the strength of the partnerships and creates a sense of belonging. For interviewee E3, for example, it was important that the women involved in the project felt they were part of and had value for the organisation's development. It is interesting to see this interaction because sewists can be seen as partners of the organisation, offering their time and specific knowledge, taking part in the production process, and giving ideas.

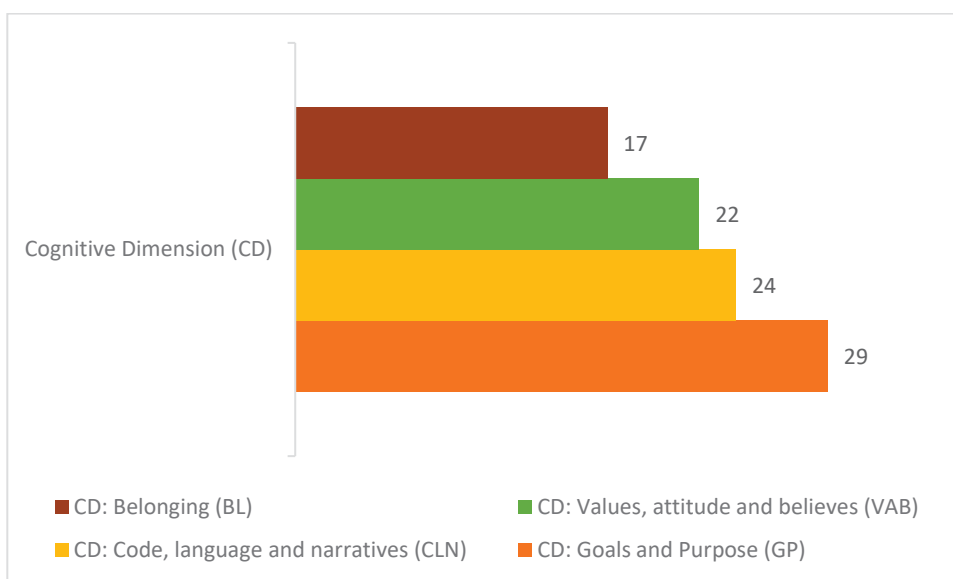
The feeling of “belonging” was translated in the strength of the tie that the interviewee felt related to the partner. For example, “friend” and “family” were used to characterise the feeling of belonging. For E10, for example, the benefits of the partnership were the feeling of belonging because they collaborated and expanded their partnership.

There is this seamstress, and our relationship has been going on for five years—it is practically family. We have become good friends, and things just sort of flow naturally. I always buy everything on time and stick to the agreed dates, but she does complain about others not doing the same. (Interviewee E6, 2025)

So, yeah, I think that is it. I believe the most important thing in a partnership is building a network of people where you create a sense of belonging. (Interviewee E10, 2025)

Graphic 5 shows how often the interviewees cited a theme when asked about the cognitive dimension of their partnerships.

Graphic 5 – Frequency of theme Cognitive dimension



Source: Author’s own (2025)

As in other sections, Table 24 presents the analysis structure followed regarding the motivations for establishing partnerships based on the Gioia method.

Table 24 – Cognitive Dimension Gioia Table Dynamics

1° Orden concept (code)	2° Concept (theme)	Aggregated dimension
Difficulties faced together	Shared Experiences	Code, language and narrative (CLN)
Shared narratives		
Shared achievements	Collective success	

Political Position	Ideological criteria ¹	
Real exchange	Meaningful Connections	
Value alignment	Shared vision and purpose	Goals and purpose (GP)
Enterprise's purpose		
Together, we can achieve more.		
Similar values	Trust and value alignment	Value, attitudes and beliefs (VAB)
Political position		
Security of partner's behaviour		
Tie of friendship or family	Interpersonal Bond	Belonging (BL)
Sense of belonging		
Value within the social entrepreneur		

Source: Author's own (2025)

¹ Makes mention to the same code cited in Structural Dimension (Criteria to establish partnerships)

4.4.4 The social capital in effectual partnerships

In this section, our discussion will focus on aligning the three dimensions of social capital to analyse how the dimensions interact with the crazy quilt principle and whether there is any interaction between the dimensions and effectuation. Before we explain the data, it is necessary to understand that ATLAS.ti performs a co-occurrence analysis to identify patterns and relationships in order to map discursive connections (Paulus; Leste, 2015). We therefore used ATLAS.ti to carry out a co-occurrence analysis of the following codes: structural dimension (SD), relational dimension (RD), cognitive dimension (CD) and crazy quilt (CQ).

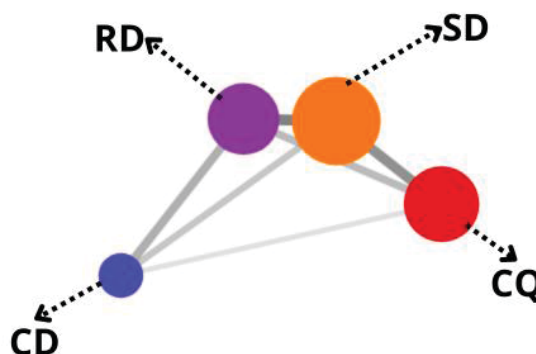
Figure 20 illustrates the co-occurrence between the codes. This visualisation was generated by ATLAS.ti so that we can understand and visualise the interconnectedness of the emerging themes. The three dimensions of social capital are connected to the crazy quilt to a greater or lesser degree. Each circle in the figure represents a code assigned during the analysis of the interviews, so we can see that SD is presented in orange, RD in purple, CD in blue and CQ in red. The size of the circle refers to the frequency of the code in the data, i.e. the larger it is, the more often it appears, while the smaller it is, the less often it appears in the data.

As we can see, SD is one of the most frequent codes in the data, while CD is the least. This is due to the subjective nature of CD, which is more challenging to capture in interviews, depending on internal and subjective factors to the individual, such as the code, the language, the narratives and the sense of belonging. All these elements have already been discussed in previous chapters.

In Figure 20, we can see that SD (orange) and CQ (red) have a strong correlation with each other, which indicates that these two codes appear together in the data more frequently. Similarly, CD (in blue) and CQ (in red) have a lower correlation, which means that the interaction between CD and the other dimensions is more isolated. The reason for this can be explained by its subjective nature.

Another point to note is the line that connects the codes; it represents the co-occurrence relationships between the codes; in other words, it shows us the codes that appear together in the same unit of analysis. The thickness of the line, i.e., the more frequently the codes in the data are used, the thicker the line is. Similarly, the less frequent the co-occurrence, the thicker the line.

Figure 20 – Graphic of social capital and crazy quilt principle



Source: Author's own (2025)

As shown in Figure 20, SD is closely connected to RD, CD, and CQ, but it is not the only element linking these dimensions. The figure illustrates multiple interactions among the codes, with SD playing a central role while still being part of a broader network of connections. The thick lines between SD and the other elements indicate its strong ties, but RD, CD, and CQ also interact, shaping the dynamics of the network in different ways.

SD's centrality also suggests that CQ may emerge as a result of the interplay between SD, RD, and CD. The presence of bridging ties further reinforces SD's strategic importance, as these ties facilitate access to diverse forms of knowledge that may not be available through bonding ties. Therefore, we can interpret that the social entrepreneurs in the data analysed use their networks strategically to mobilise the resources and know-how needed for their organisation. This capacity can be directly related to the flexibility of interactions.

This process is related to the crazy quilt principle since new opportunities are visualised as social entrepreneurs combine their networks to achieve new knowledge, resources and know-how. Furthermore, we can see that for the social entrepreneurs in this study, bridging ties is how social entrepreneurs can strategically reach out to new networks, mobilise resources between partners and generate the co-creation of value, which reinforces that social entrepreneurs use the flexibility and adaptability of the effectual approach, and the strategic use of resources mobilised by networks.

Similarly, RD can be seen as a cause or effect of the union of the other codes SD, CQ and CD. As discussed above, the most cited elements of RD were proximity and reputation/status of partners. These elements are connected to SD and can reinforce the importance of partners' reputations in strategically utilising partnerships formed from bridging ties.

The distance of the CD from the other codes may suggest that the CD is acting in isolation from the other elements. However, we can see that RD and SD are strongly related to CD, so we can infer that CD co-occurrence occurs more covertly in the process.

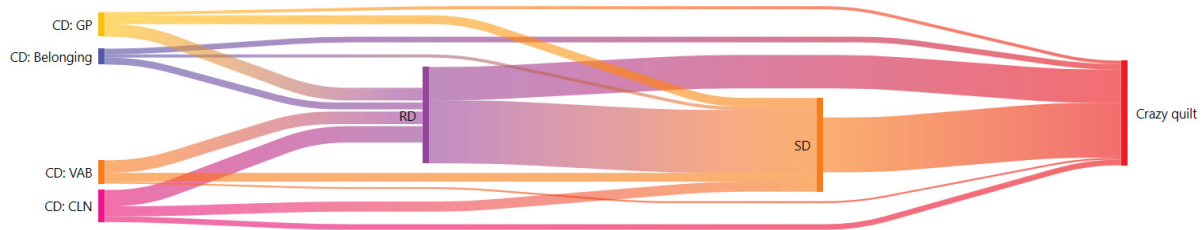
Figure 21 shows a more focused view of the CD codes and their influence on the other codes. The lines that connect the categories show the predominance of the CD code in the other codes and provide a comprehensive analysis of the field by showing the tendency of the CD code. As can be seen in Figure 30, we list the aggregate dimensions of the cognitive dimension: Belonging (represented by the colour blue); Codes, languages and narratives (represented by the colour pink); values, attitudes and beliefs (represented by the colour orange), and goal and purpose (GP) (represented by the colour yellow). The colours of the RD, SD and CQ (crazy quit) dimensions remain the same.

The intensity of the colours reveals the frequency and predominance of the code over the dimensions. In this way, we can see that CLN, VAB and GP are more predominant in the RD than in the other dimensions. The predominance of these three codes reveals that the CD code may be acting directly on the characteristics and qualities of the relational dimension, so the social entrepreneurs in this research are more inclined to develop partnerships with individuals who share the same values, have aligned goals and purposes and narratives similar to their own. These results have already been observed and discussed in the relational dimension section.

In addition, we can see that CLN is more interconnected with RD, which suggests that entrepreneurs can use codes, language and narratives to shape the characteristics and qualities of partnerships. In other words, the narratives created between the social entrepreneurs in this study and their partners help strengthen the bonds between them.

As we can also see from Figure 21, DC is connected to the other dimensions but with less predominance. This may suggest that for our study, DC is a dimension that occurs in the background, i.e. it interferes more predominantly with the characteristics and quality of relationships, influencing the configurations and patterns to be established and maintained by all the individuals within the network. As it occurs against a backdrop, its influence can be more indirect, but with the potential to expand and connect with the other dimensions. As the DC is a more subjective element of the interactions, we may argue that its influence and interference are also subjective.

Figure 21 – Sankey of Cognitive dimension related to RD, SD, CQ



Source: Author's own (2025)

The relationship between the crazy quilt and the structural dimension shows that while flexibility and adaptability help social entrepreneurs mobilise and expand their networks through bridging ties, the configuration of these partnerships is shaped by external structures and established patterns. Over time, the relational dimension—especially proximity and reputation—also plays a role. Initially, entrepreneurs look for partners with more influence or higher status, but shared experiences help bring the partnerships closer together as time passes.

On the other hand, the cognitive dimension seems to have a more substantial impact on the relational dimension than on the *crazy quilt*. In our study, the CLN (codes, languages and narratives) code stands out, suggesting that social entrepreneurs use stories to align their visions and objectives. The fact that the cognitive dimension has a lower influence on the *crazy quilt* indicates that this principle is more about innovation and resource mobilisation through bridging ties rather than deep alignment or shared identity. Therefore, the *crazy quilt* is not a central element but a strategic tool that enables the exploration of new markets and ideas.

On the other hand, the relational and structural dimensions permeate these relationships in different ways. While the crazy quilt encourages flexibility, social capital provides the structure and predictability for social entrepreneurs to navigate the environment with greater security. Among these dimensions, the structural one appears to be the most central. This suggests that, when expanding their networks and configuring partnerships, entrepreneurs rely on the structural dimension to sustain the relationships over time.

4.5 PARTNERSHIPS INFLUENCE: MEANS, RESOURCES AND OBJECTIVES

In the effectuation process, partners may influence both means and objectives and sometimes impact both simultaneously. Means refers to the expansion of resources, defined as three key elements: who I am, what I know, and whom I know (bird in hand principle). Conversely, objectives are not predetermined in the effectuation process; they evolve based on the partners' interactions and ideas.

New means is the first aggregated dimension identified within the theory of effectuation. We identified that partners influenced the new means, changing the bird-in-hand principle of effectuation by providing the interviewee with new ideas and information about the market or a new technique, for example. Sometimes, the partner just came up with the idea of something they wanted to buy or see sealing because they believed it was different or economically viable. Even though the raw materials were the same, the social entrepreneur had to adapt his knowledge to bring the idea to reality.

