

## **Navigating Tensions in Social Enterprises: A Comprehensive Review of Stakeholder Engagement Strategies**

**FILIPPE DELARISSA BARROS**

FACULDADE DE ECONOMIA, ADMINISTRAÇÃO E CONTABILIDADE DA UNIVERSIDADE DE SÃO PAULO - FEA

**HELNA ALMEIDA DE ARAUJO GÓES**

FACULDADE DE ECONOMIA, ADMINISTRAÇÃO E CONTABILIDADE DA UNIVERSIDADE DE SÃO PAULO - FEA

Agradecimento à orgão de fomento:

This study was financed in part by the Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior - Brasil (CAPES) - Finance Code 001.

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### **Introdução**

Social enterprises are organizations that use market mechanisms to solve a social or environmental problem; thus, having a social purpose while being profitable creates tensions due to the conflicting stakeholders' demands. These tensions are important to characterize social enterprises and can affect their success. Because of that, social entrepreneurs must have managerial practices to deal with conflicts between social and financial performance. In this sense, the way that the literature presents how to deal with tensions may vary, depending on the theoretical approach of the research.

### **Problema de Pesquisa e Objetivo**

There is an opportunity to better understand how social enterprises deal with their tensions, specifically interacting with their stakeholders. Because of that, we seek to clarify how stakeholder management is associated with tensions in social enterprises. Our research question is: In what ways can stakeholder engagement strategies be applied to manage tensions in social enterprises? To this end, we conducted a systematic literature review following PRISMA Model with 27 articles.

### **Fundamentação Teórica**

Our theoretical framework considers two main topics: stakeholder engagement and tensions in social enterprises. Strategies for stakeholder engagement strategies can be classified into informational level, response level, and involvement level (Stocker et al., 2020). Tensions are management challenges that emerge from the quest to fulfill the mission and expectations of economic viability in these organizations (Smith et al., 2013; Battilana et al., 2019; Smith & Besharov, 2019), and can be classified into performance, organizing, belonging and learning tensions (Smith et al., 2013).

### **Discussão**

We identified how stakeholders can originate tensions in social enterprises. We also observed that tensions can be interdependent and that a tension caused by one group of stakeholders can influence new tensions and other stakeholders. Additionally, we identified stakeholder engagement actions in an informational, response, and involvement level aiming to mitigate tensions with each stakeholder group. Finally, stakeholder engagement was applied to increase legitimacy, to increase the trust, to solve conflicts, to enhance resources mobilization, and to cocreate value.

### **Conclusão**

We present three major findings with this work: the relationship between stakeholder groups and tensions, identifying how stakeholders' demands can originate performance, organizing, belonging and learning tensions; a summary of stakeholder engagement strategies, actions, and results to manage tensions; and a conceptual model with the expected relationship between stakeholder engagement, its results, and tensions. By that, our paper contributes to the understanding of how social impact businesses manage their tensions and their relationships with their stakeholders.

### **Referências Bibliográficas**

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