

## Article

# The Role of B Corps in the Mexican Economic System: An Exploratory Study

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## Abstract

The B Corp certification is a voluntary designation granted by B Lab. This nonprofit organization evaluates two main aspects of a company's operations: the positive impact generated by its daily activities and how its business model reflects unique practices that yield positive outcomes for its stakeholders. Sistema B is at the forefront of the B movement in Latin America and the Caribbean, working to develop an ecosystem that enables B Corps to harness market forces to address social and environmental challenges. However, the B Corp movement in this region faces significant challenges, primarily due to a lack of government support, including tax benefits and legal recognition. This study aims to advance the existing literature on B Corps by examining sustainability-oriented hybrid organizations that strive to reconcile profit generation with social impact within the context of Mexico's socioeconomic landscape. Additionally, it seeks to enhance the understanding of how ventures navigate trade-offs between financial and social objectives, and to identify factors that can help address these challenges. Twenty semi-structured interviews were conducted with Mexican B Corps to explore the entrepreneurial motivations related to social objectives, the B Corp movement, and the internal organizational dynamics of balancing social and economic logics. We discuss how tensions arise and are managed, as well as the issues regarding regulatory tensions in Mexico and the challenges that stem from organizational complexities. Future research directions are also outlined.

**Keywords:** B Corps; B Corp certification; hybrid organization; exploratory study



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## 1. Introduction

The B Corp movement is a part of a global ecosystem that involves individuals, businesses, governments, nonprofit organizations, universities, and other stakeholders working together to create a sustainable economy [1]. Since its inception in 2007, this movement has undergone rapid evolution, challenging the traditional corporate emphasis on profit maximization. This shift in perspective is increasingly recognized in the academic research [2,3].

The B Corp certification is a voluntary designation granted by B Lab, a non-profit organization that evaluates a company's commitment to governance, social equity, and environmental sustainability. This certification underscores the importance of upholding rigorous standards of verified performance, accountability, and transparency across various areas, including employee benefits, charitable contributions, and supply chain practices [4,5].

B Corps lead the way in promoting a more sustainable and inclusive future, advocating for a shift in economic systems. By fostering collaboration, innovation, and collective responsibility, these companies demonstrate that it is indeed possible to achieve both profitability and social impact, ultimately benefiting all stakeholders involved [6].

Companies pursuing B Corp certification are hybrids that balance multiple logics and navigate the complexities arising from competing belief systems related to social welfare and commercial interests; this involves managing goals, organizational structures, governance mechanisms, and professional legitimacy [7]. To achieve B certification, a company must [8,9]: (i) demonstrate strong social and environmental performance by obtaining a B Impact Assessment (BIA) score of 80 or higher, (ii) maintain an effective corporate governance framework that ensures accountability to all stakeholders, not just shareholders, and (iii) show transparency by publicly sharing information about its performance as evaluated against B Lab's standards.

The BIA tool enhances organizational operations and reflects a company's distinct approach, which varies based on the selected business model. This approach embodies innovative practices that generate positive outcomes for stakeholders. The BIA score linked to this value is known as the Impact Business Model [9]. By refining this strategic approach, certified companies can differentiate themselves, strengthen their competitive positioning, and reinforce their social and environmental identity [10], thereby enhancing their reputation and legitimacy, increasing networking opportunities, and potentially benefiting financially [11]. This is particularly appealing to stakeholders who seek to incorporate social responsibility standards into their business practices [5,12].

Sistema B (B System) is at the forefront of the B movement in Latin America and the Caribbean, working to develop an ecosystem that enables B Corps to harness market forces to address social and environmental challenges [1]. The B Corp movement in Latin America faces significant challenges, primarily due to a lack of government support, including tax benefits and legal recognition [13]. Additionally, B Lab, the sole certifying organization for B Corps worldwide, often has capacity issues, causing delays of up to a year for companies in the region to obtain their certifications [13,14].

Sistema B promotes the Benefit and Collective Interest Society (BIC) as a regional legal framework in its operational countries. Inspired by the U.S. Benefit Corporation model, it has been adapted to local contexts. Currently, only Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Uruguay have approved the BIC Law, while Argentina, Brazil, and Chile are still in the proposal stage [13]. Notably, Mexico is not included in this initiative. This is explained by scholars [15] who argued that Latin America serves as an ideal setting to examine a unified context within the Global South, yet there are significant differences among the countries in the region regarding their economies, cultures, policies, and demographics.

The present study aims to advance the existing literature on B Corps by examining sustainability-oriented hybrid organizations that strive to reconcile profit generation with social impact within the context of Mexico's socioeconomic landscape. Additionally, this study seeks to enhance the understanding of how ventures navigate the trade-offs between their financial and social objectives and to identify the factors that can help address these challenges [16]. Furthermore, it responds to the research call by [6] concerning the effects of B Corp certification in emerging economies.

An exploratory qualitative research approach is appropriate for this inquiry, as it effectively addresses phenomena that are still in the early stages of theoretical development [17]. Twenty semi-structured interviews were conducted with Mexican B Corps to explore the entrepreneurial motivations related to social objectives, the B Corp movement, and the internal organizational dynamics of balancing social and economic logics.

This study is organized as follows: Section 2 presents a thorough literature review, Section 3 describes the research methods, Section 4 presents the findings, and Section 5 provides an analysis of these findings. Finally, Section 6 concludes with a summary of the study's limitations and offers recommendations for future research.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Theoretical Frameworks

Certified B Corps may not represent the optimal solution for addressing global challenges. However, they can still play a significant role in facilitating the transition to the new structures and actions needed to tackle social and environmental issues effectively [18]. There is steady growth in the number of companies joining the B Corp family with the unified goal of not only being the best in the world but best for the world [19]. The BIA includes the following areas [9]: (i) corporate governance evaluates transparency, accountability, stakeholder engagement, and the organization's policies; (ii) the worker-focused area examines employee relations, focusing on salaries, benefits, training opportunities, work environment, communication, flexibility, and job security; (iii) the focus on other stakeholders assesses interactions with suppliers and the local community, including volunteer initiatives, donations, and local development support; and (iv) the environmental category analyzes the company's environmental impact across the product life cycle, including resource use, energy consumption, sourcing, and distribution.

The current research on B Corps is based on five primary theoretical perspectives [10]: hybrid organization theory, stakeholder theory, identity theory, institutional theory, and legitimacy theory.

#### 2.1.1. Hybrid Organization Theory

Organizations within the B Corp movement position themselves closer to fully commercial for-profit enterprises [20]. B Corps are exemplary models of social hybrid organizations because they are both legally and voluntarily committed to promoting social and environmental objectives through their business practices [21]. According to the B Corp entrepreneurs and executives interviewed by [11], obtaining certification helped them address many of the perceived conflicts that arise when using commercial methods to tackle social and environmental issues. While the certification resolved specific challenges within these companies, it also introduced a broader challenge: maintaining a distinct identity compared to non-certified firms across different regions and industries. This research suggests that focusing solely on internal conflicts between purpose and profit may be misguided.

Four key elements highlight the value proposition of B Corps [22]: organizational mission, targeting customer groups and their relationships, and transformative or systemic change. B Corps focus on delivering value by defining their product-service system, targeting specific customers [23], and emphasizing the benefits they offer. They combine commercial and sustainability goals, addressing a wider range of stakeholders [24]. As hybrid entities, B Corps blend social and environmental objectives with revenue generation, prioritizing mission alignment over profit maximization. Committed leadership strengthens its dedication to social and environmental responsibility [25]. B Corps can effectively promote positive changes toward sustainability due to their unique ability to [26,27]: (i) advocate for and implement complex socio-ecological perspectives, recognizing both individuals and organizations as vital components of socio-ecological systems; and (ii) create supportive collaborative environments that encourage synergistic connections and meaningful relationships beyond their organizations. This involves forming mutually beneficial partnerships with stakeholders and actively engaging with the marketplace, com-

petitors, and industry leaders. These characteristics drive positive social and environmental change, which is a core objective of these types of companies.

### 2.1.2. Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory, introduced by [28], asserts that a company has responsibilities not only to its shareholders but also to all stakeholders affected by its operations. This includes employees, customers, communities, and suppliers. The theory emphasizes that all stakeholders hold equal importance.

The principles underlying the BIA and the pursuit of certified B Corp status can be analyzed through the lens of stakeholder theory [29]. The B Corp designation signifies a commitment from B Corp companies to engage in activities that generate positive impacts and address the expectations of various stakeholders. This designation serves as a symbol of legitimacy that companies can present to customers and partners [30]. Additionally, there are substantial questions regarding the regulations that govern these companies, particularly concerning the tools available to help them balance differing stakeholder interests and the innovative role of management in this regard [31].

Enhancing environmental performance and fostering collaboration among stakeholders relies on empowering employees and gaining management's commitment. This is particularly evident in B Corps, which attract mission-driven employees whose values align with their goals. Both managers and employees are vital to an organization's environmental performance [32]. Furthermore, employee engagement is positively linked to interactions with external stakeholders [33].

B Corps face challenges in raising consumer awareness of the B Corp certification, as it remains unfamiliar to many customers. Those who advocate for B Corps are typically influenced by the companies' social and environmental values, perceiving the certification as a hallmark of effectiveness and sustainability. Furthermore, consumers are driven by personal incentives, such as the aspiration to become agents of change and to enjoy access to high-quality products [34].