Yes. Many ideas, right? For example, let me tell you, back in 2000 and 1995, we did not produce yarn for crochet. And then a client came here, who was not even a client yet, and said, "I would like you to make a yarn like this one for me to do crochet." I looked at it. Everyone buys the commercial model of cotton thread at small shops for crochet. I said, "This one, I will replicate this yarn." I copied its thickness, diameter, and texture—pure silk, which does not exist anywhere else. So, it was a great idea that worked well and came from the partner. (Interviewee E1, 2025)

Sometimes, the partner's idea completely changes the social entrepreneur's original concept. The idea could be accepted, but it depended on the interviewee's flexibility and risk tolerance.

They usually bring ideas and proposals different from what we are doing. This generates costs, but it can be beneficial. (Interviewee E1, 2025)

It has nothing to do with mulberries anymore. I did not immediately accept this change, but it was difficult to argue with my partners. Starting from the premise that Brazil had, at the time, 5,000 hectares of mulberry trees planted—today, it must be even less. In Paraná alone, there are 4.6 million hectares of native forest. So, he said, "Arthur, we cannot create a business of this scale to work with just 5,000 hectares in Brazil or even 1 million hectares of mulberry trees when Paraná alone has 4.6 million hectares of native forest. Moreover, the algorithm we developed can be applied to native forests. (Interviewee E2, 2025)

Ideas came from the entrepreneurs, depending on how they wanted to achieve the objective. It is common that at the beginning of the enterprise, the partners were just the

providers of raw materials. As the partnership developed and they gained more reputation/status, they changed their position to a more collaborative behaviour, sharing their knowledge or ideas.

We try to adapt their material to see if it is possible to work with it (...) So, we went after these companies that manufactured uniforms. We started collecting these new uniforms from the industries, right? And then we began working with them. That is why our first pieces are literally like a puzzle—they are made from tiny pieces that we patch together to transform into a fabric, which can later become a bag or a toiletry pouch. (Interviewee E3, 2025)

I said, "Well, I will not burn these pieces because that is not an option. I will repurpose them and sell them." Moreover, that is how ReJeans came to life. I took all those pieces—back then, upcycling was not a term—transformed them by stripping away their original identity and created the ReJeans brand. I took this new brand to Babilônia Feira Hype, where other businesses and big brands started in Rio de Janeiro. I set up a booth with the name ReJeans, which was not the name of my factory. Moreover, that is how it all started. It turned into something big; it was a massive success because the product was incredible, it started selling, and things took off from there. (Interviewee E11, 2025)

In cases where the company was relatively new to the market, the available means evolved. Social entrepreneurs actively seek out new knowledge, training, or technical courses to enhance their skills and better meet the needs of their audience. In doing so, they discovered innovative production methods aligned with sustainable practices, attracting an audience interested in upcycling. This approach improved their products and facilitated the development of new partnerships with collaborators who shared their values and vision for sustainability.

So, overlock became the best technique for perfecting the pieces to achieve better finishes. That is when I started searching and eventually enrolled in a fashion design technical course. (...) During the course, I studied fashion and discovered timeless pieces, such as the corset. Since my materials were often limited—I did not always have long fabrics or rolls to work with, sometimes just scraps—I needed to create something that could be made from small pieces of material. That is how I developed the corset technique. Later, when I received these scraps, I realised I could not establish partnerships that did not focus on using leftover fabric or materials from major brands. Instead, I could create partnerships with people who believed in sustainability and shared a bigger purpose, which aligned perfectly with the values of my brand. (Interviewee E9, 2025)

For instance, social entrepreneurs often start with an idea and then seek a partner to teach them the necessary techniques to bring it to life. This was evident in case E12, where the entrepreneurs decided to create clothing from discarded umbrellas.

The new means were more closely tied to resources such as E8 and E10 in other cases. For example, in case E8, the entrepreneurs worked with upcycled fabrics, and the partner's

resources influenced the final product, such as the colour and dimensions of the shoes. Conversely, in case E10, resources primarily represented know-how, such as building an online infrastructure to reach a larger audience.

The **new objective** is the second aggregated dimension identified within the effectuation framework. It was less prevalent than "new means," in most cases, partners did not significantly influence the new objective. However, in cases E1, E2 and E7, the partners played a key role in advising the entrepreneur to focus on a new market opportunity, different from the initial one. In this instance, the partners directly impacted shaping the objective while still keeping the overarching goal of environmental and social change intact. Cases E2 and E7 demonstrated the entrepreneurs' flexibility with their objectives as partners, which helped them refine their focus. As a result, entrepreneur E1 changed his focus to the fashion sector, and E2 pivoted from working with silk to addressing carbon footprints. In contrast, entrepreneur E7 redirected focus to older people with reduced mobility or palliative care. This shift illustrated how the "bird in hand" principle was modified based on new information and partnerships. Simultaneously, this change affected the available means, as the partners brought in new expertise.

Well, let us go back to 2007. Of course, I discovered that my product was good for fashion, so I went after a partner, and it worked with one. (...) The person who saw the potential was him. However, I also contacted similar companies and presented a new product. (Interviewee E1, 2025)

Ah, let us see this. And then they said, 'Look, this is an excellent idea. Why don't we do this with... let us put the silk aside and work with the native forest area service.' So, after calculating and analysing, I thought, 'Yes, this makes sense.' So we tried to do it for some time as one of our projects. (Interviewee E2, 2025)

This changes the focus of our actions and research, which HarmonyMove, because we needed to narrow down our target audience since the market is vast, and the needs and gaps are immense. So, every time we went to a new place, every opinion leader, doctor, or specialist we met, each one came with a different demand. Some said, 'You need to do this,' others said, 'You need to do that.' At one point, we realised we were trying to do three hundred things simultaneously to meet the market's needs. However, then you said, 'No, stop. You need to focus. Otherwise, you will not be able to scale.' So, we had to define the target. Our target is elderly people with reduced mobility or people in palliative care. (Interviewee E7, 2025)

In the case of E12, both means and objectives evolved when the entrepreneurs shifted their focus to upcycling umbrellas. Initially, they aimed to be a school of resignifying industrial raw materials, but they eventually began producing clothing made from umbrellas. Their partners introduced the new means and brought the necessary know-how for the production

process. Over time, the objective also shifted, reflecting the entrepreneurs' flexibility and ability to adapt to new opportunities.

We decided to start an internal project focused on learning how to use umbrella nylon, a research subject by our future designers since 2013. We began selling the clothing pieces via WhatsApp. When we reached a certain point, we were able to pursue a new advantage, and then we had a new project approved by law, where we continued working with the umbrella nylon concept. It was never Umbra's idea to be a product-based brand. Instead, our goal was, and still is, to be a school of thought for fashion focusing on sustainability. Due to the nylon umbrella, the partnership did not change our direction—it added a new dimension to Umbra. Now, we have Umbra as both a school of thought and a brand that creates wearable clothing and bags. (Interviewee E12, 2025)

Social entrepreneurs' flexibility was a key factor in shaping new objectives. However, we observed that they often developed new ideas and sought partners who could provide information, know-how, and raw materials. While they were generally open to incorporating new product ideas, they were less inclined to change the organisation's core objective. This objective, tightly linked to the organisation's mission, purpose, and identity, was seen as non-negotiable.

In the *effectuation* process, flexibility is similarly relevant. Social entrepreneurs were willing to collaborate with their partners, share ideas, and consider new approaches. However, our data shows that while collaboration was encouraged, the interviews did not frequently mention the discussions around new objectives. This connects to the concept of new means and objectives. Essentially, social entrepreneurs were willing to engage in product development and use new means (such as information, know-how, and raw materials), but only if these did not alter their fundamental objective, the reason why they considered that their partners should be aligned with their goals and purpose in the cognitive dimension of social capital. In this sense, partners supported the purpose more than primary agents of change.

This might be seen as inflexibility, but it reflects how social entrepreneurs act within causal and effectual logic when engaging in partnerships—making these partnerships more complex to analyse. The strong connection between mission and purpose is crucial in determining partnerships and the entire effectuation process. In this sense, the foundational principles of *effectuation* can be challenged or redefined based on the strength of the social entrepreneur's mission and purpose.

At the outset of our analysis, we defined "new means" and "new objectives" as the deductive codes guiding our exploration. However, as we delved deeper into the data, we realised that these initial codes did not fully capture the complexity of what was unfolding in

the field. Specifically, we found that new means—understood as the expansion of resources—did not always lead to creating new products. Additionally, the partners did not significantly influence new objectives in most cases.

In this context, we understood that "new means" primarily referred to expanding resources to achieve specific goals, often social and environmental ones, central to social entrepreneurship. Partners contributed valuable resources like raw materials and technical knowledge, which motivated the establishment of partnerships. However, these resources did not necessarily result in direct changes to the product itself. Instead, they influenced the production process, improving aspects like garment cutting and fitting or introducing more sustainable dyeing methods. Nevertheless, these changes typically did not alter the fundamental nature of the product or the value delivered.

In some cases, product development took place independently of partners' contributions. This realisation led to the emergence of an inductive code, which we named **new product development**—the third aggregated dimension. The product development showed how new means and new objectives affected or not the creation of new products. We observed that the way partners were affected was through resources. For example, in the up-cycling sector, the fabric's quality, colour and size differ from each partner. New fabrics demand other techniques or ideas to transform the fabric into another product, depending on the partner's needs.

So, they come to us explaining their problem, and we try to adapt, right? Sometimes, a product I already have, I try to adapt it, like they liked a specific product. (...) We try to adapt their material to see if it is possible to make it work. For example, they use a uniform to make a cover for a car hood because they need to sand it and do not want to buy new material. I can use that material, right? Every 6 months or so, we need to dispose of it because it tears, but we offer them this possibility. We can fix it, remove the torn part, and repair it. (Interviewee E3, 2025)

Largely, the work I do, all the pieces I produce, are made from materials I have found or, even if it is a partnership or collaboration, something like that, they are defective pieces or leftover scraps from manufacturing that went wrong, and we reuse them. (...) (Interviewee E9, 2025)

However, in the case of E10, the material itself affected the development of the product.

So, since I did not make—well, I do not usually make—clothes for men, I created a unisex outfit. How did this partnership work? I had to understand what was comfortable for him, what clothes he wore, and what I could create within his universe that would resonate. So, I sent him a set for him and his wife, along with some ceramics. I partnered with a ceramic maker for that, too. We assembled a Father's Day kit, including ceramics for a couple to enjoy soup and unisex shirts. It turned out well for me. That was a successful partnership. (Interviewee E10, 2025)

In Case E7, partners directly affected the development of the product through their knowledge of diseases and ideas to improve it.

So, the pyjamas and nightgowns are similar to the sweatshirt I developed for my nephew because we saw how well it worked based on customer feedback, right? (...) Nevertheless, after several attempts, many errors, successes, and experimenting with various fabrics and everything, after a long time trying things out, he realised it did not work that way, so he had to make another piece of clothing and create a prototype. When it did not work, he had to try again. After many attempts, we finalised each piece to suit each specific reduced mobility need.

In case E3, the partners provided the material, but the collaboration was limited. They supplied the fabrics and expected the social entrepreneurs to find a solution independently. In contrast, in case E9, the material could be considered rare, as it was challenging to re-source or replicate the same product with the same material. Here, product development could be constrained or facilitated by the availability of materials provided by the partners. In case E10, due to the unique nature of the partnership, the entrepreneur had to adapt her idea to suit the partnership's needs better, even though it was considered a unique product in a specific context.

In case E8, the partners played a direct role in shoe development, each responsible for a specific part of the product. If any partner failed to deliver as initially agreed, the product could not be completed, and trust between the partners would diminish. In this case, the new means went beyond just resources; they included tangible elements essential to the project's success.

During the pandemic, we observed limited direct influence from partners on product development. In case E3, for instance, the entrepreneur reconnected with an acquaintance who had followed the organisation's growth and suggested making cloth masks during the pandemic. However, this product did not last long, as the organisation quickly shifted its focus to reusing fabrics from the industry once the pandemic began to subside.

In contrast, case E1 did not rely on partners to develop a new product. The idea came solely from the entrepreneur, who decided to sell crochet thread from products he already had in stock. He then launched it on his website. Similarly, in case E12, an internal member of the Umbra project had the idea of repurposing umbrellas, and after that, they sought a partner. In this case, the partners influenced the product development by providing new means—information—and shaping new objectives for the project.

To sum up our discussion, from the 12 interviews in our data, we identified 8 cases where the partner directly influenced product development. Of these 8 cases, only E1, E2, E7, and E12 demonstrated how partners impacted the new objectives, directly or indirectly,

highlighting that social entrepreneurs tend to be less flexible with their goals. In other cases (E1, E4, E5, and E6), there was no direct connection to product development.

