ABSTRACT

Purpose: The objective of this paper is to analyze the evolution of and the latest knowledge in the scientific production on challenges and tensions for the management of social enterprises.

Theoretical framework: the theoretical framework was the basis for the choices made regarding data collection and analyses. For that reason, the theoretical framework of this paper approached social enterprises definition, tensions in social enterprises, and bibliometrics and its fundamental laws.

Method/design/approach: This article is based on the bibliometric method and our final database was composed of 479 articles from Web of Knowledge.

Results and conclusion: We identified that more than 70% of the publications occurred in the last five years. The most cited papers provided important theoretical bases as they address the perspectives of organizational hybridism and social entrepreneurship. These theoretical approaches also converge after 2013. In addition, we identified 12 core journals and three thematic word clusters.

Research implications: We expect to encourage new research within the social entrepreneurship and hybridism theoretical perspectives. We also present questions to be addressed related to how challenges and tensions for the management of social enterprises affect and are affected by decisions regarding value creation and distribution to stakeholders, reframing how stakeholders’ divergent demands are related to tensions.

Originality/value: This article presents a portrait of the literature related to tensions in social enterprises, highlighting the most cited works and authors, and pointing possible research gaps in this field.

Keywords: Social Enterprises, Social Entrepreneurship, Tensions, Bibliometrics.
Método/projeto/abordagem: Este artigo baseia-se no método bibliométrico e nossa base de dados final foi composta por 479 artigos da Web of Knowledge.

Resultados e conclusão: identificamos que mais de 70% das publicações ocorreram nos últimos cinco anos. Os artigos mais citados forneceram importantes bases teóricas, uma vez que abordam as perspectivas do hibridismo organizacional e do empreendedorismo social. Essas abordagens teóricas também convergem após 2013. Além disso, identificamos 12 revistas principais e três grupos de palavras temáticas.

Implicações da pesquisa: Esperamos incentivar novas pesquisas dentro das perspectivas teóricas do empreendedorismo social e do hibridismo. Apresentamos também questões a serem abordadas relacionadas ao modo como os desafios e tensões para a gestão de empresas sociais afetam e são afetados por decisões relativas à criação de valor e distribuição às partes interessadas, reformulando o modo como as exigências divergentes das partes interessadas estão relacionadas com tensões.

Originalidade/valor: Este artigo apresenta um retrato da literatura relacionada a tensões em empreendimentos sociais, destacando os trabalhos e autores mais citados, apontando possíveis lacunas de pesquisa neste campo.

Palavras-chave: Empreendimentos Sociais, Empreendedorismo Social, Tensões, Bibliometria.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The search for sustainable development must involve coordinated efforts and partnerships between multiple stakeholders (George et al., 2016; Nations, 2018), which highlights the importance of companies also engaging with this agenda and aligning themselves with the sustainable development goals (Grejo & Lunkes, 2022). To address social challenges while also seeking profit, organizations can rethink ways of doing business (Barki et al., 2020). Within this context, innovations and business models geared toward sustainability are also being devised, proposing a new perspective on the way organizations operate in the market (Barki et al., 2020; Dyllick & Muff, 2016; Evans et al., 2017; Jäger & Schröer, 2014; Mair & Martí, 2006).

Social enterprises are organizations that operate to provide a positive socioenvironmental impact through market mechanisms, and they are important models for addressing the common agenda proposed by sustainable development goals (Barki et al., 2020). These organizations thus emerge aiming to resolving some social or environmental problem with the sale of products or services, which can be a virtuous cycle and characterizes their hybridism (Barki et al., 2020; Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Defourny & Nyssens, 2017; Doherty et al., 2014). However, this need to combine socioenvironmental impact with financial viability creates a series of challenges and tensions for the management of social enterprises (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Doherty et al., 2014; Siegner et al., 2018; Smith et al., 2012, 2013; Smith & Besharov, 2019; Wry & York, 2015).