A previous study [35] examined how U.S. benefit corporation laws impact B Corp certification. The study found that these laws likely increase both new certifications and recertifications, although the impact varies according to the region's corporate sustainability norms. Even weaker legislation can promote gradual improvements in sustainability and encourage values-driven companies to seek more rigorous certifications. Thus, government and regulatory support is crucial for enhancing certification rates and driving broader systemic change [10].

### 2.1.3. Identity Theory

Achieving B Corp certification reflects the ethical values of the leaders and team members within B Corps [36]. Business owners pursue this certification for various reasons, often motivated by themes that resonate with their personal beliefs and values [37]. A study [38] found that companies adopt different marketing strategies regarding their B Corp status; some emphasize their certification, while others choose to downplay it. This indicates that seeking B Corp certification not only represents a company's internal principles but also involves strategic considerations regarding external recognition.

Another study [38] examined 1251 certified B Corporations in the U.S. and found that certification is more common in environments with weak sustainability norms, low mimetic pressure, and a smaller percentage of women-owned businesses. This suggests that variations in certification are closely tied to identity work, which enhances a sense of self-coherence and distinctiveness. Similarly, the authors of [39] conducted a qualitative study involving 46 firms seeking B Corp certification and developed an identity control

model centered on prosocial opportunities. Their findings indicate that entering a prosocial category leads firms to engage in identity-driven reflexivity. This reflexivity influences their participation in prosocial activities, taking into account factors such as the attractiveness of the opportunity, potential conflicts, and legitimacy within the category.

Tensions often emerge when financial, social, and environmental identities clash, leading businesses to prioritize one aspect over the others. In their empirical analysis of 138 certified B Corps, the authors of [40] showed that, due to the prominence of economic organizational identity, sustainability-focused firms typically emphasize their social or environmental identity more than adopting a balanced approach.

#### 2.1.4. Institutional Theory

Institutional theory [41] refers to the influence of external institutions and certification bodies on the B Corp movement, while also recognizing the movement's responsiveness to the collective advocacy efforts of B Corps [10]. The cross-level nature of institutional theory presents opportunities to explore various aspects of organizations and their environments [42].

Research by [43] indicates that participating in the B Corp movement enhances the legitimacy of companies. Additionally, alignment with this movement influences lower-level integrative strategies, enabling organizations to attract and engage employees, as well as communicate their organizational purpose to financiers. Consequently, B Corp certification fosters an environment that effectively attracts employees and investors who share the company's dual objectives, thereby reinforcing legitimacy among these stakeholders. These like-minded providers of essential resources help reduce the risk of mission drift. Moreover, B Corps actively contribute to institutional change by educating, promoting, and advocating for new norms, which shape broader institutional contexts [3].

B Corps are examined within dynamic frameworks that address both formal and informal institutional pressures [10]. Institutional theory also highlights the organizational tensions faced by hybrid organizations by exploring designs and structures that support the coexistence of competing logics [42].

#### 2.1.5. Legitimacy Theory

Legitimacy theory [44] provides valuable insights into why B Corps pursue voluntary sustainability reporting assurance. By obtaining this assurance, these companies can enhance stakeholder trust in their disclosures, improve their reputation, and validate their actions. Organizations that perform at average levels in environmental and social responsibilities, or those with insufficient related disclosures, may seek assurance for strategic reasons and to mitigate potential risks [9]. As a result, the literature on B Corps applies legitimacy theory to explore how these entities utilize certification to reinforce their sustainability commitments, gain moral legitimacy, and engage with supportive stakeholders [10]. The B Corp certification serves as a mechanism to formalize practices and processes related to otherwise unclear and complex initiatives, thereby granting legitimacy to certified companies.

Setting integrated social, environmental, and economic goals can be challenging, making the B Corp certification an attractive option for signaling legitimacy and enhancing reputation among key stakeholders [45]. Firms may view the certification process as an opportunity to create value by organizing and legitimizing their efforts in alignment with social purpose initiatives. This approach allows them to manage the costs associated with B Corp certification while rethinking, restructuring, or refreshing the social purpose aspects of their business [12].

## 2.2. Tensions in Hybrid Organizations

The third author of this article has previously described the tensions of hybrid organizations in their work [46], outlining a framework that encompasses belonging, performing, organizing, and learning tensions.

Belonging tension refers to the challenges individuals and groups face regarding identity and relationships within an organization. Managers often struggle to define “who they are,” which complicates the organization’s identity due to conflicting commercial and social goals [42,47]. Leaders may align with either the social mission or commercial objectives but find it difficult to reconcile both. This tension is influenced by diverse backgrounds, such as whether leaders come from non-profit or for-profit sectors. A potential solution is to implement hiring and socialization practices that promote a culture of hybridity [48]. At a group level, tensions arise when stakeholders have conflicting objectives, as those focused on social missions may clash with clients or investors concentrating on economic goals [42].

Performing tensions arise from conflicting financial and social goals, with financial metrics being easier to quantify due to their short-term focus [42]. Social goals, on the other hand, are long-term and require varied indicators to satisfy different stakeholders [49,50]. Prioritizing financial goals over social ones can lead to unmet stakeholder demands and jeopardize financial health, increasing the risk of business failure [42]. Hybrid organizations must balance these tensions, particularly when addressing critical social issues or crises. The resolution of these tensions centers around results, and organizations need to create a strategy to harmonize the objectives of hybrid organizations.

The third type of tension is known as organizing tensions, which are associated with the practices, culture, and processes within hybrid organizations that operate in both market and philanthropic contexts [48,51,52]. These tensions occur when different institutional logics clash, especially during decision-making processes such as hiring, selecting legal forms, and fostering a hybrid culture [42]. Effectively managing these tensions requires strategies that address conflicting logics while also developing the necessary skills [42]. Additionally, organizing tensions can coincide with belonging tensions in situations that involve individual and group identity expectations [47].

The fourth type of tension, known as learning tension, arises from the differing time frames that hybrid organizations face while pursuing social and financial objectives. Financial goals often focus on short-term outcomes, whereas social goals typically require a longer time horizon to produce significant results. This mismatch can create tension [42], as prioritizing immediate financial gains may compromise long-term social sustainability. To balance these objectives, two key factors emerge: the need for longer time horizons to support slower and more autonomous business development, and the presence of positive, engaged leadership [27]. Additionally, learning tension may also arise from internal and external changes that compel the organization to adapt its business model.

## 3. Research Methods

### 3.1. Data Collection

To gain richer insights into the experiences of companies adopting B Corp certification, the research study employed in-depth, semi-structured interviews with founders, directors, and managers responsible for advancing the B Corp agenda of 20 certified B Corps in Mexico (see Table 1). These 20 B Corps, certified by B Lab [53], were operating in Mexico at the time of the study. The participants were selected using a convenience sampling method, a technique frequently employed in qualitative research. This approach entails selecting individuals who are readily available and willing to participate in the study [54]. We acknowledge a potential bias in the reliability of the information, as we interviewed only one respondent from each company.

**Table 1.** Summary of participants.

Sector	Organization Code <sup>a</sup>	Industry	B Corp Certification Date	Role of the Interviewee
Service with a minor environmental footprint	FS1	Investment advising	April 2017	Director
	FS2	Microfinance—emerging markets	November 2017	Director
	FS3	Other financial services	November 2016	Director
	FS4	Other financial services	February 2018	Director
	S1	Data processing and hosting	March 2019	Founder
	S2	Environmental consulting	December 2016	Director
	S3	Other business support	July 2019	Founder
	S4	Other business support	December 2017	Founder
	S5	Other personal services	June 2018	Director
	S6	Other professional, scientific and tech	October 2017	Founder
	S7	Other professional, scientific and tech	June 2018	Founder
	S8	Social networks and info sharing	February 2018	Manager
	S9	Other personal services	December 2017	Director
	Service with a significant environmental footprint	S10	Postal and courier activities	March 2020
S11		Restaurants and food service	December 2017	Manager
S12		Restaurants and food service	October 2020	Director
Manufacturing	P1	Agricultural support/post-harvest	April 2020	Founder
	P2	Construction	February 2012	Director
Wholesale/Retail	P3	Apparel	February 2018	Director
	P4	Food products	April 2020	Director

<sup>a</sup> FS: Financial services; S: Other services; P: Products.

The participants spanned a variety of industries, including agricultural support and post-harvest, apparel, computer programming services, construction, data processing and hosting, environmental consulting, investment advising, financial services, professional, scientific, and technical services, postal and courier activities, restaurants and food services, and social networks and information sharing. All participating organizations are small, with an expectation of P2, which is a medium-sized organization.

The semi-structured interview protocol consisted of an average of eight open-ended questions, which were developed in consultation with a panel of scholars and industry experts. This semi-structured format allowed participants to discuss additional issues they deemed relevant. We designed the interview protocol to enhance the qualitative strengths of the overall data-gathering process.

The interview guide included questions about the organization's mission and the value it provides, as well as how it integrates social objectives into its business model. It also aimed to understand the organization's motivation for joining the B Corp movement. Furthermore, the guide explored the internal management processes the organization employs to achieve both economic growth and a positive social impact. Finally, it examined the impact of the organization's B Corp certification on its industry, particularly in terms of the principles of the B movement. A breakdown of the interview questions is available in the Supplementary Materials.

Additionally, secondary data sources such as websites, marketing materials, and company reports were utilized to provide background information on the companies and their founders. All interviews were digitally recorded with the consent of the participants and subsequently transcribed to facilitate the analysis process, ensuring the validity and reliability of our findings.

