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# Understanding and managing business—development hybrids: an institutional logics case analysis

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## ABSTRACT

There are growing numbers of business—development hybrids that combine a commercial orientation with an intent to deliver development goals. Yet, within development studies research to date, there has been limited conceptualization of these organizations. Borrowing from the extensive literature in other disciplines, this paper argues that the concept of institutional logics can be used as a basis for understanding business—development hybrids. The lens of institutional logics is used to analyze two hybrid case studies of ‘impact sourcing’ that outsource IT work to disadvantaged groups in Pakistan and India. Synergies between business and development logics were managed by combining those logics, but tensions between the two required techniques of compromising or decoupling the logics. Organizations also managed the logics by presenting a more business-oriented face to clients and a more development-oriented face to workers, by protecting their development logic from commercial pressures, and by seeking to institutionalize both logics. Implications are considered for practice and for future development research.

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Business—development hybrids; development studies; institutional logics; impact sourcing

## Introduction

In recent years, international development has seen continuous growth in a ‘hybrid domain’: a set of initiatives and organizations that combine in some way the values and practices of business with development-oriented goals and actions (Aoyama and Parthasarathy 2016). The business element would include profit-maximization goals, practices of efficiency improvement, and growth of market channels and clients; the development element would include achievement of development goals (such as the SDGs), practices of development goal delivery, and growth in development partnerships and beneficiaries. Hybridization of business and development may lie at the core of an organization, as seen with fair trade or social enterprises whose goals, strategies and practices reflect a mix of both business and development (Raynolds 2009; Scarlato 2013). Alternatively, hybridity may be found in some aspect of an organization, as when multinationals work with bottom-of-the-pyramid markets through corporate social responsibility, or when NGOs and other development organizations adopt private sector management techniques (Kolk and Van Tulder 2006; Dar and Cooke 2008; Prahalad 2010).

Our focus here is specifically on the treatment of business—development hybrids within development

studies research and literature. As analyzed below, this literature exhibits two current knowledge gaps. First, that the focus has largely been on the developmental impact of hybrids, rather than researching within initiatives to understand how hybridity is managed. Where hybridity is itself the object of discussion, identification of benefits tends to be outweighed by a narrative of challenge and conflict; particularly of the for-profit focus of a business worldview coming to dominate and then damage the impacts sought by a development orientation. Yet, to date and despite calls for such work (Chataway et al. 2007; Holmes 2012), the second knowledge gap is that there has been little conceptualized analysis of how the challenges of the two different worldviews – business and development – are managed in practice.

To address these gaps, the aim of this paper is to explore how business—development hybridity within organizations can be understood and managed. The paper proposes that this aim can be realized through the use of institutional logics as an analytical lens; a lens about which there already exists extensive literature outside of development studies, including literature specifically linked to forms of hybrid organization. We make only an incremental addition of new case material

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to the literature on hybridity and institutional logics. Instead, our main intended contribution is to enable development studies scholars to understand the nature, operationalization and potential insights offered by institutional logics within our discipline.

Below, the paper first scopes the hybrid domain and key issues of relevance within development studies in order to justify the paper's aim. It then introduces institutional logics as a conceptual frame for understanding business—development hybridity, and describes the selection of the two hybrid case studies to which the lens of institutional logics was applied. These are information technology (IT) 'impact sourcing' hybrid organizations: one with a stronger business orientation; one with a stronger development orientation. Organizations were chosen in part because the bulk of development studies literature to date on hybrids relates to multi-organization partnerships, and thus ignores – a third knowledge gap – the growing number of individual organizations that are combining business and development. Following a description of the research methods used, the paper describes three different ways in which the case organizations were found to manage their business—development hybridity. It closes with an analytical discussion of the findings, and conclusions.

### Hybrid issues and conceptualization

In recent years, there has been continuous growth in a 'hybrid domain' within development that 'encompasses a variety of stakeholders' and exhibits 'an increasingly hybridized logic in economic governance, manifest in growing overlaps, spillovers, and even redundancies across public-private sectoral boundaries' (Aoyama and Parthasarathy 2016, 27–28).<sup>1</sup> The organizational forms within this hybrid domain may be collaborations: for example, public—private partnerships, or multi-stakeholder partnerships between private, NGO and public sector actors (Trebilcock and Rosenstock 2015; Beisheim et al. 2018). Or they may be individual hybrid organizations that contain within them some mixture of business and development missions (Maitrot 2019).