The tensions in social enterprises have already been addressed in some theoretical studies of literature reviews (e.g. Doherty et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2013). However, there is a gap in understanding how social enterprises deal with tensions (Ran & Weller, 2021). Because of that, it is important to outline the latest knowledge in the research on the tensions and management challenges in social enterprises, identifying the main theoretical bases in this field, its evolution over time, and any gaps that could compromise the development of future studies and the application of management practices in social enterprises. Thus, the general aim of this
paper is to analyze the evolution of and the latest knowledge in scientific production on challenges and tensions for the management of social enterprises.

This article will use the bibliometric method (Araújo, 2006; Araújo & Alvarenga, 2011; Bailón-Moreno et al., 2005; Bufrem & Prates, 2005; Ellegaard & Wallin, 2015; Wallin, 2005; Zupic & Čater, 2015), and with this we seek to contribute to scientific and practical advancement. Regarding the development of research on the topic, we hope that this study will assist in identifying new theoretical gaps, as well as supporting the construction and consolidation of theoretical frameworks related to the theme. Regarding managerial contributions, in turn, we hope that this paper will offer business managers a snapshot of a body of literature that supports them in understanding their challenges and in implementing new management practices in their ventures, favoring their economic viability and the achievement of their social and environmental goals.

Next, we will present the other sections of this article, namely: the theoretical framework, the methodology, the discussion of the results, and the concluding remarks.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to better outline the object of study of this research, it is first necessary to delve deeper into the definitions and characterizations of what a social enterprise is. Subsequently, we will also present within this theoretical framework the basis for the choices made regarding the analyses to be conducted. For that reason, the theoretical framework of this paper will be subdivided into three sections: social enterprises, tensions in social enterprises, and bibliometrics.

2.1 Social enterprises

Social entrepreneurship seeks to address a problem or social demands while the financial benefits for the entrepreneurs are not a priority (Mair & Martí, 2006). Similarly, even being an emerging field of research (Schmitt & Alberton, 2022), social enterprises have gained prominence within the field of entrepreneurship since they emerge with the goal of addressing social and/or environmental demands at the same time as being financially sustainable through the sale of products and services (Barki et al., 2020; Defourny & Nyssens, 2017; Doherty et al., 2014). Although this is a common characteristic that enables us to distinguish these organizations from traditional companies, governments, and non-profit organizations (Tecks, 2023; Yunus et al., 2010), there is not yet a consensus on the definitions, typologies, models, and even nomenclatures related to social enterprises (Barki et al., 2020; Defourny & Nyssens, 2017; Rosolen et al., 2014). For that reason, next we will briefly discuss the concepts and nomenclatures related to social enterprises.

For this paper it is important to recognize the lack of consensus and the various denominations attributed to this type of organization, considering that it can be known as social enterprises, social businesses, or inclusive businesses, among other denominations depending on the country and context in which they originate, and they can refer to different types of organizations, with different legal compositions (Barki, 2015; Barki et al., 2020; Defourny & Nyssens, 2017; ICE & Pipe Social, 2019; Rosolen et al., 2014). However, in general, definitions found in the literature highlight aspects of social enterprises that characterize their hybridism that, in this case, is related to the need to achieve a social objective or goal at the same time as being financial sustainable (Barki et al., 2020; Battilana & Dorado, 2010).

Hybridism is one way of understanding social enterprises, increasingly adopted in the literature related to this kind of organization (Barki et al., 2020). For this study, it is important
Challenges and Tensions for the Management of Social Enterprises: Theoretical Bases and Opportunities for Advancing the Literature

to understand that this hybridism relates with the paradox and interdependence between financial result and social impact, and generates a series of tensions, which are challenges for the management of social enterprises, originated from multiple and often conflicting demands from various stakeholders (Barki et al., 2020; Bull, 2008; Doherty et al., 2014; Siegner et al., 2018; Smith et al., 2013; Smith & Besharov, 2019).