Following [55] to ensure interviewee anonymity, we categorized the organizations into three groups: financial services, other services, and products. Participants from each venture receive a code (refer to Table 1). These codes identify the ventures and facilitate a clear and accurate presentation of quotes from interviewees, reflecting their perspectives.

### 3.2. Data Analysis

The examination of the data was conducted using the thematic analysis method. This method is used to “identify, analyze and report patterns (themes) within the data” [56]. Additionally, it can be approached from both realistic and constructivist perspectives and with either inductive or deductive logic during the data analysis [57]. Therefore, thematic analysis serves as a valuable method for studying various phenomena. Although it has mainly been applied to health-related issues [58], there is also evidence of its effectiveness in business and administration, particularly for its potential to thoroughly analyze empirical data [59].

The thematic analysis employed a qualitative content analysis approach, following the guidelines established by [60] for the inductive method, which involves developing categories directly from the material itself. Its application is described next.

Interviews were transcribed and entered into the qualitative data analysis software Atlas.ti 9. First, the authors of this article familiarized themselves with the collected data. To do this, they read the interview transcripts several times to identify initial patterns. Second, initial codes were generated to capture the participants’ perspectives. In this phase, open coding [61] was executed to facilitate reflections on the content of the data. The generated codes were compared with each other and with the data, enabling their refinement. Through this refinement, it was discovered that the codes could be grouped to form tentative themes. The relevance of these themes was assessed by examining their relationships with the codes and the empirical evidence that supported them. Consequently, the ongoing examination of the data led to 17 codes being grouped into four key themes. A matrix was then designed to provide a final categorization, which gave meaning to the results of this research. Reflexivity indicated that, throughout the processes of coding, analyzing, and interpreting the data, the first author was aware that her prior experience as a B Corp manager could influence her interpretations. The credibility of the analysis was further strengthened by the diverse perspectives of the co-authors, who ensured that the first author’s preliminary interpretations were accurately presented.

The themes identified in Table 2, although inductively emerged, also reflect elements informed by the literature [6,10,55].

**Table 2.** Categorization matrix.

Theme	Categories
1. Primary objectives What are the primary objectives of the B Corps?	Solve environmental and social problems Seek positive change
2. Source of motivation What motivates the decision to obtain B Corp certification?	Prosocial identity Entrepreneurial journey Self-assessment tool for improvement Join a conscious community Market differentiation
3. Success measures How do B Corps measure success?	Economic growth Quantitative and qualitative metrics Social and environmental impacts Internalize impacts Pricing model
4. Stakeholders How are the stakeholders collaborating to achieve the objectives of B Corps?	Employees Investors and owners Customers Suppliers Government

## 4. Findings

### 4.1. What Are the Primary Objectives of the B Corps?

#### 4.1.1. Solving Environmental and Social Problems

Companies pursuing B Corp certification are generally more innovative, continually seeking ways to enhance their processes and social and environmental impacts [6]. This aligns with our findings regarding the main objectives of the ventures.

P1 was established to tackle the problems faced by small-scale agriculture. Despite its rich heritage, this sector struggles with productivity due to issues beyond management. The founders of P1 recognize the need for agrochemical-free options and understand that small producers often lack access to resources. High organic food prices arise from these systemic issues. P1 focuses on professionalizing the agricultural sector by providing small producers, distributors, and farm advisors with effective tools in marketing, management, planning, and technology. Their goal is to assist informal workers and businesses in transitioning into the formal sector. Moreover, regarding agriculture, S1 is a venture aimed at reducing rural poverty and making agriculture a prosperous endeavor, both economically and environmentally, by utilizing information and communication technologies to provide farmers and participants in agricultural value chains with timely information for decision making. This includes weather and pest forecasts, management strategies, production risk mapping, best farming practices, and market trends. In addition to providing timely information to help companies to cultivate more profitable plots while decreasing agrochemical and water usage, S7 also offers agricultural insurance products. Agricultural insurance is a tool for mitigating risk, securing higher premium returns, and streamlining operations.

P2 addresses the housing shortage in Mexico caused by the limited availability of democratic construction materials for vulnerable populations in marginalized communities. They have noted that these services are often the least accessible due to distance and dispersion, as well as the lack of government presence, which complicates operations.

P3 was born out of the need to represent Indigenous traditions in the field of clothing, arguing that tradition does not need to be static or ephemeral. P1's manifesto of fashion resistance describes the need to stop junk fashion. Its designs are created in collaboration with artisans, weavers, embroiderers, wood carvers, leatherworkers, lace makers, and dyers, who utilize traditional techniques and processes to create contemporary fashion. Similarly, S12 aims to continue and promote Mexico's cultural richness while positively impacting the environment, using gastronomy as its starting point.

FS2 aims to achieve financial inclusion for rural women, as the local population in the region that houses its headquarters lacked access to financial services. The organization explored the needs of families and women for genuine transformation, respecting traditions and serving as a community model. This led to the development of enhanced services and a microcredit program. They also addressed the prevention of violence against women, acknowledging its high prevalence in the northern region, which is often marked by conflict and political instability.

For their part, FS3 has adopted a business model that serves as a solution to limited access to financial resources. This challenge affects a significant portion of the Mexican population. This company provides a fundraising platform to simplify the overall process, streamline operations, and ensure transparency. Regrettably, numerous institutional deficiencies exist in the management of critical sectors such as healthcare and education in Mexico. S3's director commented: "Like most companies, we were born to solve problems. . . we identified needs, and thanks to technology, we can offer a technological tool to solve them—in our case, through a fundraising platform" [S3].

Similarly, FS4 started as a fundraising platform and, through its connections with social and environmental impact projects, identified a problem in Mexico: social organizations

spend 70% of their time raising funds and only 30% on the important activities for which they were established. Therefore, the venture aims to be an ally and a driver for fundraising by generating ease, speed, and transparency.

S11 tackles the challenge of sustainably integrating individuals facing social abandonment through a social empowerment platform, which relies on a restaurant chain that exclusively hires young people from this background. This initiative empowers them through the “Route of change”, a 12-month program.

Active social groups emphasize the need for Mexico to establish regulations for companies with significant social and environmental impacts, highlighting the inadequacy of the current legislation, which does not explicitly recognize companies that use market-based solutions to address social or environmental issues [14]. Our findings indicate that many B Corps were established as civil associations—non-profit legal entities governed by the civil codes of each state in Mexico. These organizations are formed through contracts in which members agree to collaborate toward a common lawful goal that is not primarily financial in nature [14]. For instance, FS2 was established as a civil association with a social objective. Following regulatory reform, it changed its legal status to operate its microcredit product in a legal and transparent manner, resulting in the establishment of an entity that offers financial services, primarily credit. The civil association continues to operate and collaborates closely with FS2. Similarly, P4 originated from a civil association’s search for responsible fishing solutions. Focused on sustainability, P4 aims to reduce the fishing industry’s environmental impact while promoting a healthier ecosystem and working primarily with cooperatives (organizations of individuals united by common interests, promoting mutual aid to meet economic needs). The venture offers a catalog of sustainably sourced fish and seafood in Mexico, supported by its purchasing policy for transparency and sustainability. This model empowers fishermen to earn more, prevents overfishing, and addresses poverty in the artisanal fishing sector. For instance, in Oaxaca, fishermen earning MXN 5 to 10 per kilo for whole fish receive less than one would pay for waste. Thus, products face high market prices due to Mexico’s extended fishing value chain. A similar example comes from S7 regarding price fairness, where a customer pays MXN 17 for a kilogram of beans, while the farmer only receives MXN 4 per kilogram. The difference is lost to three intermediaries who exploit this situation and do not contribute to the value chain. These examples demonstrate the income inequality among workers in Mexico, highlighting why Mexico has the highest inequality rate among countries in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development and ranks among the highest globally [62].

#### 4.1.2. Seeking Positive Change

FS1 is a high-impact consultancy focused on environmental and social investment projects. Its mission is to ensure that capital serves life, rather than governing it. As FS1’s director explained: “We now have an economy where everything is at the service of investor reforms, so it does not matter how much we extract from planet Earth and communities if everything is done to maximize the return of investors. . . investments should begin as a way of serving the economy and people’s well-being, so we want to change that paradigm” [FS1].

In environmental consulting, S2 focuses on enhancing business sustainability by implementing environmental, social, and governance criteria in buildings to facilitate informed decision making. The director of S2 remarked that “We are not just an organization; we are a purpose-driven entity. Our unique approach enhances the financial sustainability of our clients’ businesses” [S2]. Similarly, S5 is a consultancy dedicated to transforming the construction industry towards regeneration. In contrast, S3 specializes in creating sustainability strategies that increase organizational value while promoting a more inclusive and

conscious world. The founder of S3 stated that “We are driven by awareness of the impacts we cause. For companies, we recognize the environmental, economic, and social effects of their actions” [S3].

The founder of S4 emphasized the organization’s commitment to helping individuals create impact-driven businesses. This B Corp offers a diverse range of services that showcase the influence of partners utilizing a unique social entrepreneurship platform. This platform involves developing and implementing impact-oriented programs and methodologies through a dedicated training initiative and support for entrepreneurs via its business accelerator. Similarly, S8 started as a social communications agency, but later evolved into an environmental, social, and strategic consultancy. It recognizes that achieving a deeper impact requires more than just communication; it also involves fostering experiences, programs, collaborative projects, and communication campaigns. Meanwhile, S6 operates as a consultancy focused on social innovation, facilitating the transition to a new economy while prioritizing sustainable development. Its strategies aim to improve clients’ economic, social, and environmental performance.