Instances of hybrid organizations include venture philanthropists, impact investors, fair and ethical trade, co-operatives, social enterprises, state-owned enterprises and other models that mix together some variation of a focus on commercial profit and a focus on broader development goals (Scarlato 2013; Aoyama and Parthasarathy 2016; Krumbiegel, Maertens, and Wollni 2018). One may also find hybridity within larger organizations. This might be a largely commercial organization that seeks in part to deliver development goals through corporate social responsibility actions (Gilberthorpe, Agol,

and Gegg 2016), or a public or NGO development agency adopting some business-oriented practices (Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff 2015; Girei 2016).

Examples of the development goals that business—development hybrids seek to deliver would include social development in the form of improved health or education for consumer or producer communities. For instance, the investments of coffee fair trade organizations in rural schools and health centers (Raynolds and Greenfield 2015). They would also include economic development in the form of poverty alleviation, typically to be achieved via supply chain integration of workers or producers from low-income communities. For example, social enterprises in Africa providing a conduit to market for rural handicraft producers (Peterson 2015).

### Development studies research on hybrids

A review was undertaken of development studies literature on business—development hybrids in order to identify current knowledge and knowledge gaps.<sup>2</sup> The literature was inductively categorized into four main sub-domains around a simple value chain model:

- Inputs: the drivers and resource inputs to formation of hybrids.
- Processes: in particular how hybrids are managed.
- Outputs: in particular the development impact of hybrids.
- Governance: the broader structural arrangements and context for hybrids.

In numerical terms (50 of the 75 items), the predominant area of literature is that on the development impact of hybrid organizational forms. More than half of these papers review the impact on producer communities of fair trade or related certification schemes (e.g. Giuliani et al. 2017; Dietz et al. 2020). Almost all of these papers – whether finding positive or negative development outcomes – take a homogenized view of the organization(s) involved, and do not analyze the particular impact of hybridity nor seek to disentangle the separate mission threads that make up the hybrid.

However, a few researchers do explore the implications of the combination of those missions. They may see the combination as positive and complementary in helping an initiative to scale and/or to sustain (Anderson 1997). This positive view is also reflected in some analysis of the drivers to hybridity; for example, the analysis that combining business and development missions is undertaken in order to allow access to resources or values or perspectives that would not otherwise be obtainable (Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff 2011;

Mistarihi, Hutchings, and Shacklock 2013), leading to more effective performance by hybrid organizational forms (Abate et al. 2016).

Slightly more prevalent are those who take a more negative view of hybridity in development; seeing the missions as being in tension and conflict with one another. In particular, there is a strand of literature that sees either a reality or a danger of the business world-view dominating hybrid initiatives, and then damaging development impacts: for example, preventing the poorest from benefiting in terms of service delivery (Kuriyan and Ray 2009) or poverty alleviation (Shermenko, Escalante, and Florkowski 2017; Bayliss and Van Waeyenberge 2018), or more generally delivering conservative rather than transformational development outcomes (Sesan et al. 2013; Al-Dahdah 2019).

This link between development impacts and the internal synergies or tensions of twin business and development missions thus encourages and legitimizes investigation of the governance and management of hybrids as a topic for development studies research. In practice, only a few reviewed items of development studies literature focus on this but they demonstrate that either the structural design of hybrid initiatives or the process of their management is significant in determining their development impact. This reinforces the value and importance of studying management of business—development hybrids within development studies.

The actual focus for this literature has largely been at the level of what can be called ‘institutional design’ (Forsyth 2007): the institutional and organizational forms of governance that oversee the functioning of hybrids; for example, the use of extension contracts vs. challenge funds vs. guarantee funds to govern public—private partnerships (Poulton and Macartney 2012). As illustrated by this example, the literature is restricted to considering the implications of institutional design for partnerships rather than other hybrid organizational forms.

Arising from this review, there are a number of knowledge gaps that could be identified within the current development studies literature, starting with the limited explicit recognition that these initiatives are indeed ‘hybrids’ of two different missions. But there are three particular gaps we wish to highlight. First, the lack of analysis of the particular management actions – as opposed to structural governance – taken within hybrid initiatives in order to manage the tension between business and development missions. There are calls for more analytical research into the management of hybrids in development (e.g. Chataway et al. 2007) but few have answered that call so far. There are ‘recipe-book’-type descriptions of case-specific success

factors for hybrid partnerships (e.g. de Boer and van Dijk 2016; Ketola 2016), but an absence of conceptualized analysis.