2.2 Tensions in social enterprises

The tensions in social enterprises are management challenges that derive from their hybridism, which means that the managers of these businesses need to deal with the paradox of integrating social and financial mission and divergent demands from different stakeholders. These tensions may cause mission drift (Ebrahim et al., 2014; Ramus & Vaccaro, 2017) and tend to be classified as tensions in performing, organizing, belonging, and learning (Smith et al., 2013). Also, in dual purpose organizations, these tensions represent a duality that will demand flexibility (Doherty et al., 2014; Siegner et al., 2018; Smith et al., 2012, 2013; Smith & Besharov, 2019), as well as practices to help these companies to maintain a hybrid culture and manage conflicts between social and financial goals (Battilana et al, 2019).

The tensions will demand from the leaderships of these organizations practices for their management (Battilana et al. 2019; Doherty et al., 2014; Siegner et al., 2018; Smith & Besharov, 2019). Some theoretical studies have already carried out a literature review to classify and propose models for studying the tensions in social enterprises (e.g. Doherty et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2013), which highlights that there are already empirical studies in academia on the tensions in social enterprises. These studies also revealed that this subject has been studied through different theoretical perspectives, such as institutional theory, stakeholder theory, paradox theory, organizational identity theory, and hybrid theory (Sarhangi et al, 2021; Smith et al, 2013). However, we were unable to find an empirical study that evaluated these publications, which represents a relevant gap that could compromise the development of future studies and the application of management practices in social enterprises.

2.3 Bibliometrics

As the objective of this paper is to analyze the evolution of and the latest knowledge in scientific production on challenges and tensions for the management of social enterprises, the research method adopted will be the bibliometric one. Bibliometric research uses a quantitative approach to analyze behaviors of the literature and the evolution of the scientific production in an area of knowledge in a particular context and period, which may be of interest to public policy managers, scientists, and other stakeholders (Araújo, 2006; Araújo & Alvarenga, 2011; Bufrem & Prates, 2005; Ellegaard & Wallin, 2015). Therefore, we can consider bibliometrics as being used to transform something intangible, which is the quality of the science, into something manageable (Wallin, 2005).

By understanding that bibliometrics seeks to analyze the evolution of the scientific production in a particular period, we can define the first research question of this study, as proposed below:

**Question 1:** how has the quantity of publications on challenges and tensions for the management of social enterprises evolved over time?

To evaluate scientific production, several analyses have been proposed over time. The three fundamental laws of bibliometrics are Lotka’s law, Bradford’s law, and Zipf’s law. These are described as follows.
Lotka’s law is used to evaluate the productivity of scientists, to identify the main authors in a particular research area. According to this fundamental law, based on the inverse-square law, it is possible to identify that a small group of authors contributes with many articles in a particular area, while a large group of authors contributes to the literature with only one article each.

In the same way that Lotka’s law has been important for the development of other studies, it has been tested by various authors. In his study, Price, for example, defined as the law of elitism that the number of members of the elite of authors on a particular theme relates to the square root of the total authors, and this elite is considered productive if more than half of the scientific production in the field derives from that group of authors (C. A. Araújo, 2006; Mathankar, 2018). For that reason, it is based on Lotka’s law that we define the second research question of this paper:

**Question 2:** which are the main authors and publications related to the theme of challenges and tensions for the management of social enterprises?

Bradford’s law, in turn, evaluates the dispersion of the scientific production among the journals, identifying the ones with the greatest number of publications in a particular area. According to Bradford’s law, the journals can be divided into groups based on the division of the total articles published in the area, where the core is a small group of journals that focus more on a particular theme, in which 1/3 of the publications are concentrated, and the second and third groups of journals each account for 1/3 of the publications. Bradford’s law has been very important for practical applications in bibliometrics and, just like for Lotka’s law, other studies have deepened this research of the dispersion of scientific production among journals (C. A. Araújo, 2006; Bailón-Moreno et al., 2005; Mathankar, 2018), which leads us to the third research question of this paper:

**Questions 3:** what are the main journals related to the theme of challenges and tensions for the management of social enterprises?

