

Abstract

Hybrid organizations pursue social or environmental goals while also relying on commercial activities to remain financially viable. This dual orientation makes them promising organizational forms for addressing societal challenges, but it also exposes them to the risk of mission drift. Existing research has examined mission drift in relation to commercialization, growth and stakeholder pressures. However, less is known about how internal and external factors interact in shaping mission drift and how organizations manage this risk in practice. Therefore, this thesis addresses the research question: “How do internal and external factors shape mission drift in hybrid organizations, and which practices help to mitigate it?” To answer this question, the study combines Resource Dependence Theory and the Institutional Logics Perspective. A qualitative research design was applied, based on ten semi-structured interviews with founders and managing directors of early-stage hybrid organizations and one consultant. The data were analyzed using the Gioia Methodology. The findings identify four influencing factors: External Resource Dependence, External Legitimacy Pressure, Viability-Driven Mission Logic and Mission Embeddedness. These factors show that mission drift is not caused by isolated external or internal pressures, but by their interaction and by how organizations govern these pressures in practice. The thesis further shows that governance mechanisms in early-stage hybrid organizations are not limited to formal structures but also include everyday practices.

Keywords: *hybrid organization, mission drift, social enterprises, resource dependence theory, institutional logics*