Despite the partners' influence to change the organisation's objective, as in cases E1 and E2, the idea came from an internal proposal or the social entrepreneur. In these cases, partners influenced the objective change by providing new means and collaborating with them. Because of that, we considered this latest product development an independent innovation, where the partners indirectly affected the objectives by providing social entrepreneurs with support and new means to implement the new objectives they were already putting into practice.

Table 25 summarises how partners influenced social entrepreneurs.

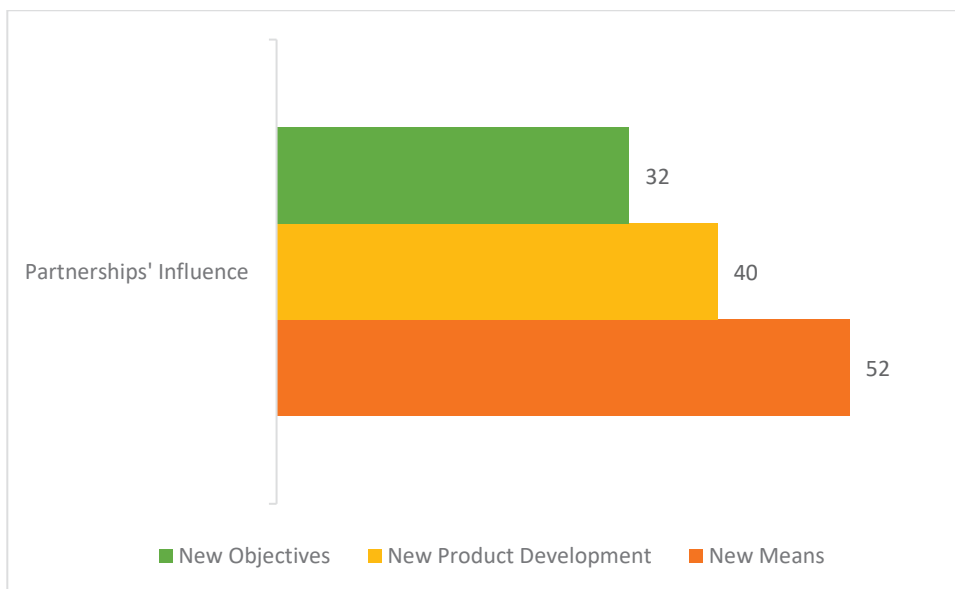
Table 25 – Categorization of Partner Influence on Product Development

Case	Category	Partner's role	Observation
E1	Independent innovation	Partners did not collaborate with new means but supported the change of objectives.	In 2007, the partner influenced a new objective: making clothes from silk. In 2020, the idea to sell crochet threads from stock originated from the entrepreneur without direct partner involvement.
E2	Objective and resource-driven	Partners not only created new means but changed the objectives of the organisation.	A rare case where partners influenced the organisation's means and objective.
E3	Resource-Driven	Partner's needs and resources directly change product development but have little involvement in the organisation's objective.	I used uniforms to make car hood covers and vanity bags. The entrepreneur adapted the material independently.
E7	Resource-driven	Partners contributed ideas and suggestions, leveraging their expertise, which occasionally led to adjustments in the organisation's objectives.	Partners helped to develop the product and refine the focus of the organisation.
E8	Resource-Driven	Partners contributed tangible parts essential for the product's development and provided rare or unique materials.	Each partner was responsible for a specific shoe component and guided the product's design based on availability and scarcity.
E9	Resource-Driven	Partners provided rare or unique materials that influenced the final product.	Due to availability and scarcity, materials like defective pieces or scraps guided the product's design.
E10	Independent innovation	Partner collaboration led to product adaptations for a specific context.	Created a unisex outfit and collaborated with a ceramic maker for a Father's Day kit.
E11	Resource-Driven	Partner provided materials but had minimal involvement in the design or objective of the product.	-
E12	Independent innovation	The internal team proposed the idea, and partners were sought later for implementation.	The idea to upcycle umbrellas came from within the organisation, and a partner provided additional resources or insights that eventually influenced the organisation's objectives.

Source: Author's own (2025)

Graphic 5 presents how often the interviewees cited a theme when asked about the partnership's influence on their means and objectives.

Graphic 6 – Frequency of theme Partnerships Influence



Source: Author's own (2025)

As in other sections, Table 26 presents the analysis structure followed regarding the new means and objectives for establishing partnerships based on the Gioia method.

Table 26 – New means and objectives Gioia Table Dynamics

1° Orden concept (code)	2° Concept (theme)	Aggregated dimension
Adaptation of knowledge	Resource evolution	New means
Unique raw materials		
Influence of mission/purpose	Strategic reorientation	New objectives
Mission and Identity		
Opposition to changing objectives		
Non-negotiable objectives		
Partner know-how	Creation and Improvement	Product development
Partner raw material		
Product adaptation		

Source: Author's own (2025)

5 DATA DISCUSSION

This chapter will discuss the results in light of the theoretical framework.

5.1 HOW EFFECTUAL PARTNERSHIPS HAPPEN

Our study showed that social entrepreneurs do not follow a single approach to effectual partnerships, i.e., effectual or causal. Of the cases analysed, half of the social entrepreneurs effectually began their partnerships, and over time, causal partnerships tended to become more effectual without losing their causal characteristics.

Furthermore, the approach to partnerships depended very much on the stage of the organisation, as we saw in the field. As the organisation developed, social entrepreneurs were likelier to establish rules and adopt a more causal than effectual approach. At the beginning of the partnership, the social entrepreneur tests his opportunities, but when the organisation starts to grow, and new partners appear, there is a need to establish stricter contracts, not least to protect the project under development. This finding collaborates with Sarasvathy and Botha (2022), Sarasvathy, 2008 Martin *et al.*(2023), and Racat *et al.*(2023) when the authors argue that entrepreneurs tend to change their approach according to the needs of the environment; in more uncertain environments, effectuation becomes a good alternative for innovating and looking for new partners, but when there is less uncertainty, causation helps to structure partnerships.

Rosca *et al.*(2020) argue that women have a greater tendency to adopt a causal approach at the start of the organisation, looking for more information before starting their business. In the context of partnerships, we realised that the causal or effectual approach was not linked to gender. In E3, for example, the social entrepreneur can mobilise her networks and is even more flexible and adaptable. This attitude helped her to expand her network and reach out to partners. On the other hand, case E4 spent two years researching partners for her business to ensure that the organisation was entirely sustainable.

Similarly, in case E8, a business graduate who had previously worked in banking adopted a more causal approach at the start of his partnerships. His previous knowledge of administration may have helped define his partnerships. However, we found no evidence that gender does or does not contribute to the choice of approach. In this way, we can infer that the choice between one approach and another may be linked to the social entrepreneurs' prior knowledge, context, or support base. For example, case E3 had the support of her family, albeit

emotionally and in coming up with ideas to develop her business, which may have contributed to her applying a more effectual approach at the start of the organisation.

Regarding collaboration, we can see that effectuation provides social entrepreneurs greater flexibility, mainly to expand their networks more efficiently and collaborate with more partners. As Sarasvathy (2008) argues, adaptability helps social entrepreneurs be more innovative by reaching out to partners with new knowledge and resources that can be transformed into new ideas and products. There was a positive factor between the effectuation approach and the creation of value for social impact businesses, as Yang *et al.* (2022) and Masitnamani (2024) argue in their studies. However, we were unable to identify that all the discussions between the partners led to the co-creation of value, from which we can infer that the co-creation of value depends on other factors, such as the openness of the social entrepreneurs about their objectives and the organisation's mission, which our study showed to be immutable and rarely negotiable. This finding demonstrates that although flexibility comes from flexible and unstated objectives in effectuation theory, this factor practically does not apply to social entrepreneurs' relationships with their partners.

Furthermore, in the context of the pandemic, which we consider an uncertain context, we observed that partners did not have as much influence on the adaptation of social entrepreneurs as Chandra and Paras (2020) argue in their study. Despite this, we observed that effectual logic tends to be applied in these contexts, altering the bird-in-hand and accessible loss, according to the survey by Weerakoon *et al.* (2019). In these cases, the social entrepreneurs adapted what they already had and used their resources to find innovative solutions for their organisations. In the case of E6, E9 and E10, the pandemic was an excellent opportunity to increase their networks through the Internet, but their partners still did not have much influence on the co-creation of value.

This result may be linked to the influence that partners have on the discussion of ideas, which is lower when compared to collaboration. Our study showed that partners helped more with the means, with the mobilisation of tangible and intangible resources; however, there was a specific limit to the social entrepreneurs' ability to accept all the ideas brought up by their partners. This finding initially contradicts the idea that the organisation's project becomes that of the partners who equally own the idea or the organisation, as argued by Giueu (2019).

In effectuation theory, effectual negotiations tend to be more flexible without defined objectives (Sarasvathy, 2008). In practice, however, we observed that social entrepreneurs set limits on the extent to which partners can affect the idea, as in the case of E1, where not all ideas were taken forward due to economic unfeasibility or even the incompatibility of the idea

with the sustainable fashion sector and the organisation's mission. Thus, social entrepreneurs recognise the potential for collaboration on the part of their partners but tend to remain firm in their aims and ideas.

In this sense, social entrepreneurs develop a more independent approach, expecting less from their partners and seeking to develop independent innovation within the organisation. Finding partners aligned with their values can be difficult due to the context in which they operate. In this way, our study collaborates so that partners can improve value co-creation through the collaboration of resources. However, we also advance by demonstrating that the partner's role in discussing ideas can become secondary to social enterprises in the fashion sector. However, in the context of the social entrepreneur, this relationship is still unclear, requiring further studies on this sector, the actions of social entrepreneurs and partnerships.

About the development of embedded commitment in partnerships, Sarasvathy (2008) argues that three factors could affect the development of commitment: 1) interactions become a commitment; 2) interactions do not become an embodied commitment as the outer world influences the inner world; and 3) the effectual network changes its nature by an exogenous process that splits apart the partnership. Our study showed that social entrepreneurs base their interactions on six factors: loyalty, support, identification, proximity, know-how and reputation/status. These six factors help to turn the interaction between social entrepreneurs and their partners into a committed relationship.

The fact that know-how collaborates with the study by Kerr and Coviello (2020) since social entrepreneurs, in the first phase of interaction, look for partners who have knowledge that adds to product development. On the other hand, they also look for partners with a certain amount of influence and who can use their resources to influence or achieve their goal, which is called the reputation/status factor. In addition, the proximity factor was the most prevalent, indicating that interactions between partners and social entrepreneurs go beyond the initial exchange of resources. We can, therefore, infer that the closeness of the interactions between the partners may affect the development of commitment among the entrepreneurs.

According to Kerr and Coviello (2019), entrepreneurs can mobilise partnerships from their existing networks, such as friends, family and work colleagues. On the other hand, according to Sarasvathy (2008), partnerships can be formed from Random chance, path dependency or existing networks. Lasalle *et al.*(2020) say that these partnerships can be formed from relational (professional networks), social (community), and structural (formal or informal relations with institutions). Thus, our study shows that social entrepreneurs' initial contact networks can be established with friends and family. However, these networks offer social

entrepreneurs more emotional support, product promotion, and the ability to share specific knowledge. However, it should be noted that the social entrepreneurs in the data sample analysed also had previous contacts with universities and already had market experience, which may have helped mobilise the social entrepreneurs' network, as established by Lasalle *et al.*(2020) Onalan *et al.*(2020).

Considering the empirical findings discussed in this section and the literature on partnerships in social entrepreneurship and the effectuation approach, we conclude that effectuation is present in partner interactions, providing more flexibility. However, as the organisation develops, there is a greater need for structure, achieved through causation. This change in the structure of partnerships helps social entrepreneurs to have greater control and predictability, thus ensuring the smooth running of their organisation.

5.2 MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS FOR PARTNERING

Regarding the motivations for establishing partnerships, our study identified two types of motivations: intrinsic motivations, which refer to internal motivations without external interference, and extrinsic motivations, which refer to external factors that contribute to forming partnerships. Among the extrinsic motivators most mentioned in the analysis were shared values and alignment of purpose. These factors were the most important for social entrepreneurs because their goals were part of their identity, which helped them look for partners who were aligned with their goal and mission, which directly influenced the success or failure of the partnership, as Alvez *et al.*(2016) argue.

According to Nieste and Jolink (2020), partnerships can be established by sharing resources as a competitive advantage or knowledge for innovation. Guieu (2019) argues that one of the motivators for establishing partnerships is a lack of resources or knowledge. Our study showed that there may be a relationship between a lack of resources and knowledge once social entrepreneurs search for partners to mobilise new information or resources.

However, the social entrepreneurs were not so much looking for learning as for the expertise and technical knowledge the partner could bring. Among the cases in which there was a search for learning, we can cite case E12, in which the entrepreneur sought new knowledge from his partner to add to his work. However, our research found that social entrepreneurs are more motivated by sharing the expertise of their partners, referred to in the study as know-how.