Zipf’s law evaluates the words used in the papers considering the frequency of their use. According to Zipf’s law, by ordering in descending order the words used in a text according to their frequency, the position of a word in that list multiplied by its frequency will result in a constant. This law has also been reviewed by various authors, including establishing a parallel between it and Bradford’s law, but as it is based on the principle of least effort and word use it is important to indicate the subject of the documents (Araújo, 2006; Bailón-Moreno et al., 2005; Mathankar, 2018). This paper will use the principles of Zipf’s law to establish the fourth research question:

**Question 4:** what are the main topics addressed by the articles within the theme of challenges and tensions for the management of social enterprises?

Finally, it is important to highlight that the analyses of this study will not only take into consideration the quantity of publications for the analysis of the main authors and journals, but also citations. Citations enable us to evaluate the relationship between a paper and the other articles cited by it and identify a series of patterns in the production of the scientific knowledge, such as identifying the most influential authors in a research field and the core journals that compose a field (Araújo, 2006; McBurney & Novak, 2002). Although this paper does not propose a qualitative analysis regarding citation (McBurney & Novak, 2002; Wallin, 2005), the analysis will be conducted throughout the research.

With this, next we will present the process of collecting and handling the data for subsequent analysis, which should answer the questions proposed.
3 METHODOLOGY

Below we will detail the data collection and handling stages carried out, which are also presented in Figure 1.

After outlining the research problem, the first choice made concerned which databases would be used in the study. In this study we used the Web of Knowledge database, which contains the oldest and most comprehensive citation indexes and enables an analysis of high quality literature (Ellegaard & Wallin, 2015). Next, we defined the keywords to be used in the search. For this choice we considered keywords present in the literature, which were divided into two blocks and combined with each other to map papers on social enterprises and their tensions for management.

The first block of keywords referred to the definition of social enterprises. The literature presents various terms for these organizations, such as social businesses, social enterprises, and inclusive businesses (Barki, 2015; Barki et al., 2020; Rosolen et al., 2014), and as there is no consensus on the terminologies and definitions (Barki et al., 2020). Because of that, this study was based on the same keywords used by a previous bibliometric study on social enterprises (Rosolen et al., 2014) and on other terminologies used by articles that compose the theoretical framework of this study (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Bull, 2008; Defourny & Nyssens, 2017; Mair & Martí, 2006; Siegner et al., 2018; Smith et al., 2012, 2013; Wry & York, 2015). Thus, the keywords used to define social enterprises were: “social ent*”; “social busines*”; “hybrid organization*”; “mission drive*”; “purpose organization*”; and “inclusive business*.”

The second block of keywords aimed to direct the search for challenges and tensions. To define these terms, we also used articles featuring in the theoretical framework of this paper. Thus, the keywords used to map the tensions were: “tension*”; “mission drift*”; “manag* challenge*”; and “paradox*.”

Due to the choices made for the terminologies, we carried out 24 searches, enabling all the possible combinations between the first and second block of keywords. The results were filtered so that only articles were considered. Next, we will present the results of the data collection.

As Figure 2 shows, all the searches conducted enabled us to map 876 articles in total and 581 unique articles without duplicates for initial data processing with the aim of excluding those that were not related to our research problem. In this process, all the article titles were read and if there were any doubts with relation to their suitability for the research, the abstracts were also read. In the end, the database was composed of 479 unique articles.
Challenges and Tensions for the Management of Social Enterprises: Theoretical Bases and Opportunities for Advancing the Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Tension*</th>
<th>Mission drift*</th>
<th>Manag* challenge*</th>
<th>Paradox*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Social ent*&quot;</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Social business*&quot;</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Hybrid organization*&quot;</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Mission drive*&quot;</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Purpose organization*&quot;</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Inclusive business*&quot;</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2 - Summary of the data collection without duplicate and exclusion processing
Source: Prepared by the authors (2023)

After the data collection, the content of the articles selected was exported from Web of Knowledge and subsequently added to the HistCite, VOSViewer, CitNet Explorer, and Microsoft Excel software packages to carry out the analyses. It is important to highlight that for each analysis we carried out specific data processing, with the inclusion of missing years in more recent papers and the adjustment of authors’ names that had different abbreviations. For the analyses that used the CitNet Explorer software we also disregarded documents not exclusively classified as articles by Web of Knowledge (such as early access and book chapters, even if the document was also considered an article), as well as the papers that did not have their year of publication registered at the time of the exporting process (in this case manual inclusion was not carried out, as done in Microsoft Excel for the first analysis presented below).