Second, and directly following on, there has been a lack of conceptualization of business—development hybrids. Not merely, as just noted, in relation to their management but more generally, ‘the hybrid domain ... suffers from a lack of conceptual acknowledgement and, thus, insufficient theorization’ (Aoyama and Parthasarathy 2016, 190; see also Chataway et al. 2007; Holmes 2012).

Third, the lack of research on management of the tensions that arise within single-organization hybrids. The great majority of the development studies literature (67 of the 75 items) relates to partnerships of some kind between two or more discrete organizations. Yet there are increasingly-numerous examples of individual organizations that combine business and developmental goals: benefit corporations, community interest companies, social enterprises, co-operatives, commercially-oriented NGOs, venture philanthropists, impact investors, etc. (Aoyama and Parthasarathy 2016). The existence and dynamics of tensions within these individual-organization hybrids is acknowledged – within community-based social enterprises (Cieslik 2016); when NGOs transform into shareholder-owned financial institutions (D’Espallier et al. 2017); when corporations become involved with community development (McEwan et al. 2017); when socially-oriented microfinance institutions have to compete with one another (Maitrot 2019) – but again this has yet to be subject to a conceptualized analysis.

These development studies research gaps motivate the stated aim of this paper to explore how business—development hybridity within organizations can be understood and managed.

## Logics

In this section, we look for the conceptual foundations necessary to help address the research aim just stated. Per Aoyama and Parthasarathy’s imperative, we sought a generic conceptualization: one not derived from, and which would not just apply to, one particular form of hybrid. To do this, we investigated a terminology that recurs a few times within the development studies literature on hybrid initiatives, as the following examples illustrate (our emphasis):

Fair Trade challenges the organization of social relations in the conventional coffee commodity chain and with it, the *logics* and assumptions that underlie the conventional market. ... Fair Trade’s shift to a ‘mainstreaming’ strategy responds to the urgent need to expand its

market, yet may undermine Fair Trade's own alternative *logic* and practice. (Taylor 2005, 138–139)

Social enterprises ... exhibit a number of contrasting features in terms of organizational *logic*, guiding principles, and objectives. (Cieslik 2016, 12)

A picture emerges of a highly fragmented and often quite ambiguous political-economic framework for China's state–business relations in African agriculture. This results from the differing *logics* and often divergent interests driving the central government, the provinces and the business community. (Gu et al. 2016, 24)

The terminology and application of 'logics' fits with some of the themes identified above including the idea of tension or even conflict particularly between a more business-oriented perspective and a more development-oriented perspective; and the argued dangers to development impacts if the more business-oriented logic comes to dominate (see also Widger 2016). Yet, in these cases, while the term 'logic' or 'logics' is used a number of times, it is not conceptualized or used as the basis for analysis. This, indeed, has led to calls for more theorized analysis of the incursion of business logics into development (Holmes 2012).

To provide this, we looked to the growing literature on 'institutional logics'. In simple terms, institutional logics can be understood as 'organizing principles, practices, and symbols that influence individual and organizational behavior' (Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury 2012, 2). These frames of reference or worldviews are typically aggregated into named logics of which there has been a proliferation. A review of literature in development studies journals found that the frame of institutional logics has hardly been used at all.<sup>3</sup> Hence, there are calls for greater use of this frame within development studies (Fejerskov 2016).

We found only three development studies journal papers engaging with institutional logics as part of their main perspective. They indicate the value of this frame in development but do not specifically look at how hybridity is managed nor specifically at business—development hybridity. Instead they highlight conflicts between what they name 'social transformation logic' and 'managerialist logic' in NGO networks (Elbers, Knippenberg, and Schulpen 2014), 'gender equality logic' and 'cost-effectiveness logic' in a philanthropic foundation (Fejerskov 2017), and 'planned economy logic' and 'market economy logic' in a national government (Argento, Peda, and Grossi 2018).