The search for resources, as mentioned by Gieu (2019), is borne out in our study. Social entrepreneurs are motivated by new financial and raw material resources, which are a way of

expanding their resources in uncertain environments (Sarasvathy and Botha, 2022). About market strategy and competitive advantage, as cited by Niesten and Jolink (2020), these factors are even mentioned by social entrepreneurs. However, they did not stand out in the research, which shows that knowledge sharing is a predominant fact in the interactions.

Sarasvathy and Botha (2022) argue that expert entrepreneurs are motivated more by how partners can help in value co-creation instead of financial help. Our study identified this relationship in partner relevance, an extrinsic motivator for partnership. Social entrepreneurs tend to enter into partnerships based on the partner's relevance, such as their position or ability to influence. This type of factor is more prevalent in cases where partnerships are made through social networks. The relevance of the partner is also measured by other factors, such as commitment to sustainability, one of the criteria cited by social entrepreneurs.

From a general perspective, the study demonstrates that social entrepreneurs are motivated by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Regarding intrinsic factors, the alignment of values and purpose stands out as central elements. They are also driven by extrinsic factors, such as the pursuit of know-how, which emerged as the most predominant among these factors. This suggests that, for the social entrepreneurs in this study, partner selection is focused on strategic elements and criteria. Thus, the more aligned partners are with their values and purpose, the greater the likelihood of strategic alignment, contributing to achieving social and environmental goals.

5.3 THE ROLE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL IN THE EFFECTUAL PARTNERSHIPS

Our study showed that social capital is linked to effective partnerships. This is because pre-existing patterns influence the effectuation process directly or indirectly, as Kerr and Coviello (2020) argued. In other words, it is a social process where actors interact with each other (Kerr; Coviello, 2020; Engmann and Ngwakwe, 2021; Wegner and Maehler, 2012). We suggest, however, that these existing patterns go beyond the individual and are established in inherent qualities of the environment where these relationships are established and become more complex depending on symbolic, material and similarity factors (Bourdieu, 1986; Häuberer, 2011). Thus, in our study, we observed that the relationships between the partners in the effectual process, despite being a process of flexibility and adaptability, depend on structural, relational and cognitive factors since social relationships do not occur in isolation (Claridge, 2020).

In this study, we approached social capital through structural, relational, and cognitive dimensions. We observed that social entrepreneurs maintain a more flexible relationship for the structural dimension, seeking to bridge networks to expand their knowledge, ideas, and innovation.

The social capital literature explains that bridging ties increases the potential for innovation by connecting groups with different identities and knowledge (Putnam, 2000; Lin, 2017). For the effectuation process, the entrepreneur's ability to mobilise their networks is a central process, without which the effectuation process does not expand (Sarasvathy and Botha, 2022; Kerr and Coviello, 2019). In this process, networks are seen as mobilising resources in limiting or uncertain environments. In this sense, our study contributes to the theory of social capital and effectuation, as it shows that social entrepreneurs can mobilise their networks and use their resources in a collaborative network maintained with their partners.

It is important to note that when the social entrepreneurs' networks were well built, partnerships occurred without much effort on the part of the entrepreneurs, based on references from their partners and acquaintances, as was the case with E3. This finding allows us to infer that the social entrepreneurs' flexibility at the organisation's start allowed them to expand their network more easily (Mikic *et al.*, 2020).

For the effectuation process, the rules and roles played by partners tend to be more informal, which allows relationships to be adaptable (Sarasvathy, 2008). In social capital, on the other hand, rules, norms and sanctions reduce the uncertainties of relationships and create a structure of commonly agreed-upon norms (Claridge, 2020). We can see that the relationship structures of social entrepreneurs tend to be more flexible, without so many formalised rules and norms.

However, effectuation may become more causal over time, with the presence of norms and formal contracts. This happens because as the partnership develops and the partners gain more trust, more norms and expectations may arise from the partnership (Wegner and Maehler, 2012). This change in approach may be due to the necessity of controlling and predicting the exchange within the partnerships (Moran, 2005).

The search for partners, in this sense, is based on well-established criteria, which set the standard for the relationships expected within the partnership. As shown in our study, social entrepreneurs take relational aspects into account, such as the ethical behaviour of their partners (E3, E4, E5, E6, E7, E8, E9, E10, E11, E12), mutual exchange (E1, E3, E4, E5, E7, E8, E10, E11, E12), and honesty (E2, E3, E4, E7, E8, E10, E11, E12). According to Lin (2017), similar characteristics collaborate to intensify ties. In this case, when social entrepreneurs observe the

presence of these criteria in their partners, they are more likely to initiate the partnership and maintain it over time.

For the **relational dimension**, our study also showed that social entrepreneurs tend to get closer, given their partners' proximity and reputation/status. According to Kerr and Coviello (2019), a lack of purpose leads entrepreneurs to look for partners closer to them as their first contact network. Contrary to the study by Kerr and Coviello (2019), we observed that social entrepreneurs do not start looking for partners without a goal in mind. The data sample showed that social entrepreneurs have a clear mission, with their organisation being an extension of their identity.

Therefore, proximity, in this case, is given by other factors, such as sharing sustainable objectives and social impact. Even so, the presence of objectives does not inhibit the desire or willingness of partners to be part of the project and participate in it, as argued by Guieu (2019). However, low proximity between partners may be a determining factor for partner engagement and permanence.

On the other hand, the reputation/status of the partner also seems to have a significant influence during the partnership. This is because, initially, partnerships depend on the actors' needs (Lin, 2017). In the social capital literature, Bourdieu (1976) argues that relationships within social capital are based on power and status. On the other hand, for Coleman (1988), actors are influenced by the value of the resources they can offer. In this sense, at first, social entrepreneurs may consider the need for resources, knowledge and innovation from the perspective of how the partnership can influence the means. However, as the partners become closer, this reputation transforms into admiration. This admiration is one of the characteristics that makes social entrepreneurs seek to establish partnerships (E11).

Furthermore, social entrepreneurs may be more inclined to focus on deepening existing relationships by increasing partnership exchanges, aligning with Saravasthy and Botha (2022). This would explain, for example, why some partnerships are more momentary and others become longer lasting since the exchange between partners can increase the collective identity of the partnership, which maintains a sense of belonging, friendship or familiarity with the partner (Lin, 2017).

Social entrepreneurs may keep a more effectual approach at the beginning of the interaction. However, as Sarasvathy (2008) indicates, environmental interaction may affect the structures of relationships between partners. We may see that over time and with the interaction between partners, more rules and expectations will arise from the relationship as a form of diminishing the uncertainty of the relationship (Moran, 2005; Wegner and Maehler, 2012).

Even if relationships are flexible, norms, sanctions, and criteria exist amid these interactions. Even if not communicated in codes, they are indirectly communicated and agreed upon.

For the **cognitive dimension**, we observed that shared narratives contributed to the alignment of vision, as the partners comprehended the objectives and purpose of the organisation more. As Sarasvathy (2008) and Martin *et al.*(2023) point out, storytelling is widely used by social entrepreneurs with their partners to reinforce the narratives, codes, and languages of a group. It influences the conditions under which information and resources are exchanged, as Johansson (2018) points out.

For Naphiet and Ghoshal (1998), shared language facilitates the ability to gain access to knowledge resources, discuss ideas, and provide a standard apparatus through which information is shared. On the other hand, narratives create a sense of belonging and meaning to the unique interaction for that specific group (Meek *et al.*, 2019).

To illustrate our discussion, Figure 23 shows how partnerships can develop from the elements of social capital discussed. We have adopted this figure from Kerr and Coviello (2020). However, we pay more attention to relational factors than market dynamics, as shown by the model of Kerr and Coviello (2020). We have therefore divided the interactions into four levels: 1) individual structural dynamics, 2) dyadic relationship, 3) network dynamics and 4) embedded commitment; the last level chosen for this study is opposed to the market level of Kerr and Coviello's model.

At the first level, individual structural dynamics, we can observe the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations to mobilise networks: 1) the assessment of means and 2) what can I do? According to Guieu (2019), network mobilisation occurs when entrepreneurs need information and resources unavailable within their current network. Similarly, we observed that social entrepreneurs tend to mobilise their networks through the lack of resources or knowledge.

The second level is the relational dimension, in which social entrepreneurs in our analysis achieve their partners. First, they mobilise their networks through bridging ties and seeking partners with a certain level of reputation, influence, or power to mobilise their resources; hence, this initial stage is called "What can you do?" This first connection leads to collaboration between partners, where there is an exchange of resources and the prior knowledge that the social entrepreneur can provide to their partner.

At the third level, deeper connections are formed, named network dynamics. At this level, partners exchange their means, but different from the second level, the questions are changed to "What can we do?" In other words, at this level, partners share their means. At this

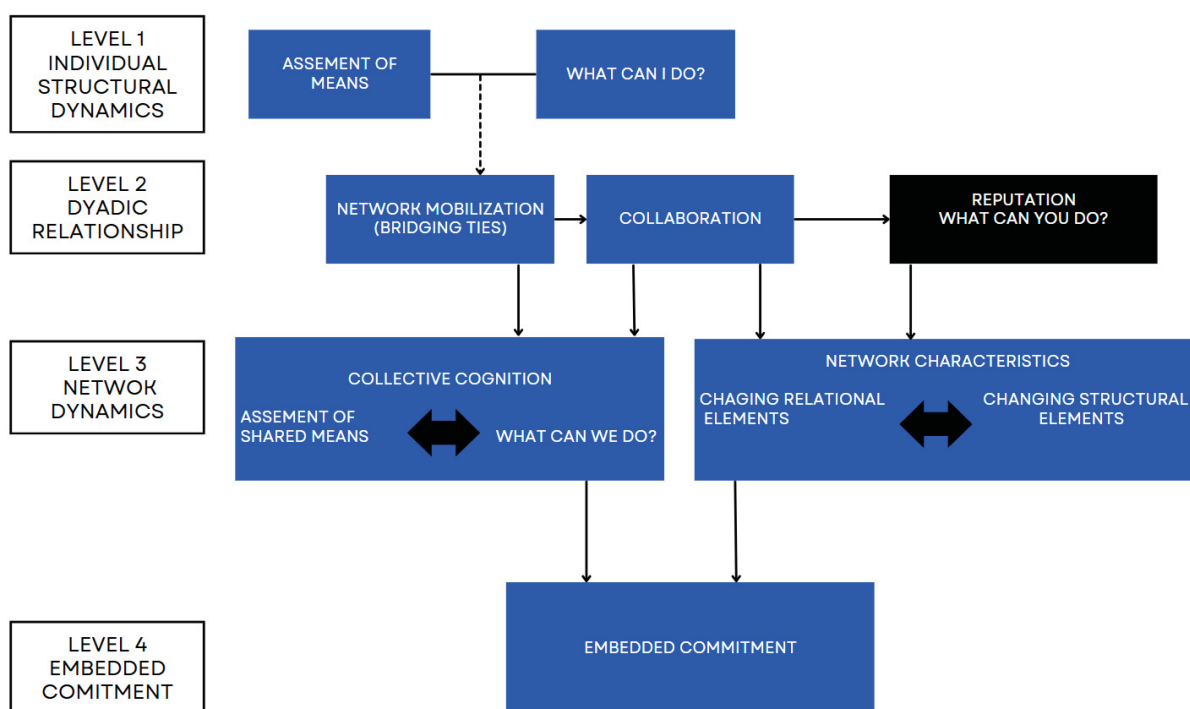
level, the discussion is based on the cognitive dimension of social capital. At this level, partners are committed to each other, sharing the same vision and objectives.

Still, the exchange of relational and structural elements occurs in the third level. This second level is initially more focused on exchanging relational and structural elements. At this level, we consider the tangible and intangible elements derived from this exchange, such as knowledge resources and financial support, as well as structural.

Different from the model of Kerr and Coviello (2020), the embedded commitment takes place at the fourth level. Here, the partners combine their resources collaboratively, and the narrative aligns more closely with what we can achieve together. We argue that the closer the partners are to the shared CLN, the greater the sense of belonging and, therefore, the higher the level of commitment among the partners.

Figure 22 is based on the data of social entrepreneurs in the fashion sector and on what we have seen so far in the field.

Figure 22 – Convergence of the effectual and social capital dynamic



Source: Adapted from Kerr and Coviello (2020) based on the data collected.

In our study, the structural dimension seems to play a central role in the partnerships. It is through bridging ties that social entrepreneurs can explore new opportunities. However, the paper on the crazy quilt principle is more peripheral. This can suggest that while the crazy quilt principle provides more flexibility, the configurations, patterns, and predictability of this

partnership are provided by the structural and relational dimensions, with the presence of norms and expectations. The role of the crazy quilt principle is to mobilise, innovate, and develop strategies suitable for uncertain contexts.