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following sections present the main results of the research obtained through the data analysis, in order to answer our research questions.

4.1 Evolution of the publications over time

The first analysis carried out on the selected articles related to the evolution of the quantity of publications over time. For this analysis, the data were processed in the Excel software and analyzed manually, since when directly exporting them from the Web of Knowledge, 32 articles had an unknown publication date, so these dates were directly searched for by the researcher. Below, in Figure 3, we present the main findings with relation to the quantity of papers published each year.

Figure 3 - Quantity of publications per year
Source: Prepared by the authors (2023)

Based on the analysis of the data presented in Figure 3, it is possible to identify that from 2006 to 2009 no year saw more than three publications and more than 70% of the publications about the theme occurred in the last five years, which highlights the recentness of
this literature and its possible current relevance in the scientific development. It is also possible to perceive that from 2013 onward the quantity of annual publications always rose, indicating a growing trend for the next years. Finally, it will be interesting to evaluate what that trend will be like after the consolidation of the publications subsequent to June of 2021 (when data was collected), as the growth in the number of published papers was 28% from 2019 to 2020, the second highest in the time series.

By that, we hope to have answered the first research question of this study, which was: how has the quantity of publications on challenges and tensions for the management of social enterprises evolved over time? The next analysis should answer the other questions proposed for the study.

4.2 Main authors

The second analysis conducted in this study was related to the authors who published the articles in the sample, using the HistCite software. First, it was possible to identify that only 87 of the 1109 authors have more than one publication, which, although with a different sample, does not confirm Price’s finding that 60% of the authors in an area have only one publication (Araújo, 2006; Mathankar, 2018). Similarly, to validate Price’s law of elitism (Araújo, 2006; Mathankar, 2018), we calculated the square root of the total authors and identified that the elite would correspond to 33 authors who, in order to be considered productive, must be responsible for half the articles in the database. However, adding up all the production of these authors without considering coauthorships produced only 91 articles, which represents around 19% of the total. This pulverization of authors with only one publication may indicate that the area is still being consolidated, as was also possible to understand from the evolution of the quantity of recent publications on the theme.

Standing out among the authors with most publications are Bob Doherty with six papers, Marya Besharov with five, and Nardia Haigh, Benjamin Huybrechts, and Wendy Smith with four articles each. With relation to the quantity of citations, in turn, there are authors with only one publication, such as Marti and Jay, who stand out with regard to citations, which may indicate the relevance of these papers. It is also possible to note that Doherty, despite having six publications, only has the sixth highest number of citations. Finally, Mair and Battilana stand out for being the authors with the greatest number of citations of their works, as presented in Figure 4.

![Figure 4](image-url) - Number of citations and of publications per author

**Source:** Prepared by the authors (2023)
Based on this analysis, it was necessary to study which were the most cited papers within the sample itself, with the aim of identifying the seminal articles in this field. It was possible to highlight the paper of Mair and Marti from 2006 and the paper of Battilana and Dorado from 2010 as the most cited, which each has more than double the citations of any other paper in the sample. It is also important to highlight that five of the ten most cited articles are theoretical, and another three are exploratory and essentially qualitative studies, which corroborates the view that this is still an emerging field whose theoretical basis is just beginning to be consolidated. Next, Table 1 presents the ten most cited articles in the sample.