While hardly used yet in development studies literature, and not at all to analyze business—development hybrids and their management, institutional logics has been extensively used in other literatures including

material relevant to the ideas if not the specific focus and terminology of hybrids of 'business logic' and 'development logic' (e.g. Battilana and Dorado 2010; Jones, Livne-Tarandach, and Balachandra 2010; Pache and Santos 2013; Mair, Mayer, and Lutz 2015). Analyzing these sources and other institutional logics literature (Thornton and Ocasio 2008; Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury 2012), we can build a set of the differentiated characteristics of each logic.<sup>4</sup> Business logic is driven by a goal of profit-maximization. It would see legitimacy as deriving from the organization's market position and bottom line, and authority from the CEO and corporate hierarchy. Strategic practices would include growth of market channels and clients, or improvements in economic efficiency. By contrast, development logic is driven by achievement of one or more development goals (such as the SDGs). It would see legitimacy as deriving from the organization's reputation and delivery of developmental value, and authority from those adhering to or delivering that value. Strategic practices would include growth of development partnerships and beneficiaries, or improvements in mechanisms for (say) poverty alleviation or gender equity.

The use and development of institutional logics has fractionated into many elements in recent years but one strand is of particular and obvious relevance: that dealing with hybrid organizations, defined as 'organizations that incorporate elements from different institutional logics' (Pache and Santos 2013, 972). These are, of course, precisely the focus for this paper: in this case, organizations that incorporate elements from both business logic and development logic.

Although no work to date discusses this exact terminology of logics, we can learn lessons for development studies research from related work on logic hybridity. Echoing the literature on hybridity in development, different views are expressed on the impact of hybridity. Some emphasize the value of hybridity in stimulating innovation or aiding organizational survival (e.g. Jay 2013) but the more dominant narrative is of the 'competing' (Pache and Santos 2013), 'conflicting' (Mair, Mayer, and Lutz 2015; Skelcher and Smith 2015) and 'negative' (Battilana et al. 2015) relationship between the different logics found in hybrid organizations. Again echoing the development studies literature on hybridity in development, this conflict between logics in hybrid organizations is seen to damage the achievement of one or both of the logics' goals and to potentially threaten the sustainability of the organization. As a result, there has been growing interest within hybrid organization literature in the question of how to manage the relationship between competing logics: a central concern in this paper.



Three main management strategies can be identified from the literature (Battilana and Dorado 2010; Pache and Santos 2013), with the assumption in this original work that organizations adopt one of the strategies throughout the organization:

- *Combining logics*: where an organization amalgamates elements from the two competing logics; for example, when creating a working group made up from some members subscribing to one logic, and some members subscribing to the other logic. Pache and Santos (2013) describe a variant form of combination as ‘selective coupling’ which can be understood as combining a relatively few components from each of the two logics.
- *Compromising logics*: where an organization tempers the prescriptions of both of the logics in light of the prescriptions of the other logic into an intermediate position; for example, a micro-finance organization setting a compromise lending interest rate that is lower than the market rate but higher than the very poorest could afford.
- *Decoupling logics*: where an organization decouples the symbolic endorsement of one logic from the operational practices of the other logic; for example, the ‘greenwashing’ that occurs when an organization presents an environmental-friendly façade and values to external stakeholders while not implementing such practices internally.

These three may not be an exhaustive list of possible strategies, nor are they the only terminology adopted in the literature (see, for example, Skelcher and Smith 2015<sup>5</sup>). However, we will use them as the basis for investigation, with impetus given general calls for more research into application of these strategies in hybrid organizations (Doherty, Haugh, and Lyon 2014; Battilana et al. 2015), and the absence of work to date looking specifically at management of business—development hybrids.

## Methodology

### Case sub-domain and organizations

To study the management of business—development hybrids, we focused on the sub-domain of information technology impact sourcing (ITIS); which we can define as the outsourcing of IT-related work to disadvantaged groups, such as those who are unemployed or on low incomes. Though in existence since at least the turn of the century, IT impact sourcing has particularly come to prominence as a development activity following a

Rockefeller Foundation (2011) report and programme, which led in 2016 to the formation of the Global Impact Sourcing Coalition. IT impact sourcing forms one part of the wider growth in ‘impact’ engagement with development, such as the phenomenon of impact investing (Vecchi et al. 2017).

There are estimates that nearly a quarter of a million workers are employed in IT impact sourcing in developing countries, with double-digit annual growth rates, which made ITIS seem a good choice for a focal sub-domain (Everest Group 2014; Opriens and Beerepoot 2019). And there is evidence of significant livelihood benefits for the workers: not just income gains but also improvements in competencies, social capital, self-efficacy and longer-term career progression (Heeks and Arun 2010; Malik, Nicholson, and Morgan 2016). Clients are also seen to benefit from lower IT outsourcing costs and reduced worker attrition rates (Everest Group 2016).