S10 identifies itself as Mexico’s first zero-emissions shipping center using 100% electric vehicles and solar energy. Furthermore, the venture aims to connect engaged customers with environmental protection and collaboratively create a positive impact. For their part, S9 provides unlimited purified water through a service that utilizes advanced purification technology, thereby reducing the need to produce and transport bottled water by treating it at the point of delivery.

#### 4.2. What Motivates the Decision to Obtain B Corp Certification?

##### 4.2.1. Prosocial Identity

B Corp certification represents a fundamental shift in how businesses operate, prompting them to integrate profit with a broader purpose and contribute to a better world for all [6]. This reflects the slogan reiterated by many participants: “I am part of this company... a company that doesn’t strive to be the best in the world, but aims to help create a better world for everyone” [S6].

According to S8, the motivation centered on a question of identity: specifically, the desire to adopt the role of a social enterprise and gain clarity about their identity through the B Corp certification, which also offers international validation. This aligns with the statement by [18] that recertification can lead to further opportunity sedimentation by capturing and positioning the firm’s opportunities with a prosocial identity or a renewed sense of purpose.

F2 began their certification process because the B Corp label aligned with their business model, which seemed to diverge from conventional market logic. Through Sistema B, they discovered a community where they truly belonged. Other ventures expressed a similar sentiment, as S6 stated, “We were born to be a B Corp... We understood that if we wanted to promote this new economy and a different way of doing business, it was essential for our company’s growth to lead by example, since we couldn’t advocate for something we weren’t” [S6].

Another B Corp, FS1, was incubated on a platform called the GO Platform, which collaborates with various social and environmental impact models. The founder of this platform was among the first to promote Sistema B in Mexico. This company became the ninth to receive certification in Mexico, shortly after its operations began, marking barely one year in business.

Ventures that have already implemented practices positively impacting the triple bottom line found the certification process to be straightforward. As S5 explained, “When we encountered Sistema B and met the director of Academia B, along with the entire team,

a third-party verifier confirmed that we were adhering to an impact business model. This allowed us to progress and be selected among the top 5% of B Corp companies globally. This certification, issued by an independent verifier, underscores our commitment” [S5].

#### 4.2.2. Entrepreneurial Journey

Entrepreneurial activities are characterized by specific prosocial motivations. Entrepreneurs and managers actively promote socially responsible and sustainable business practices, driven by a strong sense of ethical and social responsibility [6]. The B Corp certification highlights a particular timeframe, marked by significant experiences that demonstrate the prosocial motivations, opportunity processes, and actions related to entrepreneurship [18].

Many founders of B Corps are either foreign, have parents from other countries, or have lived outside of Mexico. In 2012, P2 became the first company to be certified in Mexico; its founder, who has Italian parents, was inspired by a family background in construction materials machinery to create a democratic construction material. The founder of S7, a German national, has worked globally and was surprised by the level of social division accepted in places such as Mexico. S9’s founding partners are English, with one having experience in the water sector and renting out water purification equipment. The founder of S5 lived in the United States, where she embraced the principles of sustainable building.

Some entrepreneurs have previously worked with NGOs, as described by S4’s founder: “I’ve worked on social issues for many years, particularly with TECHO, an organization operating in 19 Latin American countries that aims to alleviate poverty in low-income settlements through resident and volunteer collaboration. . . my experience reinforced my belief in the youth’s capacity for change. After leaving TECHO, I developed a strong connection with the ideas of the B model in the realm of social entrepreneurship” [S4].

As social entrepreneurs, the founders of B Corps sought work that was meaningful and impactful, which is why the concept of the B Corp resonated with them. The founder of S3 previously worked as a communications specialist in advertising and marketing agencies, where she observed that substantial resources and budgets were often allocated to projects with only short-term effects that quickly faded after launch. Meanwhile, the founder of FS1, who managed finances for wealthy individuals and companies at the largest banks in Mexico, recognized an opportunity within the impact investing landscape.

Entrepreneurs face pressures to scale social impact from both supply and demand sides [63]. In the ecosystem of scaling social impact, S4 highlighted a critical risk: the ecosystem tends to build upon itself without expanding its base: “Many initiatives, materials, and pieces of content support those who are already part of the ecosystem. While it’s natural for the ecosystem to nurture and develop itself, this approach doesn’t grow the base of participants. Therefore, a major priority must be to expand this base by attracting new individuals to engage in social entrepreneurship. Many organizations, such as business accelerators, focus on helping their existing companies grow. However, there is a lack of focus on bringing in new entrepreneurs and participants to the ecosystem, which is precisely our primary mission. Our role is to attract new individuals, who will then connect with all the organizations within the ecosystem. I believe this represents our most significant impact” [S4].

#### 4.2.3. Self-Assessment Tool for Improvement

The B Corp certification framework helps companies to assess their impact using the BIA. By completing this assessment, businesses can identify areas for improvement, enhancing their ability to measure and advance consistently. As S6 explained, “The first benefit of being a B Corp was having a roadmap. . . since none of the three founders had been

entrepreneurs before. Being born within the B Corp model, researching best practices, and completing the evaluation provided us with clarity” [S6]. A Born B company is recognized as an impactful B Corp [64], characterized as a small start-up that was conceived as a B Corps since its inception. Despite their limited organizational and certification experience, as well as their smaller size, these companies are capable of achieving a high BIA score.

For S12, the B Corp label encouraged enhanced measurement and record-keeping, enabling them to establish measurable goals linked to the Sustainable Development Goals. They committed to a thorough evaluation and improvement of their management standards, which encompassed governance, employee relations, community engagement, environmental responsibility, and customer relations. Similarly, S8 conducted the BIA and identified areas for professionalization within the company. This certification helped them systematize, organize, and effectively communicate their impact. For S5, the focus was on improving gender equality and diversity. S6 completed the BIA and emphasized the importance of having an advisory board and clearly defined policies from the very start of the company’s operations. Meanwhile, for FS3, the certification process facilitated internal growth, enhancing their operations and service offerings to stakeholders. Accordingly, the BIA tool enhances the positive impact generated by the company’s daily activities. This includes effective management of good practices, adherence to policies and procedures that the company has implemented to ensure transparent and ethical governance, a healthy and stimulating work environment, diversity and inclusion, and responsible energy procurement choices [9].

#### 4.2.4. Joining a Conscious Community

The founders are motivated to connect with networks and join a community of like-minded business people who want to differentiate themselves from traditional businesses [5]. Being part of this community represents a commitment to interdependence among B Corps [53], as these organizations support one another and grow together. This community includes individuals, partnerships, and connections with other companies that share a common goal of creating a positive impact.

Many B Corps report that this sense of community is a significant driving force behind the movement, as S4 articulated, “We are an ecosystem-oriented organization that collaborates extensively with other entities. The success of our model relies on our involvement in this system. This interaction is a crucial aspect of our work, so it makes perfect sense for us to be part of the network, both formally, as a genuine social enterprise that validates our impact, and fundamentally, as a member of this community, to collaborate rather than compete” [S4].

Similarly, for S11, connecting with other companies committed to improvement is highly beneficial. They share best practices and join forces, even when operating in different industries. P1 recognized that much more can be achieved collectively than individually, highlighting the element of emotional support.

Most B Corps feel a sense of community from the very start of the certification process. Being part of a global movement provides them with strength and assurance. S6 explained, “We haven’t given up because we see the impact it’s generating in other countries. We are sure this is the right path. We are pioneers, breaking new ground. Feeling part of both our local community and this global movement, witnessing what’s happening elsewhere has undoubtedly anchored us, helping us to persevere and continue innovating” [S6].

Greenwashing occurs when a company engages in deceptive marketing practices to create an image of sustainability that does not accurately reflect its genuine actions or commitment to sustainable practices [6]. P1 mentioned that Sistema B provides a community-based support system that has guided them in navigating issues related to

greenwashing: “There are moments when the distinction is subtle regarding decisions to pursue projects that do not align with our mission. These can appear as incredible opportunities. For instance, large companies often engage in greenwashing practices that are difficult to identify at first glance, and we can easily fall into these traps. It’s always helpful to have external perspectives that keep you grounded. Discussions with Sistema B help you stay centered” [P1].

#### 4.2.5. Market Differentiation

Studies have shown that certification leads to benefits in terms of innovation and resilience [6]. For founders and employees, being part of the B Corp community and actively contributing to it is essential. B Corps gain brand recognition and legitimacy from their certification, which further enhances their competitive edge [37]. For example, S10 stated that “Being a B Corp has given us a competitive advantage among new generations that embrace the ideology of environmental stewardship and seek to reduce their carbon footprint in their daily activities” [S10]. For FS4, a crowdfunding platform, B Corp certification signifies transparency in their operations.

The hybrid nature of B Corps, along with their social impact, is shaped by market opportunities and external pressures [20]. S2, an environmental consultancy recognized as “Best for the World” for two consecutive years, noted that this recognition opened doors for them, attracting customers who share their mission as well as those who needed convincing. Therefore, the B Corp certification acts as a key differentiator, proving that a company’s claims align with its actions, which is increasingly important to employees and stakeholders. Similarly, FS3’s experience as a B Corp underscores the importance of maintaining a strong reputation over time, enabling others to trust that the company will contribute to achieving their goals.