Table 1-Most cited articles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Article</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Citation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mair J, Marti I</td>
<td>Social entrepreneurship research: A source of explanation, prediction, and delight</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>1396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Battilana J, Dorado S</td>
<td>Building sustainable hybrid organizations: the case of commercial microfinance organizations</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Doherty B, Haugh H, Lyon F</td>
<td>Social Enterprises as Hybrid Organizations: A Review and Research Agenda</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Jay J</td>
<td>Navigating paradox as a mechanism of change and innovation hybrid organizations</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ebrahim A, Battilana J, Mair J</td>
<td>The governance of social enterprises: Mission drift and accountability challenges in hybrid organizations</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sharir M, Lerner M</td>
<td>Gauging the success of social ventures initiated by individual social entrepreneurs</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Battilana J, Sengul M, Pache AC, Model J</td>
<td>Harnessing productive tensions in hybrid organizations: the case of work integration social enterprises</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Van Der Have RP, Rubalcaba L</td>
<td>Social innovation research: an emerging area of innovation studies?</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023)

In addition, we believed it would be interesting to evaluate how the citation of the papers within the sample occurred. We used the CitNet Explorer software to visualize the information, considering the data processing already mentioned before and the criterion of only contemplating articles with more than 10 citations within the sample, limited to 30 articles based on their cite score. Figure 5 presents the summary of that analysis.

Figure 5-Article citation network

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023)
It is possible to note how the works of Mair and Marti from 2006 and of Battilana and Dorado from 2010 are positioned as central for the development of the other papers, although they are not connected with each other. One of the possible interpretations of this arrangement of the articles in the sample is that the articles of Mair and Shahir, which are further to the right in the figure, address the theme under the theoretical lens of entrepreneurship, analyzing social enterprises as part of the entrepreneurial process and, more specifically, of entrepreneurship with a focus on addressing social demands. Thus, the other papers connected to that of Mair and Shahir mention social entrepreneurship or enterprises in their titles.

The paper of Battilana and Dorado, in turn, addresses the phenomenon under the theoretical framework of institutional theory and hybrid organizations, even though applied in cases of entrepreneurship with non-governmental organizations. Thus, the papers that are connected to the article of Battilana and Dorado also normally refer to the organizations as hybrid organizations and themes such as identity and paradox, among others, appear in the titles of the other papers. Finally, it is interesting to note how the works of Smith, Gonin, and Besharov from 2013, Ebrahim, Battilana and Mair from 2014, and Doherty, Haugh, and Lyon from 2014 are also among the ten most cited and occupy a central position in the figure, with the organizational hybridism approaches of Battilana and Dorado converging with that of Mair and Marti to be subsequently cited by various other articles in the sample.

With this, it can be noted how the logic of organizational hybridism came to be adopted for studying tensions in social enterprises based on the work of Battilana and Dorado from 2010, although from the next years onward it was covered in a complementary way to the logic of social entrepreneurship in order to actually be incorporated into the reality of those ventures. This finding appears to confirm the perceptions of Barki et al. (2020) that organizational hybridism is a more comprehensive approach and parallel to that of social enterprises, although it can be used in studying this kind of organization, especially in this sample, in researching the tensions in social enterprises. Finally, it may be interesting to reflect on how the different nomenclatures for social enterprises mentioned in the literature (Barki, 2015; Barki et al., 2020; Rosolen et al., 2014) are also unrelated to the different theoretical approaches used in studying these organizations.

Subsequently, in this study we also carried out a citation analysis that was not restricted to the papers in the sample and that considered articles with more than 50 among those present in the sample (for analysis purposes we excluded from the result the paper of Eisenhardt from 1989, which is considered an important methodological input for case studies, but is not necessarily related to the theme of this research). With this, it was possible to identify other articles more related to the theme of social entrepreneurship, such as those of Austin, Stevenson, and Wei-Skillern from 2006, of Zahra, Gedajlovic, Newbaum, and Shulmane from 2009, of Dacin, Dacin, and Matear from 2010, and of Dacin, Dacin, and Tracey from 2011, in the same way that it was possible to identify other articles more related to organizational hybridism, such as those of Pache and Santos from 2010 and of Pache and Santos from 2013. It is important to note that again these papers converge in terms of citations from 2013 and 2014 onward, although the articles related to the theme of social entrepreneurship are to the right of the paper of Battilana and Dorado, closer to the work of Mair and Marti, while the papers related to organizational hybridism are to the left of Battilana and Dorado, which can be visualized in Figure 6 and confirms the previously presented findings on the two main theoretical lines and their convergences toward the study of tensions in social enterprises.
With this, we hope to have answered the second research question of this paper, which is: which are the main authors and publications related to the theme of challenges and tensions for the management of social enterprises? In the next analysis, we will evaluate the journals of the publications.