However, As the partnership develops, more control over the partnerships is needed to diminish the uncertainty of the exchanges. In this sense, social entrepreneurs tend to shift over time toward a more formal approach, establishing norms, rules, and sanctions for partners already part of the collaboration.

Additionally, we observe that social entrepreneurs initially focus on external aspects, such as the reputation/status of their partners. This finding connects with extrinsic motivational factors and the need for competence, as discussed in the motivation chapter. In the first stages, social entrepreneurs seek partners primarily due to resource and innovation needs. Over time, however, reputation shifts from being a power attribute to becoming more of a feeling of admiration, which can gradually reinforce the identity of the partnership and the bonds between partners.

On the other hand, given the subjective nature of the cognitive dimension, this dimension seems to play a more isolated role than the other dimensions. The codes, languages, and narratives are complex elements because, although they are material assets within partnerships, they are also symbolic (Bourdieu, 1986). Our study observed that narratives and shared histories are central to the cognitive dimension. Social entrepreneurs may use the narratives to align their vision and objectives.

5.4 THE INFLUENCE OF PARTNERS IN THE CREATION OF VALUE IN EFFECTUAL PARTNERSHIPS.

From the perspective of how partnerships influence the initiatives of social entrepreneurs and from the viewpoint of effectuation, our study identified that social entrepreneurs tend to be more resource-oriented than goal-oriented (E3, E7, E8, E9, E11). This probably occurs because social entrepreneurs are more focused on exploring the available means—such as knowledge and partnerships—as noted in the studies by Akemu *et al.*(2016) and Martin *et al.*(2023).

Our study also showed that not all interactions between social entrepreneurs and their partners led to innovation, a new market, or a new product, as effectuation theory proposes. In these relationships, innovations sometimes originate from the entrepreneur, who seeks new partners to increase their resources to realise the idea. This factor can be analysed by the nature

of these relationships, initially based on searching for resources (Guieu, 2019; Niesten and Jolink, 2020).

On the other hand, social entrepreneurs are more aligned with their values and goals—which, as the social entrepreneurs have stated, constitute their identity—thereby limiting the influence of their partners on their objectives (Akemu, 2016; York *et al.*, 2016). This occurs because the product goes beyond the material; it is the sum of the social entrepreneur's values, objectives, and identity, converted into the organisation's mission, as further supported by the study of Akemu *et al.* (2016). In a few cases, such as E2, we observed the direct influence of the partner on new objectives.

In this sense, our study does not demonstrate that effectuation influences the mission and vision of social entrepreneurs, as discussed by Weerakoon *et al.* (2019). In practice, we observed this only in case E2, where the social entrepreneur moved to another sector—still within the fashion industry—motivated by his partners and the difficulties of finding partners aligned with the initial organisation's mission.

These results demonstrate that objectives and mission may serve as a norm and sanction that affect the relational dimension of social capital. Moreover, in the cognitive dimension, we observed that the GP (goals and purpose) were influenced by the CLN, meaning that the shared objectives between social entrepreneurs and their partners contribute to the development of the partnership. On the other hand, regarding effectuation, we may observe that in social entrepreneurs' partnerships, the objective and mission influence the entire effectuation process. Therefore, the social entrepreneur needs to ascertain—before initiating a partnership—whether the partner understands their mission and the meaning of a social enterprise (Yang *et al.*, 2022).

In this way, we may argue that the influence of partners is more tied to new means—the mobilisation of resources through partnerships—than to new ends. We also observed the relevant role that the organisation's objectives and mission have in influencing the entrepreneurs' perceptions of their partners, thereby limiting their influence. In this sense, we may infer that, at least about the partnerships of social entrepreneurs in effectuation theory, causation influences the structures of partnerships. In contrast, effectuation is a strategy for mobilising new resources.

6 CONCLUSION

The process of how and why partnerships occur has always raised questions for the field of management, especially for the field of social entrepreneurship. The literature on effectuation indicated that relationships between partners in the crazy quilt principle were established through flexibility and adaptability of objectives. In this way, partners began collaborating with new means and objectives. However, the current literature did not explain how these relationships took place within the crazy quilt, that is, how they occurred and transformed into bonds of embedded commitment. For the literature on social capital, relationships between partners depend on pre-established contextual elements beyond the individual, as these relationships are not carried out individually or in isolation. Given this, our research question emerged: "How do partnerships contribute to social entrepreneurs' initiatives, considering the perspectives of effectuation and social capital?" this dissertation aimed to answer by analysing how partnerships contribute to social entrepreneurs' initiatives in the sustainable fashion sector through the lenses of effectuation and social capital.

Thus, we chose social entrepreneurship initiatives in the fashion sector with more than three years of operation for the context of this research. The data was collected through interviews with social entrepreneurs. Using a semi-structured questionnaire, we investigated how relationships between social entrepreneurs and their partners were established and how their partners influenced initiatives. Since access to social entrepreneurs in the fashion sector in Brazil is limited, mainly due to the lack of information about social enterprises in this sector, we achieved the general and specific objectives set for this research.

Therefore, the data analysis and discussion of the data were divided into four chapters for the discussion of the general and specific objectives. In the first analysis chapter, we sought to present the data observed in the field regarding social entrepreneurs' initiatives following the crazy quilt principle. In this chapter, we observed the practical elements employed by social entrepreneurs to mobilise their networks, collaborate, and exchange ideas, as well as the elements that enabled the development of embedded commitment. In the discussion of these findings, we noted that embedded commitment is based on proximity and relevance of the partner. We identified that social entrepreneurs prefer establishing lasting relationships with their partners despite the flexibility of mobilising their networks rather than constantly switching partners. We also observed that partner relationships are more collaborative but do not always involve idea exchange. Thus, these relationships initially seem more superficial, but proximity and sharing experiences and stories deepen over time.

The second analysis and discussion chapters described the motivational factors that led social entrepreneurs to establish partnerships. We observed that social entrepreneurs sought new partners to access resources and know-how, i.e., the partner's experience. However, they also sought partners aligned with their values and purpose, as partners not aligned with these factors would have more difficulty understanding the mission of social entrepreneurs.

In the third analysis chapter and the discussion chapter, we analysed how relationships developed by social entrepreneurs from the crazy quilt principle are further developed by examining the structural, relational, and cognitive dimensions of social capital. Social entrepreneurs tend to focus the mobilisation of their networks on bridging ties, which contribute to new perspectives and market opportunities by connecting with networks different from their own, bringing new information and resources.

Additionally, we observed again that proximity and partner reputation/status are crucial for developing these partnerships. Initially, reputation/status is viewed in terms of "what can you do for me?"—that is, the influence and position of the partners. However, over time, this reputation transforms into a sense of admiration fostered by the level of interaction, emotional sharing, and exchanges, i.e., the level of proximity. In these relationships, partners move beyond mere collaboration and give way to embedded commitment, an essential factor for the crazy quilt principle. Moreover, we also observed that, through time, social entrepreneurs may set norms and expectations as the partnerships develop.

Within these networks, it was common for social entrepreneurs to use storytelling to create codes, languages, and narratives that engaged their partners in interactions. We even observed that when narratives were shared, there was a greater chance of partners understanding the objectives and purpose of social entrepreneurs. Despite the subjective nature of the cognitive dimension, we also observed that it might serve as a background against which partnerships' characteristics, quality, configuration, and standards are defined. However, we noted that its influence is more significant on the relational dimension.

In the fourth and final chapter of analysis and discussion, we examined how partners influenced the initiatives of social entrepreneurs concerning new means and objectives. We found that partners tended to influence new means more than new objectives. This happened because, for social entrepreneurs, their objectives rarely change unless they see a new opportunity. In most interactions, partners contributed more with material resources and know-how than with discussions about objectives. Thus, we observed that the final product social entrepreneurs produce is more than the product itself, as it represents the sum of their values, objectives, and identity translated into their products. Therefore, social entrepreneurs typically

establish the extent to which partners would affect the organisation's objectives and, consequently, the final product.

Finally, considering our research question ("How do partnerships contribute to social entrepreneurs' initiatives, considering the perspectives of effectuation and social capital?"), our study suggests that social entrepreneurs are willing to collaborate and mobilise resources within their partners, outputting new means that will be transformed into other effectuation processes. However, regarding new objectives, social entrepreneurs may show a rigid position to change their objectives and mission, as social entrepreneurs' purpose and objectives are also central to their organisation. In this sense, partners may influence the new means rather than the new objectives.

6.1 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION

This dissertation contributes to the literature by articulating how and why partnerships occur from the lenses of effectuation and social capital in the context of social entrepreneurs in the fashion sector. Thus, the main theoretical contribution demonstrated in this study is how partners influence social entrepreneurs' initiatives, which showed that they are more connected with the new means rather than the new objective.

The key contributions related to the specific objectives of this study are as follows: i) Social entrepreneurs use both approaches, effectual and causal; ii) The main factors that motivate social entrepreneurs are the need for Competence and intrinsic motivation; iii) social capital is related to effectual partnerships; iv) partners influence the means, through new resources and know-how, but have less influence on the objectives.

The first contribution is that social entrepreneurs use both approaches in partnerships. The effectual approach allows for greater flexibility in mobilising networks, contributing to the co-creation of value for social entrepreneurs, as these networks provide new knowledge and resources not found within their networks. On the other hand, the more these partnerships develop toward more excellent proximity, the more the social entrepreneurs in this study tended to adopt a more causal approach to have more predictions of the exchanges established between partners. We argue that, in this sense, while effectuation functions as a strategy, causation is where partnerships are structured.

The second contribution is that social entrepreneurs are motivated by know-how and the alignment of values and purpose. For the know-how, social entrepreneurs are interested in how their partners can collaborate in developing the idea. However, intrinsic motivators collaborated

with the partnership, such as the value and the purpose, which is understood as a central motivator to establish partnerships. A possible explanation for this is that the objective is non-negotiable – we argue that social entrepreneurs view their goals and mission as an extension of their identity. If the partner is not aligned with that, they may suffer in supporting the mission of social entrepreneurs.

The third contribution is that social capital is related to effectual partnerships. Although effectuation was considered a central element of our discussion, it acts more peripherally, with the structural dimension of social capital being central. This suggests that effectuation, for this research, emerges from the connection between the structural, relational, and cognitive dimensions of social capital. As demonstrated in the research, social entrepreneurs can mobilise their networks flexibly, and it is through this flexibility that they transform and mobilise resources, leading to collaboration between partners and co-creation of value, as the effectuation approach suggests. In this sense, we argue that effectuation is a strategy of innovation, while the structural and relational dimensions, together with causation, are the partnerships' structure.

Furthermore, partnerships within effectuation are not individual, as widely discussed in the literature, but rather a social process. Therefore, although social entrepreneurs' partnerships tend to be more flexible in mobilising their networks, social entrepreneurs' norms, narratives, languages, values, and beliefs can affect the process that permeates these relationships. Although the cognitive dimension appeared in isolation from the other dimensions, we may consider that the cognitive dimension acts as a backdrop, contributing to the characteristics and qualities of relationships within effectual partnerships.

Also, proximity and reputation/status were frequently mentioned during the data analysis. Proximity between partners over time through shared stories and narratives can help relationships endure, increasing exchanges between partners. On the other hand, when proximity is low, social entrepreneurs may seek partners with some influence or power over a specific knowledge, resource, know-how, or ability to influence their target audience. However, as social entrepreneurs develop their relationships, reputation may become a feeling of admiration.

The fourth contribution is that partners influence the means through new resources and know-how but have less influence on the objectives. Since the objective is a central and immutable element, partners have little influence, playing a secondary role in new objectives. Therefore, they rarely allow their partners to drastically change their goals and purpose,

believing it would go against their values and beliefs. In this sense, the social entrepreneurs in this study were more inclined to seek partners who shared similar values and goals.

Another contribution arises from an overall view of the cases, which allows us to observe that effectuation regarding partnership development constitutes a strategy. Social entrepreneurs' flexible position makes mobilising resources and achieving innovation possible. On the other hand, we argue that these relationships do not occur individually or without a structure in which social capital is characterised by elements and patterns that dictate how partnerships and embedded commitment will be achieved.

It is relevant to note, however, that the results discussed in this dissertation refer to what was observed in the field of social entrepreneurs in the Brazilian fashion sector. As discussed earlier, each relationship is unique and occurs based on its pre-established patterns. Thus, our study does not allow for generalising the results presented in this dissertation.

6.2 EMPIRICAL CONTRIBUTION

Regarding the empirical contributions, we highlight the importance of relational and cognitive elements for forming lasting partnerships aligned with the goals of social entrepreneurs. The dynamics of these elements prove to be essential factors that can be created and enhanced according to the needs of the social entrepreneur. Thus, this study aims to contribute by providing social entrepreneurs with an analytical tool that can be applied to their relationships with their partners, allowing them to mobilise their partnerships more effectively, utilising strategic tools that help build a relational and cognitive dynamic in their relationships.