### 4.3. How B Corps Measure Success?

#### 4.3.1. Economic Growth

In the case of B Corps, they view their hybrid nature as a means of creating a new organizational identity rather than merely combining aspects from each logical domain [20]. This perspective aligns with our findings on how growth contributes to a positive societal impact. For instance, S11 is a social empowerment platform that operates as a pizzeria. The company has two divisions: the restaurant, which generates income from five locations in Mexico City, and a distribution arm that supplies products to nine states. Without customers, S11 cannot cover essential expenses such as salaries, training courses, and workshops for its team. Approximately 90% of the workforce is aged between 17 and 35 and comes from backgrounds of social abandonment, while the remaining 10% hold operational roles. For S11, expanding into new branches and franchises does not come at the expense of their social impact. Ultimately, the company’s goals are centered around people: providing employment, fostering life skills, and enhancing life plans to secure stable jobs.

B Corps have a unique business model that integrates social and environmental dimensions into their mission. Additionally, profitability is pursued to the extent necessary to achieve social and environmental outcomes [65]. For S3, being part of the B Corp community has provided an opportunity to share their vision of how business can create value beyond mere economic profitability.

#### 4.3.2. Quantitative and Qualitative Metrics

B Corps understand that financial success is vital for creating a positive impact. Their business model illustrates that increased sales contribute to greater value and impact. By refining their impact business model, they enhance their capacity to ensure financial

sustainability and maximize their impact [66]. This perspective aids in planning sessions where ventures can outline the specific impact they aim to achieve each year, helping them move towards their vision of systemic change. As S6 observed: “Our business model demonstrates that increased sales lead to greater value and a more positive impact” [S6]. P3, an apparel venture, has developed a sales model that maximizes profit generation. This approach not only maintains high sales but also ensures fair prices for each garment.

Some B Corps evaluate their impact based on specific outputs, as shown in the following examples:

- FS1 measures outputs such as the number of investors hosted, the capital raised by entrepreneurs, the financial resources directed toward impact investments, and the number of individuals who have changed their investment thesis.
- S4 categorizes its outputs into three dimensions: media reach, the number of people trained by its academy, and the number of companies launched by its accelerator. To assess media reach, they track the readers of their books, viewers of their videos, listeners of their podcasts, and engagement with their broadcasts. These indicators represent a significant business impact. For the number of people trained by their academy, they consider the total participants in their programs and workshops.
- FS4 tracks outputs that include the number of civil associations on the FS4 platform and the total amount of money processed through the platform from donors.
- S6’s outputs include the number of social entrepreneurs supported by the venture and the number of companies that make formal and public commitments to sustainability and value generation. They gauge how effectively they encourage companies to pursue certifications and obligations, such as adhering to the Global Compact, completing the BIA, developing relevant policies, and adopting procedures focused on value generation.

Employee satisfaction has been identified as a qualitative metric of success, closely related to quality jobs, satisfied employees, and a positive working environment [6].

In P1, employees perceive themselves as integral to the organization, benefiting from flexible schedules supported by clear agreements and contracts that prioritize their well-being and happiness. S3 has implemented a structure focused on employee care, incorporating strategies such as reasonable work hours, assistance for employees to live closer to the office, and the encouragement of healthy lifestyles. Similarly, in addition to promoting reasonable work hours, S6 actively strives for gender equality, offers competitive salaries, provides nutritious food options, motivates employees to exercise, and allows them to live nearby. They also offer comprehensive primary medical insurance. S4 acknowledges that, while their salaries may not be the most competitive in the market, they are committed to providing the best possible compensation to ensure continued operations, in alignment with Sistema B and their vision of becoming a B Corp. Additionally, customer satisfaction is another qualitative metric typically collected through surveys.

#### 4.3.3. Social and Environmental Impacts

B Corps strive to minimize their negative environmental impact while maximizing their positive contributions to society and the environment. They also encourage the adoption of more sustainable practices [55]. For this reason, managing and measuring impact is essential, as it enhances transparency, informs decision making, drives continuous improvement, guides strategic direction, facilitates effective communication, and helps attract resources [67].

The commitment to reducing environmental impacts is associated with the following lines of action:

- P1 aims to reduce the use of pesticides and fertilizers, minimize waste, and decrease reliance on synthetic inputs. These efforts have a positive impact on climate change, carbon footprints, and water resources. Progress will be measured using metrics such as the number of liters of pesticides eliminated, tons of solid waste reintegrated into the soil, cubic meters of water decontaminated, and the reduction in the number of chemical doses used.
- S7 focuses on decreasing agrochemical use and water consumption, as well as reducing vehicle traffic to lower carbon emissions.
- S2 aims to mitigate the causes of climate change.
- S9 seeks to reduce the consumption of bottled water.
- S10 focuses on lowering the carbon footprint of logistics operations by implementing solar power, achieving zero emissions in the first mile, and utilizing 90% biodegradable packaging.
- S12 is dedicated to reducing both water and electricity consumption.

We found the following insights regarding the willingness to enhance social and environmental impacts:

- P1 aims to maximize the genetic potential of plants in terms of productivity, soil health, and biodiversity. This approach aims to increase profitability for producers by not only enhancing productivity but also reducing costs.
- P4 focuses on increasing the income of fishermen and building the capacity of cooperatives to process fish, primarily through filleting and packaging.
- P3 aims to support the creativity and textile industries of Indigenous peoples. This initiative aims to prevent poverty, generate stable employment, promote gender equality, ensure decent work, and foster economic growth.
- S7 seeks to increase producers' income while educating them about technology and agricultural management practices.
- S1 and S7 aim to enhance access to information for farmers and stakeholders in agricultural value chains. This initiative is designed to mitigate production risks early on, improve volume and quality, and promote systemic growth.
- S11 aims to increase labor market inclusion for socially disadvantaged youth.
- FS2 focuses on increasing financial inclusion for women in rural communities and enhancing the social and economic development of these areas.
- FS3 aims to democratize the process of raising capital and issuing donations. They have identified a measurement challenge due to their limited ability to engage in post-campaign follow-up. FS3 stated that "Our operation cannot be involved after the fundraising campaign ends to support the customer in any way. . . the customer informs us about their progress in achieving their objectives, but we lack the means to measure their impact".
- S5 aims to contribute to the sustainable transition of the construction industry by implementing strategies to reduce material usage, manage resources effectively, ensure energy-efficient designs, prevent excessive energy consumption, and avoid oversized air conditioning systems.
- S10 and S12 aim to promote a recycling culture, while S10 specifically promotes environmental stewardship in public educational institutions.

#### 4.3.4. Pricing Model

When discussing pricing models, P2 stated: "We typically establish an affordable price point and set a sales target that represents the minimum revenue required to cover our costs and ensure our survival. We also set a growth percentage that we aim to achieve each year. Our goal is to generate enough revenue to sustain our operations" [P2]. Similarly, FS4 emphasized that their service is one of the most affordable platforms for organizations

in Mexico. They recognize that these organizations already have numerous expenses and often struggle to survive, making it challenging to accommodate an additional aspect of fundraising. Therefore, FS4 only charges 10% plus VAT on transactions and absorbs the fees from various payment gateways, including credit and debit cards, PayPal, and interbank transfers.

Additionally, S7 acknowledged the need to develop insurance products tailored specifically to the needs of farmers. They aim to offer transparent and easy-to-understand insurance at an affordable price, especially for small farmers. Generally, insurance products tend to focus on medium- and large-scale farms, rather than addressing the needs of small farmers, not only in Mexico but also globally.

#### 4.3.5. Internalize Impacts

B Corps integrate social and environmental considerations into their product design and decision-making processes [55]. For instance, P1 stated that “Our goal is to create an impact within conventional production systems. Therefore, we designed our products to be compatible with the machinery used in traditional agriculture and aligned with the management practices that producers are already familiar with. This allows for a smooth transition, rather than requiring an abrupt overhaul of their methods, making it easier and more natural for them to adjust their soil management” [P1].

Another B Corp, FS2, emerged at a time when no other organizations were entering the microfinance industry, becoming the only option for addressing financial inclusion for women in rural communities. Today, however, there is more competition in this sector. Unfortunately, most competitors do not offer customer-focused solutions and instead contribute to the problem of over-indebtedness. As a result, all of FS2’s efforts are focused on addressing this significant social issue.

### 4.4. How Do Stakeholders Collaborate to Achieve the Objectives of B Corps?

#### 4.4.1. Employees

B Corps prioritize their employees as essential drivers of change and sustainable success by promoting a corporate culture rooted in ethical values, inclusion, and participation [67]. This commitment is reflected by S5: “The B Corp certification, issued by a third-party verifier, underscores our dedication. Therefore, we must not only communicate our message of sustainability but also cultivate a new internal culture” [S5]. Practices related to recruitment, onboarding, and internal business management align with this mission.

S8 actively seeks talent with a social focus, prioritizing candidates who are passionate about social causes during their recruitment efforts. They look for individuals who demonstrate a genuine interest in these issues. The recruitment process includes reviewing resumés to assess candidates’ social contributions and interests. Additionally, S8 presents challenges that highlight social aspects, allowing them to observe how candidates approach these challenges in order to identify the best fit for their team. Similarly, P4 seeks out individuals who are eager to learn and have a specific interest in sustainability issues. FS2, even when hiring for office positions, begins its onboarding process with a field tour to meet customers. This tour helps new employees understand the significance of the operations and the impact they aim to have within the community.

S3 acknowledges the contributions of all those who have collaborated with the company, which has led to a strong internal management structure and effective business operations. Each team member has actively participated in developing new products, processes, consulting services, and innovative work methods. As a result, the team’s commitment ensures a smooth workflow and fosters complete trust among its members. This sentiment is echoed by P1: “Once we find individuals who can become part of our

community and successfully navigate the learning curve, it truly enables us to achieve our goals and become highly efficient” [P1].