4.3 Main journals

With relation to the journal analysis, it was possible to identify that 12 journals published around 33% of the articles in the database, representing the core journals according to Bradford’s law (Araújo, 2006; Bailón-Moreno et al., 2005; Mathankar, 2018). Standing out among these are the Social Enterprise Journal and Journal of Business Ethics, which together published a little more than 10% of the articles in the database analyzed. It is also interesting to note that most of the core journals are geared toward the area of management linked in some way to social or environmental impact, and the Journal of Cleaner Production, Journal of Business Research, and Journal of Business Ethics have the highest impact factors in 2019 among the journals that compose the core, as presented by Table 2.
Challenges and Tensions for the Management of Social Enterprises: Theoretical Bases and Opportunities for Advancing the Literature

Table 2 - Quantity of publications and impact factor of the core journals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journal</th>
<th>Publications</th>
<th>JCR Impact Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Enterprise Journal</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal of Business Ethics</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4.141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal of Social Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntas</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1.538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal of Cleaner Production</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7.246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal of Business Research</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurship and Regional Development</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonprofit Voluntary Sector Quarterly</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIRIEC - España Revista de Economía Publica y Cooperativa</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Management Decision</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.723</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nonprofit Management &amp; Leadership</td>
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<td>1.672</td>
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</table>

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023)

With this, we hope to have answered the third research question of this paper, which was: what are the main journals related to the theme of challenges and tensions for the management of social enterprises? Next, we will carry out the analysis regarding the main words and topics addressed by the papers.

4.4 Main topics addressed by the articles

To carry out the analysis of the words and topics of the articles, we used the VOSViewer software to identify the main terms and the relationship between them. For this, we considered the content of titles and abstracts and only excluded terms that repeated fewer than 30 times and terms referring to the research methodology, such as “case study,” “originality”, “value,” and “research limitations”, “implication,” among others. Figure 7 presents the results of the analysis conducted using the software, which will be discussed below.

Figure 7 – Word summary
Source: Prepared by the authors (2023)
Based on the visualization of the figure, it is possible to identify three main word clusters, in red, green, and blue. The red cluster highlights some terms that appear to refer to the ventures studied, such as “hybrid organization” and “social enterprise,” as well as the goals of these organizations and the tensions, such as “social mission,” “social issue,” “tension,” among others. Thus, it can be inferred that this first word cluster is related to the phenomenon of the challenges and tensions themselves and their relationship with the results and impacts of these organizations.

The green cluster, in turn, which is closer to the red one, presents terms such as “value,” “model,” “activity,” “sector,” and “social innovation.” Thus, this cluster appears to relate with how these organizations try to achieve their financial and social results, which characterizes their hybridism. Finally, the blue cluster presents terms such as “market,” “society,” “social economy,” “employee,” and “person,” among others, which may represent the study of the environment of the organizations and stakeholders related to the tensions.

It is interesting to note that these three clusters connect to each other and together appear to cover the study of challenges and tensions for the management of social enterprises, as they emerge from the commitment to a social impact with a financial result (red cluster), through a business model that can create and distribute value (green cluster) while dealing with the divergent demands of various stakeholders (blue cluster). However, the mention of tensions themselves is in the same cluster of words as those related to the social impact of the organizations while the words related to the business model (green cluster) appear to intermediate the relationship between the organizations and their purpose (red cluster) with the environment (blue cluster). Thus, these studies appear not to address the business model as central in the organizations, but rather as an underlying and outside aspect, which leads us to wonder how the way that social enterprises choose to create and distribute value to their stakeholders through their business model is related to challenges and tensions in social enterprises management.