Furthermore, this study contributes by helping social entrepreneurs incorporate both effectuation and causation approaches as innovation strategies. In this way, they will have more control over when to opt for an effectual approach and when to opt for a causal approach.

The findings of our study may also benefit partners of social entrepreneurs by providing insights into the meaning of partnership for these agents. In particular, our results on, for example, the motivations behind forming partnerships and the most valued aspects of the process can help organisations seeking to collaborate with social entrepreneurs refine their practices and foster more effective partnerships.

6.3 SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION

Regarding this dissertation's social contributions, the first contribution is the creation of foundations for strengthening the collaborative networks of social entrepreneurs through the development of programs and public policies that encourage cooperation among organisations with social missions, especially social enterprises in the fashion sector. Thus, by identifying the elements, factors, and mechanisms that contribute to forming and maintaining partnerships over time, governmental and non-governmental initiatives can be structured in line with the reality of social entrepreneurs, expanding access to financial, technical, and market resources.

This study's second contribution demonstrates how these partnerships are mobilised and driven through effectuation and social capital. Therefore, we hope this study will contribute to social entrepreneurs' initiatives to improve their competitiveness, achieve their social objectives, generate jobs, and promote the social, economic, and sustainable development of their regions and the national territory.

Finally, this dissertation reinforces the importance of the values and goals that guide social entrepreneurs in their relationships with their partners. In this way, we aim to contribute to business models emphasising ethics and social responsibility, promoting a more inclusive environment capable of generating positive social, economic, and environmental change for community empowerment.

6.4 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

The main limitation of this study is, first and foremost, the inability to generalise the results presented in this dissertation. It is important to emphasise that we narrowed our study to social entrepreneurs in the Brazilian sustainable fashion sector. The sustainable fashion sector contains barriers and challenges specific to its economic, political, and social context. Therefore, when trying to generalise results for social entrepreneurs, the researcher needs to exercise caution, as each context, relationship, and individual is unique.

The second limitation of our study pertains to the approach applied. It is necessary to understand that social relationships are deeper and more complex. Therefore, it is interesting to understand both sides of the story, i.e., the perspectives of the social entrepreneurs and their partners. However, it was complex to interview the partners of the social entrepreneurs, as many no longer identified as partners, and the understanding was that, initially, individual analysis would be best, particularly for the first approach to the field.

The third limitation was the inability to visit all social entrepreneurs in person for an in-person observation. Online interviews provided greater flexibility for both the interviewee and

the researcher, especially regarding physical distance and the cost involved, so most interviews were conducted online.

6.5 FUTURE RESEARCH

Based on the development of this dissertation and the reflections raised throughout the research, we have developed a research agenda for future research in the field:

- a) Examine whether social media networks contribute to or influence the development of proximity through cross-sectional research with semi-structured interviews.
- b) Explore social capital in effective partnership practices to understand how its elements behave in different contexts, using a longitudinal study with multi-level analysis (individual, group, organisation).
- c) Investigate how the cognitive element fosters commitment between partners through ethnographic research.
- d) Study effectuation as a dimension of social capital through documentary analysis, observation, or multiple case studies with social entrepreneurs from diverse contexts.
- e) Examine how social entrepreneurs' objectives and mission integrate into the effectuation process through cross-sectional research with semi-structured interviews.
- f) Analyse how the paradox between flexible network mobilisation and pre-established patterns affects partnership formation and consolidation, using ethnographic research or case studies.
- g) Explore the legitimation of social entrepreneurs through shared codes, language, and narratives within the cognitive dimension by conducting documentary analysis, observation, or multiple case studies in the fashion sector.
- h) Assess whether coordinating institutions influence social entrepreneurs through multiple case studies across different contexts.
- i) Investigate how social capital supports value co-creation in social entrepreneurial initiatives in various contexts, using multiple case studies with semi-structured interviews.

REFERENCES

- ABEBE, M. A., KIMAKWA, S., REDD, T. Toward a typology of social entrepreneurs: the interplay between passionate activism and entrepreneurial expertise. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 27(4), 509–530, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSBED-08-2019-0279>
- AGOSTINI, L.; NOSELLA, A.; TESHOME, M. B. Inter-organizational relationships: toward a reconceptualisation of constructs. *Baltic Journal of Management*, v. 14, n. 3, 2019. DOI: 10.1108/BJM-08-2018-0306.
- AKEMU, O.; WHITEMAN, G.; KENNEDY, S. Social enterprise emergence from social movement activism: The Fairphone case. *Journal of Management Studies*, v. 53, n. 5, p. 846–877, 2016. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12208>.
- ALVES, F. S.; SEGATTO, A. P.; DE-CARLI, E. Theoretical framework about relational capability on inter-organizational cooperation. *Journal of Industrial Integration and Management*, v. 1, n. 4, 2016. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1142/S2424862216500123>.
- ANAND, B. N.; KHANNA, T. Do firms learn to create value? The case of alliances. **Strategic management journal**, v. 21, n. 3, p. 295-315, 2000.
- AUSTIN, J.; STEVENSON, H.; WEI-SKILLERN, J. Social and commercial entrepreneurship: same, different, or both? *R. Adm*, v. 47, n°3, 2012.
- AYOUNGMAN, F. Z. *et al.* Exploring the economic impact of institutional entrepreneurship, social innovation, and poverty reduction on carbon footprint in BRICS countries: what is the role of social enterprise? *Environ Sci Pollut Res*, v. 30, p. 122791–122807, 2023. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11356-023-30868-z>.
- AZEVEDO, A. C.; PARDINI, D. J.; SIMÃO, G. L.. Capital social e relacionamentos inter e intrarregionais em arranjos produtivos locais: estudo no APL calçadista de Nova Serrana/MG. **REGEPE Entrepreneurship and Small Business Journal**, v. 4, n. 2, p. 96-132, 2015.
- BACQ, S., HARTOG, C., HOOGENDOORN, B. Beyond the Moral Portrayal of Social Entrepreneurs: An Empirical Approach to Who They Are and What Drives Them. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 133(4), 703–718, 2016. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-014-2446-7>
- BAMMENS, Y.; COLLEWAERT, V. Trust between entrepreneurs and angel investors: exploring positive and negative implications for venture performance assessments. *Journal of Management*, vol. 40, no. 7, November, 2014. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206312463937>
- BARGSTED, M., PICON, M., SALAZAR, A., ROJAS, Y. Psychosocial Characterization of Social Entrepreneurs: A Comparative Study. *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, 4(3), 331–346, 2013. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19420676.2013.820780>
- BARKI, E. Negócios de impacto: Tendência ou modismo? *GV-executivo*, 14(1), 14-17, 2015. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.12660/gvexec.v14n1.2015.49183>

BARKEI, E.; *et al.* Support for social entrepreneurs from disadvantaged areas navigating crisis: insights from Brazil. *Journal of Business Venturing Insights*, vol. 14, 2020. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbvi.2020.e00205>

BASTOS, F. M. de A.; ALMEIDA, A. A. de. O IMPACTO DA INDÚSTRIA DA MODA NO MEIO AMBIENTE E A FRAGILIDADE DAS LEIS REGULAMENTADORAS. *Revista Ibero-Americana De Humanidades, Ciências E Educação*, 10(6), 2908–2921, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.51891/rease.v10i6.14588>

BAZANINI, R.; DA SILVA, J. R.; BIFFI, M. A. Empreendedorismo social em redes interorganizacionais: o fluxo mimétrico como absorção adaptativa na formação de competências para o empoderamento social. *Gestão & Regionalidade*, [S. l.], v. 36, n. 109, 2020. DOI: 10.13037/gr.vol36n109.6632. DOI https://www.seer.uscs.edu.br/index.php/revista_gestao/article/view/6632. Acesso em: 17 mar. 2025.

BIGGEMANN, S.; BUTTLE, F. Intrinsic value of business-to-business relationships: An empirical taxonomy. *Journal of Business Research*, v. 65, n. 8, p. 1132-1138, 2012.

BIRLEY, S. The role of networks in the entrepreneurial process. *Journal of Business Venturing*, (1985). DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/0883-9026\(85\)90010-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/0883-9026(85)90010-2)

BOURDIEU, Pierre. The forms of capital. (1986). *Cultural theory: An anthology*, v. 1, n. 81-93, p. 949, 2011.

BRAGA, M. J. Redes, alianças estratégicas e intercooperação: o caso da cadeia produtiva de carne bovina. *Revista Brasileira de Zootecnia*, v. 39, 2010. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1516-35982010001300002>

BRUNI, L.; DE ROSA, D.; FERRI, G. Cooperatives and happiness. Cross-country evidence on the role of relational capital. *Applied Economics*, v. 51, n. 30, p. 3325–3343, 2019. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00036846.2019.1575944>. .

BURT, R. S. et al. The social capital of structural holes. *The new economic sociology: Developments in an emerging field*, v. 148, n. 90, p. 122, 2002.

BURT, R. S. *Structural holes: The social structure of competition*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995.

BURT, R. S. The network structure of social capital. *Research in organizational behavior*, v. 22, p. 345-423, 2000.

BURT, R. S. *Toward a structural theory of action*. New York: Academic Press, 1982.

BUSKENS, V. *Social networks and trust*. London: Kluwer, 2002.

CARNWELL, R.; BUCHANAN, J. *Effective Practice in health and social care: a partnership approach*. New York: Open University Press, 2005.

CAVAZOS-ARROYO, J.; DÍAZ, R. P.; AGARWAL, N. Análise de alguns antecedentes da intenção empreendedora social entre os residentes do México. *Review of business management* (2017). DOI: 10.7819/rbgn.v19i64.3129

CHANDLER, G. N.; DETIENNE, D. R.; MCKELVIE, A.; MUMFORD, T. V. Causation, and effectuation processes: A validation study. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 2011. DOI:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2009.10.006>.

CHARLES, E.; MARCINIAK, R. Fashion and lifestyle brands: storytelling within purpose-led brands in order to contribute to growth. In: QUARTIER, K.; PETERMANS, A.; MELEWAR, T.; DENNIS, C. (Eds.). *The Value of Design in Retail and Branding*. Bingley: Emerald Publishing, 2021. p. 51–64. DOI:<https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-80071-579-020211005>.

CHOI, N.; MAJUMDAR, S. Social entrepreneurship as an essentially contested concept: Opening a new avenue for systematic future research. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 2013. DOI:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2013.05.001>. Acesso em: [inserir data de acesso].

CICOUREL, A. V. *Cognitive sociology*. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1973.

CLARIDGE, T. Social capital at different levels and dimensions: a typology of social capital. *Social Capital Research*, p. 1–8, 2020.

CLARKE, A.; CRANE, A. Cross-sector partnerships for systemic change: systematised literature review and agenda for further research. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 2018. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-018-3922-2>

COLEMAN, James S. Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American journal of sociology*, v. 94, p. S95-S120, 1988.

COLEMAN, James S. **Foundations of social theory**. Harvard university press, 1994.

CONWAY DATO-ON, M.; BANERJEE, S. In search of patterns: a preliminary investigation of social entrepreneurs in Mexico and India. In: *IN SEARCH OF BUSINESS MODELS IN SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP: CONCEPTS AND CASES*. Singapore: Springer Singapore, 2021. p. 37-64.

CORBETTA, T. *Social Research: theory, methods, and techniques*. London: Sage, 2003.

CORNELISSEN, J. P.; CLARKE, J. Sensegiving in entrepreneurial context: using metaphors in speech and gesture to gain and sustain support for novel business ventures. *International Small Business Journal* (2010). DOI: 10.1177/0266242610364427

DASKALOPOULOU, I.; KARAKITSIOU, A.; THOMAKIS, Z. Social Entrepreneurship and Social Capital: A Review of Impact Research. *Sustainability*, v. 15, n. 6, p. 4787, 2023.

DESS, J. G. *The Meaning of Social Entrepreneurship*. Retrieved April 26, 2017 [em linha]. 1998.

DHIVYA, R.; SUBATHRA, B. Upcycling the pre-consumer textile waste into inventive accessories. In: Sustainable Textiles. 2023. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-37060-1_10.

DICKEL, P., SIENKNECHT, M.; HÖRISCH, J. The early bird catches the worm: an empirical analysis of imprinting in social entrepreneurship. *J Bus Econ* **91**, 127–150, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11573-020-00969-z>

DIMOV, D. Beyond the single-person, single-insight attribution in understanding entrepreneurial opportunities. *Entrepreneurship theory and practice*, v. 31, n. 5, p. 713-731, 2007.

DUFF, R.; BULL, M. Understanding Social Enterprise: theory and practice. London: Sage, 2019.

DWIVEDI, A.; WEERAWARDENA, J. Conceptualizing and operationalising the social entrepreneurship construct. *Journal of Business Research*, 86, 32–40, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.01.053>

EISENHARDT, K. M. Building Theories from Case Study Research. *Academy of Management Review*, v. 14, n. 4, p. 532–550, 1989.