#### 4.4.2. Investors and Owners

Investors and owners who prioritize not only financial returns but also social and environmental impact play a crucial role in supporting businesses [6]. A notable example is S11, as they stated: “Investors made significant contributions to our project, which was instrumental in helping us during the pandemic. We never had to close our doors. By offering home delivery, we were able to adapt to the situation, and that wouldn’t have been possible without these investors” [S11].

S6 recognizes the company’s ongoing commitment to donate a significant portion of its profits, income, stock, or pro bono time to charitable causes [68]. This commitment is formalized and publicly disclosed: “We have committed to donating 5% of our annual net income to civil society organizations, dedicating at least 1% of our annual working hours to pro bono and volunteer services, and contributing to the UN’s 2030 Agenda” [S6].

The B Corp label provides validation for businesses that take a leadership role in pioneering a social purpose business model. Several B Corp founders actively advocate for the B movement. One B Corp stated: “The B Corp movement is still gaining traction in Mexico. We are proud to have promoted it and to see that other members of the SUMe organization of the World Green Building Council in Mexico have elected to become B Corps after we did. María Maderos, our partner leading this effort, has received training and is a B Multiplier, assisting other companies in the process” [S2].

The founder of P2 has been a pioneer in the field of social entrepreneurship in Mexico, raising awareness of the movement, forming a guild, and establishing effective communication about venture efforts. The social component has always been integral to FS2. Before retiring, the founder ensured that a civil association working with the company would own the shares of the financial company, guaranteeing that the profits generated would forever be invested in social projects.

S4’s founder attended one of the first presentations of Sistema B in Mexico, when the organization was just getting started. Similarly to this venture, Sistema B began as an incubator of incubators and has worked closely with S4 from the outset, making them one of the leading promoters of the B model in Mexico. They have contributed to raising awareness about the model as it is part of their core business.

#### 4.4.3. Customers

Certified B Corporations appeal to consumers who prioritize sustainability and social responsibility [69]. The certification assures buyers of the genuine positive impact these companies make, while also offering personal benefits such as access to high-quality, healthy products and the opportunity to be agents of change [34].

S6 explained: “For the segment that believes this is the future of business and actively promotes sustainability, being a B Corp with a deep-rooted social purpose gives us an advantage as we align with their mission. Convincing those who are not convinced is futile. We collaborate with allies who share our goals, identifying their positions to work together efficiently and effectively. We target specific customer profiles to develop focused strategies; otherwise, we waste energy on a general market that clings to traditional business mindsets” [S6].

Many customers from S2 share similar interests, which enables them to make informed decisions effectively, rather than trying to change their customers’ perspectives. Most of these individuals are developers and architects driven by various factors such as financial or

governmental incentives. However, the primary motivation for many is the understanding that adopting sustainable practices benefits everyone involved.

S10 has observed that their customers are unlikely to change providers, as they see environmental considerations as essential. Some clients find it beneficial to note that they are indirectly contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

P1 aims to professionalize the agricultural sector by creating a learning community that serves as an innovation platform. Their allies contribute by transferring knowledge and providing free consulting services. The agreement includes the following statement: “I will provide you with these benefits, this profit margin, and ongoing training support, but it is your responsibility to support the producer. We cover the cost of that support to ensure that even the smallest producers have access to quality agronomic consultancy” [P1]. As a result, P1 does not maintain a sales team or demonstration plots. Instead, they implement field projects through partnerships with allied and cooperating producers, which reduces costs and increases accessibility. Most of S9’s sales come from customers who recommend the service to their friends, neighbors, and colleagues, resulting in organic growth. They have employed only one salesperson.

Consumer perceptions of the B Corp label differ across various sectors. In niche markets, the label often does not stand out clearly from other sustainability certifications [70]. As expressed by FS3: “I haven’t had the opportunity to experience this firsthand, where customers specifically choose us because we are a B Corp. I believe they are primarily attracted to us for the benefits our platform offers. While people might assume that our B Corp certification indicates we are socially responsible and leads to a positive response, I don’t think they fully understand what it truly means to be a B Corp” [FS3]. In a similar vein, S3 emphasized the need for clearer terminology related to the B Corp movement and acknowledged the challenges B Corps face in conveying concepts such as social responsibility, sustainability, and triple impact. The variety of terminology can create confusion, making it difficult for B Corps to effectively communicate their brand to consumers. As a result, there is a significant challenge in raising awareness, educating the audience, clarifying specific terms, and establishing a more unified standard.

#### 4.4.4. Suppliers

B Corps generate positive benefits for the environment or community by creating material flows that achieve impact in two ways: by carefully selecting suppliers with a focus on strategic and impactful choices, and by designing their physical network effectively [71]. S11 remarked that, in the past, they spent a substantial amount of money sourcing ingredients from various locations. However, they now focus on local suppliers, often without fully realizing this shift. The manager believes a key advantage of B Corps is their commitment to promoting local consumption, supporting small producers, and assisting families. They source products from another B Corp that collaborates with Mexican farmers to find, roast, and distribute high-quality coffee. Similarly, S12 prioritizes using local inputs and raw materials from suppliers who have an equal or greater environmental commitment to reducing their supply chain’s environmental footprint. They also involve their employees and suppliers in implementing actions aimed at environmental protection and social equity through training and education. For instance, they purchase all their employee uniforms from participant P3.

P4 explained that the selection of suppliers varies depending on the specific circumstances. Based on their experience in the restaurant sector, one can generally evaluate the quality of life and compensation of suppliers’ employees, as well as assessing aspects such as employee health, job satisfaction, and work schedules. Another critical factor is the specific knowledge suppliers possess about the sector. In selecting suppliers, they

aim to collaborate with projects that have a significant environmental impact and engage suppliers who are driving change in this area. This aligns with the idea that relationships with suppliers, employees, and customers are grounded in mutual benefit and sustainable outcomes [10]. For suppliers specifically, while costs are taken into account, they are considered only after ensuring social and environmental outcomes are prioritized [27].

S12 purchases products from producer networks and ensures that these products comply with agroecological practices. This collaboration with producer networks has expanded significantly, enabling them to source approximately 80% of the ingredients used in their restaurants. They primarily buy produce at market-competitive prices and store it in a large warehouse located in Mexico City, enabling them to provide daily supplies to restaurants. Producers deliver their products weekly. When S12 is interested in a specific product and is confident there is demand for it, they request that producers grow and harvest that item. This arrangement provides security for the producers, as they know S12 will buy what they grow at a fair price.

S4 mentioned that their collaborators include external mentors, facilitators, designers, and video editors, who can also be considered suppliers. Some of these suppliers work closely with their team. For example, a video producer may undertake a project that spans six months, producing two or three videos per month. In such cases, they value getting to know the company and becoming integrated into its culture. Similarly, mentors are expected to familiarize themselves with the projects and align with the business vision.

#### 4.4.5. Government

The current public administration in Mexico claims to prioritize the lower-income demographic. However, it has only taken minimal political actions to eradicate poverty. As a result, many underprivileged Mexicans are often seen primarily as tools for political support and votes during campaign seasons [25]. In this context, S9 stated: “The business sector has acknowledged that it needs to either contribute to the social mission or face overall stagnation. The government is not a partner propelling progress; instead, it often acts as an obstruction. The private sector asserts that if we don’t engage, then who will?” [S9].

According to P2, local governments are seeking more collaboration because their resources are limited. They have a budget mechanism that includes federal contributions for states and municipalities based on their size, tailoring their approach to meeting customers’ needs accordingly. This attracts them because they can have a combined financing structure where the government contributes a portion, and the venture multiplies it by adding financing partners. They are also drawn to the fact that P2 has the operational capacity to reach rural communities.

S11 is running a program in collaboration with the Mexico City government, focusing on helping young people who have been released from prison to start their businesses. While some government sectors communicate their programs, these initiatives often do not progress beyond initial discussions. For example, the Ministry of Welfare contacted them, but the interaction ultimately ended without action. S11 stated that working with the government is undoubtedly a challenge, as everything tends to become bureaucratic. In Mexico, several procedures and processes could be streamlined; however, many of these have already been implemented. Ultimately, B Corps must find a way to communicate effectively with the relevant parties.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1. Primary Objectives

Seeking positive change indicates that B Corps are driven by a purpose beyond just profit; they aim to create a positive impact on their communities and the environment [6].

This idea is echoed by S9: “Since we started discussing the original business plan, it was always envisioned as a company focused on creating social, ecological, and economic impacts. We also spoke about inviting people to join the revolution” [S9].

We identified a learning tension (as detailed in Section 2.2) regarding how B Corporations adapt their business models by expanding their service and product offerings in response to identified needs. For example, S8, a social innovation consultancy, recognized that achieving a deeper impact required more than effective communication; it necessitated additional steps to ensure lasting influence. This realization led to the development of new project areas, offering services that range from diagnostics—gathering essential information for a strategic framework—to implementation, during which the project is executed. As a result, S8 evolved from a communications consultancy into a comprehensive social innovation consultancy, providing a complete transformation cycle.

## 5.2. Motivations

We found that ventures pursue B Corp certification to validate their prosocial identity, to move along the path of their entrepreneurial journey, to enhance performance, to join a conscious community, and to achieve market differentiation. Our results align with the research conducted elsewhere [72].