In the literature, it is assumed that financial results and socioenvironmental impact may be a virtuous cycle (Battilana et al., 2012). However, while the literature addresses the dual purpose as a duality that will demand flexibility from the organizations in creating value for their stakeholders (Battilana et al, 2019; Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Doherty et al., 2014; Ebrahim et al, 2014; Ramus & Vaccaro, 2017; Siegner et al., 2018; Smith et al., 2012, 2013; Smith & Besharov, 2019), we encourage a reflection on how the balance of these dimensions affect decisions regarding the business model to create and distribute value to stakeholders. Moreover, it would be important to delve deeper into which stakeholders are addressed by the literature in this area, as only some of them were identified in the analyses conducted and it is through these stakeholders’ divergent demands that the tensions emerge (Doherty et al., 2014; Ebrahim et al, 2014; Ramus & Vaccaro, 2017; Siegner et al., 2018; Smith et al., 2013).

Thus, future studies could answer the following questions: Which are the stakeholders and their expectations that can affect decisions regarding value creation and distribution in social enterprises? How can decisions regarding value creation and distribution affect and be affected by the tensions and their management, playing an intermediate role between stakeholders’ divergent demands and the tensions? Finally, how can the decisions regarding value creation and distribution affect and be affected by financial and socioenvironmental performance?

With this, we hope to have answered the last research question of the study, which was: what are the main topics addressed by the articles within the theme of challenges and tensions for the management of social enterprises? Next, we will present the concluding remarks of the paper.
5 CONCLUSION

This paper aimed to analyze the evolution of and latest knowledge in scientific production on tensions for the management of social enterprises. For this, we set research questions that enabled us to identify that this is a recent body of literature that does not yet feature a consolidated productive elite, but that the authors base their work on two main theoretical dimensions (organizational hybridism and social entrepreneurship) that converge from 2013 onward. It can also be highlighted that publications with most citations are mostly theoretical studies or ones that use a qualitative approach, that core journals related to the theme mostly present a relationship with management applied to the theme of social impact, and that there are three main clusters of contents addressed by the articles.

We expect this work will contribute to the development of the literature on social enterprises. The scientific contribution is based on the perspective that this work will support the identification of new theoretical gaps, especially because we presented questions to be addressed by future research related to how challenges and tensions for the management of social enterprises emerge and how they affect and are affected by decisions regarding value creation and distribution to stakeholders, reframing how stakeholders’ divergent demands are related to tensions. By highlighting the main authors, journals, and theoretical perspectives we also believe that this article presents an important starting point for those who intend to better understand the phenomena of tensions and management challenges in social enterprises, encouraging new research within the social entrepreneurship and hybridism theoretical perspectives.

In terms of its managerial contribution, we hope this paper can provide business managers with a snapshot of a body of literature that supports them in understanding their challenges and in implementing new management practices in their ventures, favoring their economic viability and the achievement of their socioenvironmental goals. As a social contribution, we hope, besides enhancing the actual result of these organizations, this paper can motivate players within social impact ecosystem to understand the entrepreneurs’ dilemmas and support them in understanding and resolving tensions. It is important to highlight that stakeholders are related to challenges and tensions for the management of social enterprises, so this article may help engage them in also supporting entrepreneurs in solving their tensions.

As main limitations of this study, we highlight the exclusion of articles being carried out solely by reading the titles and abstracts. This may affect the quality of the final database, which might not reflect the totality of the literature on the theme. Also, it is important to highlight that the analysis of the theoretical lines and of the word clusters was carried out without reading all the articles in full, which demanded the researcher’s perspective and may lead to greater subjectivity. Finally, as suggestions for future studies we highlight the possibilities of the replication of this research in other databases, as well as the execution of systematic literature reviews with specific clippings and objectives that could deepen the discussions raised by this paper.

REFERENCES


Challenges and Tensions for the Management of Social Enterprises: Theoretical Bases and Opportunities for Advancing the Literature

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