EMAM, L. S. E. D. E. Social business models: effectuation in action. 2016 .133 f.Thesis (Doctor) –University of Liverpool, Philosophy, Liverpool, 2016.

ENG, T.-Y.; OZDEMIR, S.; GUPTA, S.; KANUNGO, R. P. International social entrepreneurship and social value creation in cause-related marketing through personal relationships and accountability. *International Marketing Review*, v. 37, n. 5, p. 945–976, 2020. DOI:<https://doi.org/10.1108/IMR-12-2018-0360>.

ENGMANN, A.; NGWAKWE, C. C. A moderation approach to online social interaction in entrepreneurship using the effectuation and causation theory. *Journal of Governance and Regulation*, v. 10, n. 2, 2021.

EWEJE, G.; PALAKSHAPPA, N. Business Partnerships with nonprofits: working to solve mutual problems in New Zealand. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, vol, 16, 2009. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.192>

FERRARA, A.; FERRARA, C.; TOMASI, S. *et al.* Exploring the potential farmer’s networking as leverage for inclusive tourism. *Sustainability*, vol. 15, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15075856>

FISHER, G. Effectuation, causation, and bricolage: a comparison of emerging theories in entrepreneurship research. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* (2012). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6520.2012.00537.x>

FITEC AMBIENTAL. Movimentos transformam peças de roupas usadas em alternativas sustentáveis. *FITEC Ambiental*, 5 jan. 2024. DOI:<https://fitecambiental.com.br/movimentos-transformam-pecas-de-roupas-usadas-em-alternativas-sustentaveis/>. Acesso em: 11 fev. 2025.

GAWELL, M. Social Entrepreneurship: Action Grounded in Needs, Opportunities and/or Perceived Necessities?. *International Society for Third Sector Research*, 24, 1071-1090, 2012. 10.1007/s11266-012-9301-1

GIOIA, Dennis A.; CORLEY, Kevin G.; HAMILTON, Aimee L. Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research: Notes on the Gioia methodology. **Organizational research methods**, v. 16, n. 1, p. 15-31, 2013.

GLANVILLE, J. L.; BIENENSTOCK, E. J. A typology for understanding the connections among different forms of social capital. *American Behavioral Scientist*, v. 52, n. 11, p. 1507–1530, 2009.

GRANOVETTER, M. S. The strength of weak ties. *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 78, n° 6, 1973.

GRÉGOIRE, D. A.; CHERCHEM, N. A structured literature review and suggestions for future effectuation research. *Small Business Economy* (2020). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-019-00158-5>

GRIFFIN-EL, E. W. Exploring social entrepreneurial boundary spanning for compassion triggered opportunities. *Social Enterprise Journal*, 17(3), 398–426, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SEJ-06-2020-0047>

GUARDO, M.C. Di; HARRIGAN, K.R. Mapping research on strategic alliances and innovation: a co-citation analysis. *Journal Technology Transference* (2011). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10961-011-9239-2>

GUR, F. A., BOUCHET, A., WALKUP, B. R., JENSEN, J. A. Moving beyond traditional sponsorships: understanding the structure and dynamic of minority equity sponsorship agreements. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, vol. 37, 2022. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JBIM-11-2020-0502>

GUTIÉRREZ, R.; MÁRQUEZ, P.; REFICCO, E. Configuration and Development of Alliance Portfolios: a comparison of same-sector and cross-sector partnerships. *Journal of Business Ethics* (2016). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-015-2729-7>

HÄUBERER, J. *Social capital theory*. Berlin: Springer Fachmedien, 2011.

HENSEL, R.; VISSER, R. Does personality influence effectual behavior? *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research* (2020). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEBR-06-2019-0343>

HITE, J.M. Patterns of multidimensionality among embedded network ties: a typology of relational embeddedness in emerging entrepreneurial firms. *Strategic organization* (2003). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/147612700311002>

HO, JAE-YUN, YOON, S. Ambiguous roles of intermediaries in social entrepreneurship: the case of the social innovation system in South Korea. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, vol. 175, 2022. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2021.121324>

INSTITUTO DE CIDADANIA EMPRESARIAL (ICE). Carta de princípios para negócios de impacto no Brasil. 2015. DOI:<https://ice.org.br/2015/10/14/carta-de-principios/>.

JACK, S. L. The role, use and activation of strong and weak network ties: a qualitative analysis. *Journal of Management Studies*, vol. 24, 2005. DOI:

JEONG, S. W.; HA, S.; LEE, K. H. How to measure social capital in an online brand community? A comparison of three social capital scales. *Journal of Business Research*, v. 131, p. 652–663, 2021.

JIANG, YI.; RÜLING, C. C. Opening the black box of effectuation processes: characteristics and dominant types. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* (2017). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1042258717744204>

JOHANNISSON, B. (2018). Disclosing everyday practices constituting social entrepreneurs—a case of necessity effectuation. *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, 30(3–4), 390–406. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2017.1413770>

KAMALUDIN, Mohammed Faiz. Social sustainability within social entrepreneurship. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, v. 192, p. 122541, 2023. DOI:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2023.122541>.

KARAMI, M.; WOOLISCROFT, B.; MCNEILL, L. Effectuation, and internationalization: a review and agenda for future research. *Small Business Economy* (2020). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-019-00183-4>

KERLIN, J. A. A comparative analysis of the global emergence of social enterprise. *Journal of voluntary and nonprofit organizations*, 2006.

KERLINGER, F. N. **Foundations of behavioral research**. 2. ed. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1980.

KERR, J., COVIELLO, N. Formation and constitution of effectual networks: a systematic review and synthesis. *International journal of management reviews* (2019). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12194>

KERR, J., COVIELLO, N. Weaving network theory into effectuation: A multi-level reconceptualization of effectual dynamics. *Journal of Business Venturing*, v. 35, n. 2, 2020. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2019.05.001>

KNIGHT, F. Risk, uncertainty and profit. Houghton Mifflin Company: Boston and New York, 1921.

KRUSE, P.; CHIPETA, E. M.; UEBERSCHÄR, I. What keeps social entrepreneurs happy? Exploring personality, work design, external support, and social impact as resources of social entrepreneurs' mental well-being. *Sustainability*, v. 15, n. 5, p. 4109, 2023.

LAMRAD, N.; HANLON, M. Untangling fashion for development. *Fashion Theory*, v. 18, n. 5, p. 601–631, 2014. DOI:<https://doi.org/10.2752/175174114X14042383562182>.

LASSALLE, P.; JOHANSON, M.; NICHOLSON, J.D.; MROZEK, M.R. Migrant entrepreneurship and markets: the dynamic role of embeddedness in networks in the creation of opportunities. *Industrial marketing management* (2020). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2020.04.009>

LAVILLE, C.; DIONE, J. O nascimento do saber científico: A construção do saber: manual de metodologia da pesquisa em ciências sociais. Porto Alegre: Editora Artes Médicas Sul, p. 17-47, 1999.

LIMEIRA, T. M. V. Empreendedorismo social no Brasil: Estado da arte e desafios. **Inovação em cidadania empresarial**, 2015.

LÓPEZ, J. A. S. Systematic Review of Social Entrepreneurship: A Contemporary Approach. *Pacific Business Review (International)*, 16(10), 75–86, 2024. www.pbr.co.in

LOZANO, J. P. R., FELDMAN, P. S. M., GUERRA, R. P. Characteristics of the leaders of social and environmental enterprises in Latin America and the relationship with the success of their businesses. *Management Research*, ahead-of-print, 2024. DOI:<https://doi.org/10.1108/MRJIAM-02 2023-1382>

LUBBERINK, R.; BLOK, V.; VAN OPHEM, J.; VAN DER VELDE, G.; Omta, O. Innovation for Society: Towards a Typology of Developing Innovations by Social Entrepreneurs. *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, 9(1), 52–78, 2018. DOI:<https://doi.org/10.1080/19420676.2017.1410212>

LUZ, S. Pobreza e extrema pobreza recuam no Brasil em 2023. Radio Agência. DOI:<https://agenciabrasil.ebc.com.br/radioagencia-nacional/direitos-humanos/audio/2024-04/pobreza-e-extrema-pobreza-recuam-no-brasil-em-2023>. Acesso em: 17 abr. 2024.

MACHADO, H. P. V.; GAIOTTO, S. A. V.; ROVARIS MACHADO, M. C. Growth and social entrepreneurs: the challenge of conciliating economic and social values. **Revista de Gestão**, v. 28, n. 1, p. 1-21, 2021.

MAIR, J.; NOBOA, E. Social entrepreneurship: How intentions to create a social venture are formed. In: **Social entrepreneurship**. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2006. p. 121-135.

MARTIN, R.L.; OSBERG, S. (2007). Social Entrepreneurship: the case for definition. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*. Available at: https://ssir.org/articles/entry/social_entrepreneurship_the_case_for_definition. Access in: 27/04/2024.

MARX, K. Capital: An abridged edition. OUP Oxford, 1999.

MASILAMANI, V., BUDUMURU, U. R., YANG, X., KOLLI, N. S.; ADIDAM, P. T. Effectuation and Co-Creation in Social Enterprises: Examining the Relationship in the Context of Uncertainty. *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, 1–21, 2024. DOI: <https://doi.org.ez22.periodicos.capes.gov.br/10.1080/19420676.2023.2297669>

MATHIAS, T C., FISCHER, R. Managers' perceptions of partnerships between social enterprises and the public sector in Brazil. *Cadernos Gestão Pública e Cidadania*, vol. 28, 2023. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.12660/cgpc.v28.85884>

MCQUILTEN, G. The political possibilities of art and fashion based social enterprise. *Continuum*, v. 31, n. 1, p. 69–83, 2017. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10304312.2016.1262103>.

MEEK, S.; OGILVIE, M.; LAMBERT, C.; RYAN, M. M. Contextualising social capital in online brand communities. *Journal of Brand Management*, v. 26, n. 4, p. 426-444, 2019.

MENGUE, T.H.S.; SCHMIDT, S.; BOHNENBERGER, M.C. Contribuições do investimento anjo para o desenvolvimento de startups na região metropolitana de Porto Alegre. *Revista Gestão e Desenvolvimento* (2019). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25112/rgd.v16i1.1640>

MERRIAM, Sharan B.; TISDELL, Elizabeth J. *Qualitative research: a guide to design and implementation*. [S.l.]: John Wiley & Sons, 2015.

MEYER, B. *Parcerias Público Privadas: uma estratégia governamental*. São Paulo: Actual, 2021.

MIKIC, M.; HORVATINOVIC, T.; DRONJAK, M. **Do causal and effectual approaches to entrepreneurship equally drive the creation of social capital? A theoretical examination**. *Economic and Social Development: Book of Proceedings*, p. 93-100, 2020.

MILLER, T., GRIMES, M.G., McMULLEN, J.S., VOGUS, T.J. Venturing for others with heart and head: how compassion encourages social entrepreneurship. *Academy of Management Review*, 37 (4), 616-640, 2012. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5465/amr.2010.0456>

MINAYO, M. C. S. *O desafio do conhecimento: pesquisa qualitativa em saúde*. 11 ed. São Paulo: Hucitec, 2008.

MORAN, P. Structural vs. relational embeddedness: Social capital and managerial performance. *Strategic Management Journal*, v. 26, n. 12, p. 1129-1151, 2005.

MORT, G. M. S.; WEERAWARDENA, J.; CARNEGIE, K. Social entrepreneurship: towards conceptualization. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, vol. 8, 2017. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1002/nvsm.202>

MUNIZ JR, A. M.; O'GUINN, T. C. Brand community. **Journal of consumer research**, v. 27, n. 4, p. 412-432, 2001.

NAHAPIET, J.; GHOSHAL, S. Social capital, intellectual capital, and the organizational advantage. *Academy of Management Review*, v. 23, n. 2, p. 242-266, 1998.

NIESTEN, E.; JOLINK, A. Motivations for environmental alliances and internalizing environmental and knowledge value. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, vol. 22, 2020. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12228>

OLIVEIRA, M. **Empreendedorismo social no Brasil: atual configuração, perspectivas e desafios**. 2003, 568. F. Thesis (Doctor) – UNESP, Serviço Social, Franca, 2003.

OLIVER, C. Determinants of interorganizational relationships: Integration and future directions. *Academy of management review*, v. 15, n. 2, p. 241-265, 1990.