The B Corp label signifies an organization’s commitment to social responsibility by providing external indicators of its moral values and principles. It also provides a framework for self-reflection, guiding businesses in their involvement in prosocial initiatives. For instance, FS1 stated that it was established as a B Corp from its inception, incorporating social objectives into its foundation. Additionally, FS4 noted that being designated as a B Corp was not just about stating “we’re a B Corp and we’re transparent”. Instead, it reflects a genuine commitment to making a positive impact on the environment on a broader scale.

Many B Corp founders have international roots or experiences that influence their tendency to create hybrid organizations. Their diverse backgrounds expose them to various cultural norms and rules that differ from those in Mexico. This unique perspective fueled their commitment to supporting Mexico, especially as citizens increasingly recognize that our current societal path is unsustainable. Some founders have previously worked with NGOs, which reinforced their beliefs and strengthened their connection to the B Corp model. The founder of FS2 mentioned attending an annual networking event organized by an NGO, where she met a former director of Academia B. This encounter sparked the certification process for FS2. Another founder, P2, collaborated with foundations focused on housing solutions before working with an NGO. They faced the challenge of considering how to achieve systemic change. P2 questioned the impact of their efforts, stating: “We build 100 houses a year, but compared to the 9 million needed, that’s nothing. . . How can we scale this?” This reflection ultimately led to the establishment of a social enterprise and the formation of a construction company.

The B certification serves as a self-assessment tool for continuous improvement, guiding both founders without prior entrepreneurial experience and those who have been working sustainably for a long time. Most participants explored various options for certifications and social responsibility, discovering that the B Corp label aligned best with their goal of incorporating environmental, social, and governance criteria. Additionally, by undertaking the BIA, S8 identified areas for professionalization throughout the company, and S5 highlighted its use as a management tool for continuous improvement.

Becoming part of a conscious community embodies the Sistema B principle of co-construction. This principle promotes teamwork and collaboration through collective building, integrating diverse viewpoints, and valuing everyone’s input. Moreover, it involves sharing responsibilities, learning from one another, and building trust within a

team. The Sistema B community is reported to significantly assist B Corps with various challenges, including outsourcing, locating trusted suppliers who align with B Corp goals, and building a network of social entrepreneurs who share common interests and exchange best practices. Furthermore, joining an international community and participating in a global movement has been identified as a source of strength and certainty.

Regarding market differentiation, the B certification serves as a tool to demonstrate that ventures fulfill their stated commitments. This not only creates a commercial impact but also establishes a competitive advantage, acting as a means of differentiating themselves from other companies within the same sector.

Certification requirements often create challenges for smaller and newer companies, leading to attention deficits, increased compliance costs, and slower growth [10]. However, none of the participants recalled facing these difficulties, even during the Covid19 crisis. As FS1 noted: “During the pandemic, we had to cut budgets for other memberships and alliances. However, we maintained our budget for everything related to B certification due to our commitment to this new economy movement. It holds great value for us. Sistema B was one of the most adaptable organizations, retaining its impact during the pandemic and demonstrating its belief in what it advocates” [FS1].

### 5.3. *Measuring Success*

B Lab has developed a theory of change to reevaluate public indicators that assess contributions to systemic change and to create appropriate regulatory frameworks. This collaborative approach allows the business coalition to advocate for significant global economic transformation. It helps B Lab define its role by establishing global objectives and strategies [65]. As the founder of S1 noted, “We proudly and responsibly belong to this global movement of companies aiming to make a difference by leveraging our market power to address social and environmental challenges and to redefine the meaning of success” [S1].

B Corps assess their social and environmental impact, with internal stakeholders making personal, institutional, and legal commitments to consider the long-term consequences of their actions on both the community and the environment [73]. The theory of change outlines phases that social enterprises can follow to enhance their impact by evaluating long-term effects and identifying the necessary conditions for success [20]. B Corps primarily focus on short- and medium-term social objectives, closely monitoring their immediate impacts. As P4 stated, “We fight every day to increase sales. We prioritize ensuring that salaries and our organizational structure align with the company’s goals. By building with a mission of impact, if we succeed in growing sales, our impact automatically expands” [P4]. In this context, we identified a learning tension regarding the balance of timeframes in the B Corp’s objectives. In findings consistent with previous research [46], we found that B Corps that successfully integrate social objectives into their core business model tend to articulate their vision in terms of achieving enduring, broad-reaching social goals. S1 explained: “We measure our social and environmental impact and make a personal, institutional, and legal commitment to making decisions that consider the long-term consequences of our actions on the community and the environment” [S1].

B Corps also measure impact through outputs. For instance, FS1 tracks the number of investors hosted, the amount of capital raised by entrepreneurs, and the financial resources directed into impact investments. Various B Corps employ a similar approach to quantifying output. Another method is suggested by S8, which first sets the impact objective and then adjusts the key performance indicators, since each impact project is unique. Although they use methodologies, they avoid a one-size-fits-all approach.

The qualitative metrics referred to customer satisfaction through surveys and employee satisfaction, including aspects such as overall well-being, happiness, job security, competitive salaries, medical insurance, and career planning.

B Corps are committed to reducing their environmental impact, both in their operations and in the services they provide to their clients. This commitment includes minimizing the use of pesticides, fertilizers, waste, synthetic inputs, water, plastics, and greenhouse gas emissions, among other environmental concerns. Many B Corps invest in transitioning to regenerative management practices, ecosystem restoration, and climate change adaptation across various sectors, including agriculture, forestry, aquaculture, fisheries, nature-based solutions, landscape infrastructure, livestock, ecotourism, and improving financial access for small-scale producers.

In addition to environmental goals, B Corps strive to enhance socio-environmental outcomes. This includes maximizing plants' genetic potential for productivity, soil health, and biodiversity; increasing income for small-scale producers; improving access to information for farmers and stakeholders in agricultural value chains; promoting labor market inclusion for socially disadvantaged youth; ensuring financial inclusion for women in rural communities; and democratizing the processes of raising capital and making donations.

The B Corp certification enables companies to assess their performance against global best practices and the benchmarks established by their industry peers. For some B Corps, the recertification process has revealed areas that need improvement, prompting them to seek additional international certifications. Additionally, as noted by FS3: "The process of pursuing this certification makes you aware of aspects you may not have previously considered. It highlights what you need to improve in order to achieve a better score and, ultimately, become a benchmark for other companies aspiring to become a B Corp" [FS3].

The pricing model typically refers to setting a sales target, which is the minimum value that allows B Corps to reach the break-even point and sustain their operations with an emphasis on an affordable price.

B Corps internalize their impacts by integrating social and environmental considerations into their product design and all their decision making. We found that some B Corps recognize that their competitors' products or services are not customer focused, which indicates that their processes and day-to-day operations align with their mission and values, managing social and environmental impacts with the same rigor as financial ones.

The B Corp certification formalizes a venture's commitment to creating a positive impact. This certification offers benefits such as a strengthened mission focus, increased stakeholder trust, and potential financial rewards, though it also involves trade-offs and organizational challenges [10]. B Corps strive to improve both the commercial and social dimensions of their business models to address this performance tension effectively. For example, P4 noted: "We are already starting to see the benefits of many years of advocacy funded by philanthropy and non-governmental organizations aimed at raising awareness about issues related to fishing, overfishing, and the need for sustainable fishing practices. Part of our civil association's work includes a section on 'buyer engagement,' which involves collaborating with large purchasers, like supermarkets, to communicate the risks they face by not sourcing sustainably or traceably. Over time, these efforts are beginning to show results. For instance, supermarket chains are starting to adopt sustainable purchasing policies and set targets for the percentage of their supply that is sustainable. However, Mexico is still in the early stages of this process, and we have noticed significant changes only in the last two to three years. It's important to recognize that progress varies, as it is ultimately a personal decision for each buyer" [P4]. As highlighted by this B Corp representative, there is still considerable work to be done in Mexico regarding sustainable sourcing.

#### 5.4. Stakeholders

B Corps are dedicated to continuously improving their positive impact on all stakeholders and measuring the effects of their actions on social and environmental performance [19]. These organizations collaborate with various stakeholders, including internal team members, customers, suppliers, and the broader community, to create a more integrated and conscious world. Our findings align with a study [6] that suggests B Corps have the potential to establish the necessary structures and processes to foster stronger relationships with both internal and external stakeholders. As S3 noted: “We first humanize all the stakeholder groups involved who genuinely want to share those values and purpose. Communication with our various audiences is an exceptional tool” [S3]. This statement emphasizes that an organization’s ability to communicate and engage with its stakeholders is positively correlated with the scale of its social impact [74].

The B Corp certification process helps prevent mission drift by establishing structured requirements and accountability measures that support businesses in achieving their sustainability goals [10]. However, there are instances where the balance between social, environmental, and economic goals may not be aligned, leading to mission drift [27]. B Corps view themselves as leaders in creating a new economy. Consequently, we found that most B Corps invest time each year to review their theory of change, evaluate their impact, and assess their sales and financial performance. This approach aims to prevent mission drift, as noted in a review [6] that highlighted the belonging tensions that can arise when integrating social and market objectives while pursuing a sustainable business model that reinforces the social mission. FS1 avoids mission drift by prioritizing critical themes. They state: “We reject projects that lack a social or environmental focus. Although we are often told, ‘You know many investors worldwide; why don’t you help us?’ we have turned down several projects that wouldn’t generate a significant impact due to our limited capacity. We focus our efforts on several key themes. One theme is environmental regeneration and the restoration of the social fabric. For us to accept a project, it must not only be sustainable but also aim to recover something that has been lost. Another important theme is climate change, which we view as urgent and imperative. The third theme is diversity, encompassing both biodiversity and gender diversity” [FS1]. In a similar vein, S8 outlined their approach: “We work diligently to ensure that all projects we receive and collaborate on have a clear impact objective. A general objective is not the same as having a specific purpose. Some clients may have varying interests when undertaking a project, but we assign an impact objective to all projects to understand the transformation they will bring about. This is another mechanism we use to align with social objectives” [S8].