ONALAN, M. S., ERSOY, K.; MAGDA, R. Measurement of entrepreneurial profiles in turkey: A multi-dimensional scale development. *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, 22(2), 362-383, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.17512/pjms.2020.22.2.24>

OTHMAN, N., AB WAHID, H. Social entrepreneurship among participants in the students in free enterprise program. *Education and Training*, 56, 852–869, 2014. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-09-2013-0111>

PAI, R.J.; MORE, B. Sustaining social entrepreneurship through networks in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, vol. 9, 2018. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/19420676.2018.1498376>

PANGRIYA, R. Hidden aspects of social entrepreneurs' life: a content analysis. *Journal of Global Entrepreneurship Research*, 9(1), 2019. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40497-019-0199-6>

PARLAMENTO EUROPEU. O impacto da produção e dos resíduos têxteis no ambiente. 2024. DOI: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/topics/pt/article/20201208STO93327/o-impacto-da-producao-e-dos-residuostexteis-no-ambiente>. Acesso em: 09/02/2025.

PAULUS, T. M.; LESTER, J. N. ATLAS.ti for conversation and discourse analysis studies. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, v. 19, n. 4, p. 405-428, 2016.

PILLAI, K. G.; HODGKINSON, G. P.; KALYANARAM, G.; NAIR, S. R. The Negative Effects of Social Capital in Organizations: A Review and Extension. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, v. 19, n. 1, p. 97–124, 2017.

PIPE. 4º Mapa de Negócios de Impacto Social + Ambiental. São Paulo: PIPE, 2023. DOI: <https://mapa2023.pipelabo.com/>. Acesso em: 05/4/2024.

PUTNAM, R. D. Bowling alone: America's declining social capital. In: *The city reader*. Routledge, 2015. p. 188-196.

PUTNAM, R. D. Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community. Simon Schuster, 2000.

PUTNAM, R. D. E pluribus unum: Diversity and community in the twenty-first century the 2006 Johan Skytte Prize Lecture. *Scandinavian political studies*, v. 30, n. 2, p. 137-174, 2007.

RACAT, M.; RICARD, A.; MAUER, R. Effectuation and causation models: an integrative theoretical framework. *Small business economics* (2023). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-023-00787-x>

READ, S.; SONG, M.; SMIT, W. A meta-analytic review of effectuation and venture performance. *Journal of Business Venturing* (2009). DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2008.02.005>

REAST, J. *et al.* The Manchester Super Casino: Experience and Learning in a Cross-Sector Social Partnership. *Journal of Business Ethics*, v. 94, n. 1, p. 197–218, 2010.

REYMEN, I. M., ANDRIES, P., BERENDS, H., MAUER, R., STEPHAN, U.; VAN BURG, E. Understanding dynamics of strategic decision making in venture creation: a process study of effectuation and causation. *Strategic entrepreneurship journal*, 9(4), 351-379, 2015.

RICHARDSON, R. J. *Pesquisa Social: métodos e técnicas*. 3. ed. revista e ampliada. São Paulo: Atlas, 2008.

RISPAL, M. H.; SERVANTIE, V. Deconstructing the way in which value is created in the context of social entrepreneurship. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, v. 0, 2016. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12113>

RogoÅ, S., & BaranoviÄ, B. (2016). Social capital and educational achievements: Coleman vs. Bourdieu. *Center for Educational Policy Studies Journal*, 6(2), 81-100.

ROSCA, E.; AGARWAL, N.; BREM, A. Women entrepreneurs as agents of change: A comparative analysis of social entrepreneurship processes in emerging markets. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 157, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2020.120067>

SARASVATHY, S. D. Causation, and effectuation: toward a theoretical shift from economic inevitability to entrepreneurial contingency. *Academy of Management Review* (2001)

SARASVATHY, S. Questions worth asking for futures worth making: an effectual approach. *Small Business Economy* (2023). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-023-00747-5>

SARASVATHY, S.; BOTHA, H. Bringing people to the table in new ventures: an effectual approach. *Negotiation journal*, 2022.

SARASVATHY, S.; KUMAR, K.; YORK, J. G.; BHAGAVATULA, S. An effectual approach to international entrepreneurship: overlaps, challenges, and provocative possibilities. *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal* (2013). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/etap.12088>

SARASVATHY, S.D.; DEW, N. Effectuation and over-trust: debating Goel and Karri. *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal* (2008). DOI: 10.1007/s00191-005-0264-x

SARASVATHY, S.D.; DEW, N. New market creation through transformation. *Journal of Evolutionary Economics* (2005)

SAUNDERS, M.; LEWIS, P.; THORNHILL, A. *Research methods for business students*. 5 ed. London: Pearson Education Limited, 2009.

SCRIVENS, K.; SMITH, C. Four interpretations of social capital: An agenda for measurement. 2013.

SECCO, A. P. L.; NEIMAN, Z. Moda compartilhada como instrumento de Educação Ambiental para o consumo suficiente. *Revista Sergipana De Educação Ambiental*, 11, 1–45, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.47401/revisea.v11.19906>

SECCO, A. P. L.; NEIMAN, Z. **Sustentabilidade e consumo suficiente em empreendimentos de aluguel de roupas: uma análise conceitual.** *Revista Livre de Sustentabilidade e Empreendedorismo*, v. 8, n. 4, p. 154-199, 2023.

SELSKY, J. W.; PARKER, B. Cross-sector partnerships to address social issues: challenges to theory and practice. *Journal of Management*, vol. 31, n. 6, 2005. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206305279601>

SERVIÇO BRASILEIRO DE APOIO ÀS MICRO E PEQUENAS EMPRESAS (SEBRAE). Micro, pequenos e médios negócios representam 97,5% da indústria da moda. Agência Sebrae, 22 jan. 2024. DOI: <https://agenciasebrae.com.br/economia-e-politica/micro-pequenos-e-medios-negocios-representam-975-da-industria-da-moda/>. Accessed in: 11 fev. 2025.

SILVA, A. O. S. Parceira público-privadas de imacpto social no Brasil: lições de tentativas inconclusas. 2021. Theshis (Doctor) – FGV, Administração, São Paulo, 2018.

SILVA, R. L. M. Inovação social: um estudo a partir das parcerias desenvolvidas ao longo do seu processo em empresas sociais brasileiras e britânicas. 2018. Thesis (Doctor) – UFPF, Administração, Curitiba, 2018.

SIMON, H. A. Bounded rationality in social science: today and tomorrow. *Mind & Society* (1999). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02512227>

SMIRNOVA, M. M. Managing business and social network relationships in Russia: the role of relational capabilities, institutional support, and dysfunctional competition. *Industrial Marketing Management*, vol. 89, 2020. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2020.02.008>

SOTIROPOULOU, A., PAPADIMITRIOU, D., MAROUDAS, L. Personal Values and Typologies of Social Entrepreneurs. The Case of Greece. *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, 12(1), 1–27, 2021. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/19420676.2019.1668827>

SOUSA, I. G. B.; SEGATTO, A. P.; SILVA, R. L. M.; JUSTEN, G. S. The activities that constitute the phases of the social innovation process: a study in the context of social impact business. *Revista Brasileira de Gestão de Negócios* (2022). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7819/rbgn.v24i1.4152>

SUSILOWATI, E.; *et al.* Analysis of the role of social entrepreneurship in achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGS) in Indonesia. *Formosa Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, vol. 3, 2021. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.55927/fjmr.v3i4.8990>

SZRETER, S.; WOOLCOCK, M. **Health by association? Social capital, social theory, and the political economy of public health.** *International Journal of Epidemiology*, v. 33, n. 4, p. 650–667, 2004.

TERZO, G. Social capital, social economy and economic resilience of Italian provinces. *Papers in Regional Science*, v. 100, n. 5, p. 1113-1135, 2021.

TSOTETSI, T. The role of social capital in entrepreneurial effectuation: The South African experience. Universidade de Pretoria, 2020.

VAN DE VEN, A. H. *Engaged scholarship: a guide for organizational and social research*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

VERNON, M. D. *Motivação humana*. Tradução de L. C. Lucchetti. Petrópolis: Vozes, 1973. (Trabalho original publicado em 1969).

VOGEL, R.; GÖBEL, M.; GREWE-SALFEL, M.; HERBERT, B.; MATSUO, Y.; WEBER, C. Cross-sector partnerships: mapping the field and advancing an institutional approach. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, vol. 24, 2022. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12283>

WALTER, S.A.; BACH, T.M. Goodbye to paper, highlighters, scissors, and glue: innovating the content analysis process through atlas. ti. *Administração: ensino e pesquisa*, 2015. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.13058/raep.2015.v16n2.236>

WATSON, K.; MCGOWAN, P. Rethinking competition-based entrepreneurship education in higher education institutions: towards an effectuation-informed cooperation model. *Education + Training* (2020). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-11-2018-0234>

WEERAKOON, C.; GALES, B.; MCMURRAY, A. J. Embracing entrepreneurial action through effectuation in social enterprise. *Social Enterprise Journal*, 15(2), 195–214, 2019. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/SEJ-08-2018-0053>

WEGNER, D.; MAEHLER, A. E. Desempenho de empresas participantes de redes interorganizacionais: analisando a influência do Capital Social e da capacidade absorptiva. *Revista Gestão & Planejamento*, v. 13, n. 2, p. 191-211, 2012.

WILTBANK, R., DEW, N., READ, S.; SARASVATHY, S. D. What to do next? The case for non-predictive strategy. *Strategic management journal*, 27(10), 981-998, 2006.

XU, S.; HE, J.; MORRISON, A.M.; DOMENICI, M.; WANG, Y. Entrepreneurial networks, effectuation and business model innovation of startups: the moderating role of environmental dynamism. *Journal of Creative Innovation Management*, 2022. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/caim.12514>

YANG, X., *et al.* Value Co-creation in Social Ventures: A Missing Link in the Effectual Logic–Performance Relationship. In *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, 2022. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19420676.2021.2004205>

YIN, R. K. *Case Study research: design and methods*. London: Sage, 2018.

YITSHAKI, R., & KROPP, F. Entrepreneurial passions and identities in different contexts: a comparison between high-tech and social entrepreneurs. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 28(3–4), 206–233, 2016. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2016.1155743>

YORK, J. G.; O'NEIL, I.; SARASVATHY, S. D. Exploring Environmental Entrepreneurship: Identity Coupling, Venture Goals, and Stakeholder Incentives. *Journal of Management Studies*, 53(5), 695–737, 2016. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12198>

YUSUF, J. E. (WIE); SLOAN, M. F. Effectual Processes in Nonprofit Start-Ups and Social Entrepreneurship: An Illustrated Discussion of a Novel Decision-Making Approach. *American Review of Public Administration*, 45(4), 417–435, 2015. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0275074013509685>

APPENDIX A – Semi-structure interview

Section	Specific objective	Theoretical approach	Question
I	Characterization of the social entrepreneur and social enterprise.	History and context of the organization	Tell me how the idea of the organization came about?
			How many employees you have in the organization
			What is your educational background and position?
			What is your working experience in the industry?
			What are the current objectives of the social enterprise?
II	Structural dimension Identification of the patterns governing social relationships.	SOCIAL CAPITAL (structural dimension)	Who are your partners, and what kind of role do they have?
			When did you start partnering with this company/institution?
			How have the partnerships developed? – by formal contracts, mouth to mouth negotiation.
			What influenced the shape of partnerships (strategy, culture, competencies, knowledge...)
			What are the benefits for your partner of partnering with you?
III	Identification of proximity ties, norms and sanctions, obligations and expectations, identity, and identification (Nahapiet, 1998; Claridge, 2020) through interviews;	SOCIAL CAPITAL (relational dimension)	How long do you know your partner?
			How close you are to this partner?
			(Expected benefits) What were the expectations of making a partnership?
IV	Identification of the values, attitude, beliefs, purpose, codes, narrative from the cognitive dimension.	SOCIAL CAPITAL (cognitive dimension)	What factors contributed to the development of “long-term” partnerships?
			Why have you chosen this partner?
			What happens with the partnerships that are short-term?
V	Identification of the intrinsic or extrinsic factors that contribute to the formation of partnerships	MOTIVATIONS	How is the decision to look for a partner made? Is there a criterion for looking for a partner?
			How did the negotiation phase happen between you and your partner?
			What were the challenges of negotiating with partners?
			How do you manage your current partnerships? Do you have a model?
VI	Identifying the "crazy quilt" principles regarding flexibility, adaptability to new means, and experimentation with new objectives.	CRAZY QUILT PRINCIPLE	(External factors) What was happening in your organization when you decided to look for a partner? (use the following-up question when needed)
			(Flexibility) Did you plan to select your partners or was it a more natural process (without planning)?
			(Experienced benefits) – What did you actually gain in making a partnership? (Win-win thinking?)
			What were the challenges of settling the partnerships? And the disadvantages?
VII	Identified as new means and objectives that expand	Effectuation Output	(Change of idea) How did your initial business idea change?

	resources and provide opportunities (Sarasvathy, 2011)		(New product ideas or business). What kind of role do the partners have in the development of new products or new opportunities?
			How did the partnerships minimize the risk of your idea?
			(Changing of objectives) How do the partnerships influence the objective? (products, business model, market, and strategy, capabilities and organizational culture)

Source: Author's own (2025)