Addressing belonging-related tension within the organization can be achieved by effectively managing internal dynamics. FS1 highlighted that small companies generally find it easier to manage their internal operations to achieve impact objectives because the founders are committed from the beginning, with a strong sense of ethical and social responsibility. However, tensions arise when it comes to institutionalizing the company’s practices. As S6 noted: “One of my partners is responsible for the impact strategy, ensuring that our impact objectives are reviewed annually and that we produce a report based on this analysis. For all activities of this nature, we have already allocated work hours from the start; in other words, the impact strategy is considered as important as the commercial strategy” [S6].

B Corps collaborate with customers to enhance their efforts through shared best practices and to generate collective intelligence. For example, S2 shares effective sustainable development strategies with partners and hosts sessions to discuss objectives and support implementation. Their goal is to guide partners toward success by demonstrating what has worked for them. On the other hand, P1 benefits from its ability to acquire knowledge and

integrate it into daily operations. They utilize a “partner system” that facilitates ongoing identification of new perspectives, realities, challenges, and, most importantly, effective collaborative solutions for small-scale farmers.

Some organizing tensions have been identified regarding the hiring process, particularly in balancing stakeholders’ expectations with commitments to product quality [46]. P1 described the organization as lacking a hierarchical structure; instead, it operates under a holacracy, a business model that replaces traditional hierarchical systems with a horizontal framework, distributing decision-making among various workgroups. This approach enables high efficiency in terms of costs and management, as it operates as a self-managed system without an overseer. However, as P1 noted: “Not everyone can adapt to this system; those who are accustomed to a hierarchical structure often feel paralyzed and frustrated. The recruitment process has been challenging for us in finding individuals who can effectively thrive in this environment. Furthermore, the training process is lengthy and difficult, taking approximately a year and a half” [P1].

For S12, the addition of new socio-environmental goals alongside economic objectives required the implementation of new systems and the allocation of resources to achieve these aims. Although reaching these goals was a gradual process, it demanded awareness, ongoing training, and monitoring. This presented operational challenges due to the nature of the restaurant industry. Additionally, they encountered resistance to change. To address this, they prioritized communicating the results of their collaborative efforts to employees, who play a crucial role in achieving these goals, thereby fostering a more engaged workforce [27]. Furthermore, during the recruitment and selection process, candidates are informed that, as a certified B Corp, all initiatives undertaken by the company reflect its commitment.

##### *5.5. Notes on Mexico’s Institutional Regulatory Tensions*

The participants aim to address Mexico’s complex institutional regulatory challenges, which include tensions related to inadequate legislation, informal economy, insufficient government presence, political instability, and income inequality among workers. In response, B Corps are working to develop and implement viable solutions and collective processes [63] from a systemic perspective to drive transformative change [75] across various sectors, including agriculture, housing shortages, Indigenous representation in the clothing industry, fishing, financial inclusion, and support for individuals with a history of social exclusion.

The governance structure of B Corps is legitimized by legal accountability, which is established by framing the organizational purpose within business statutes aligned with national regulations. This alignment publicly demonstrates their commitment to society [22]. However, the lack of specific legislation, characterized by insufficient regulatory frameworks and limited government support, poses a significant barrier to the emergence of B Corp certifications. In Mexico, there is no specific legal framework for establishing B Corps, although existing laws and practices do support this initiative [14]. Nonetheless, these practices involve integrating non-business corporate logic, which can lead to organizational complexities and tensions. For example, in Mexico, a hybrid organization may choose to separate its social activities from its commercial activities, allowing revenues generated from commercial endeavors to support the social activities that benefit various stakeholders [46], as illustrated in the following instances.

- P2 consists of various units that enable us to operate as a social enterprise. This includes a civil association focused on fundraising, social services, community management, strategic alliances, and impact measurement. Additionally, there is a construction company dedicated to providing housing solutions through land management,

housing construction and distribution, the installation of eco-technologies, assistance, and technical training. Lastly, there is a community financial institution that comprises two units: one that grants loans and manages portfolios and assets, and another that collects savings and provides loans.

- P4 is a hybrid organization comprising a civil association and a marketing company, both of which are dedicated to impact-driven goals. The civil association relies on donations, whereas the marketing company generates profit from product sales. P4 partners with fishing cooperatives on improvement projects and conducts operational research. They notify the marketing company when a cooperative demonstrates effective management and fair revenue distribution, has a gender equality committee, and employs equitable salary policies. The civil association engages with cooperatives through initial visits to assess their potential.

Sistema B promotes the Benefit and Collective Interest Society (BIC) as a regional legal framework in its operational countries; it is a legal figure created in 2018 that defines businesses with a triple impact as those that create economic, social, and environmental value. Inspired by the U.S. Benefit Corporation model, it has been adapted to local contexts. Currently, only Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Uruguay have approved BIC Law, while Argentina, Brazil, and Chile are still in the proposal stage [13,22]. Ideas for developing a legal framework for social impact companies in Mexico can be found in a previous study [14]. These ideas include requirements for integrating social enterprises into the existing legal system, suggestions for establishing a regulatory authority, and proposals for fiscal incentives to effectively promote activities related to the state.

Recognizing the institutional regulatory tensions in Mexico, several participants shared the following experiences:

- S2: “We collaborate with governments, city councils, and consultancies to help them develop public policies that promote more sustainable communities” [S2].
- S8: “In Latin America, Chile and Argentina have made significant progress regarding B Corp issues in public policy. A proposal was submitted to the Senate by Sistema B, not directly by the B Corps themselves, but rather by Sistema B. One of the founders, María Emilia Correa from Colombia, gave a lecture to companies with the aim of proposing a legal framework for social enterprises at the Senate. I’m not aware of any other such initiatives, but I can say that if there were a clear example or concrete action that we could add to this, we would definitely support it. Since we lack experience in influencing public policies, we don’t actively champion it; however, if it existed, we would be at the forefront” [S8].
- S10: “We need to investigate further to see if there is already a law or legislative initiative addressing private initiatives with an environmental focus. Collectively, we must continue to apply pressure on interest groups. Specifically, how can businesses like ours effectively engage in public policy discussions with the government?” [S10].

The challenges confronting humanity today, coupled with a growing dissatisfaction with the limited efficacy of government actions, are resulting in heightened expectations among citizens [1]. We identified a few positive collaborations between B Corps and the Mexican government. Notably, FS2 has partnered with municipal and state governments, engaging with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, and women’s institutes. They also collaborate with various levels of government, maintaining offices across multiple municipalities, which necessitates cooperation with public administrations from different political factions. The FS2 director believes this experience underscores a stronger ecosystem beyond public administration. This statement relates to the attributes of B Corps, particularly their ability to foster systemic relationships and engage stakeholders effectively. As a result, B Corps address institutional voids and informality by reinforcing their

organizational resources, investing in social capital, providing training, and adopting more humanistic recruitment strategies. They also establish systemic relationships that prioritize engagement with local suppliers, resulting in mutually beneficial partnerships [22].

## 6. Conclusions

The study aimed to advance the existing literature on B Corps by examining sustainability-oriented hybrid organizations that strive to reconcile profit generation with social impact, particularly within the context of regulatory tensions in Mexico. Furthermore, it investigated the entrepreneurial motivations driving social objectives, the B Corp movement, and the internal dynamics of organizations as they navigate the dual demands of social and economic priorities. We also discussed how tensions arise and are managed, as well as the ongoing questions regarding regulatory tensions in Mexico and the challenges that stem from organizational complexities.

Our study has some limitations. We interviewed only Mexican B Corps, and each B Corp was represented by just one interviewee. This small sample size makes it difficult to generalize our findings. Although the B Corps included various industry sectors, they lacked a representative mix of enterprises of different sizes, which is another limitation that highlights opportunities for future research.

Future studies could investigate B Corps in other countries or conduct cross-country comparisons to gain a deeper understanding of this phenomenon [15]. Additionally, while participants in our study expressed a desire to implement specific strategies, it remains uncertain whether these intentions will translate into long-term action. A longitudinal study would be valuable for understanding how these strategies are executed over time, as well as their social and economic implications.

Future research could also examine the perspectives of both internal and external stakeholders from a broader sample of B Corps to identify any tensions and conflicts among employees and other stakeholders, as well as how these B Corps address such issues. Specifically, we noted tensions related to the inefficiencies of the Mexican government that warrant further investigation. This direction aligns with the agenda proposed by [10] regarding stakeholder dialogue and collaborative activities.

Lastly, another research direction based on our findings could focus on measuring the social impact of B Corp customers in the investment advising industry, which generally includes social enterprises, impact initiatives, and cooperatives. These B Corps aim to maximize, scale, and deepen their impacts through sustainable financing. This aligns with the research concept proposed by [10], which highlights the need for clearer insights into how B Corp certification affects social, environmental, and economic outcomes, while calling for detailed investigations into the broader impacts of these undertakings.

**Supplementary Materials:** The following supporting information can be downloaded at: <https://www.mdpi.com/article/10.3390/su17136084/s1>, S1: Interview guide.

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