Alongside the rhetoric – and some evidence – of positive development effects from IT impact sourcing, there have also been challenges faced by ITIS organizations; challenges which mirror patterns seen in the wider hybrid domain. These include the difficulty of sustaining ITIS initiatives given the specific requirements of managing the tensions between business and developmental imperatives (Heeks and Arun 2010; Sharma 2014). This reinforced the relevance of ITIS as a focal sub-domain for study.

Two case organizations were selected for the research reported here; chosen not for explicit comparison but because they represent the two main models of IT impact sourcing that differ in their business—development hybridity: socially-responsible outsourcing and developmental outsourcing (Heeks 2013). Socially-responsible outsourcing involves traditional outsourcing providers that choose to engage with workers from disadvantaged groups. In recent years, outsourcing providers such as Accenture, Microsoft and Tata Consultancy Services have become involved with impact sourcing.

Alphacorp (a pseudonym) was our chosen example; a US-based company founded in the late 1990s that mainly serves clients in the US healthcare industry, and outsources work such as the processing of electronic healthcare claims to a staff of around 1,000 employees in Pakistan. Its outsourcing centers were based in Islamabad-Rawalpindi but, in 2005, a devastating earthquake struck the nearby region of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), killing nearly 50,000 people, impacting nearly two million, and causing an estimated US\$1.2bn of damage to the economy (PDD 2013). Motivated by concern to support the rebuilding of the region, in 2009 Alphacorp set up a second outsourcing center in AJK, with the specific goal of providing jobs for young

people who might otherwise either be unemployed or migrate to urban centers like Islamabad. More than 200 employees work in the AJK center, arranged into three shifts in order to provide 24/7 operations. This center has delivered demonstrable development benefits to the recovery of the area: jobs; increased incomes, savings and investments; growth in skills and other capabilities; improved self-confidence (Malik, Nicholson, and Morgan 2015).

Developmental outsourcing involves ITIS intermediaries specifically created 'with a social mission to hire ... disadvantaged people' (Troup 2014, 34) and to deliver development benefits. Key exemplars of this model include Digital Divide Data and Samasource which were set up to create livelihoods for unemployed youth in developing countries; outsourcing data entry and digitization work from mainly US-based clients to workers particularly based in South-East Asia and East Africa.

Kudumbashree – which means 'prosperity of the family' – was our chosen example of this model; an initiative in Kerala, India of the State Poverty Eradication Mission (SPEM) launched in 1998 to help counteract poverty among women. Women from below-poverty-line families were organized into cooperative units of ten women each; those units combining functions of micro-enterprise to provide employment and income, micro-finance to provide savings and credit, and self-help groups to improve social development. Kudumbashree units were involved in a wide variety of enterprise (such as clothing production or agricultural product processing) but by 2005 more than 100 were focused on IT-related work; most undertaking digitization and data entry contracts largely from the public sector, but also some undertaking IT training work in schools and assembly of computers for public sector organizations. As with Alphacorp, survey work found a series of developmental benefits for the women working in the IT units: average earnings of US\$45 per month raised women above the poverty line; health and educational spending had increased, as had expenditure on physical assets; IT and managerial skills had grown; social networks had expanded; self-confidence and recognition within the community had improved (Heeks and Arun 2010).

When the Kudumbashree IT units were first set up, the Executive Director of Kudumbashree – TK Jose – was able to secure a series of large-scale and in some cases regular contracts for the units through his strong connections across government, and by gaining agreement for a government circular that guided all public sector agencies to direct IT work to Kudumbashree. With his departure in 2007, this arrangement ceased and contracts became

harder to obtain. In the late 2000s, a survey by SPEM found a number of the IT units had ceased operation while others were struggling in part due to poor marketing and a lack of outsourced contract work. In response, in 2012, Kudumbashree set up 'Unnathi' (meaning 'progress' in Malayalam); an apex organization that would 'possess the capability to execute data entry and other assignments to potential clients ... and canvass orders from various sources' (Kudumbashree, n.d., 10) with the objectives to bring '... better management, better quality, better delivery and better economic benefits' (Unnathi, n.d., 1) to the 84 remaining IT units. Despite this, though, the number of active units within the Kudumbashree initiative fell to 62 by 2014.

In summary, then, socially-responsible ITIS at Alphacorp starts with a business mission but adds in an element of development concern in order to achieve a desired development impact, while developmental ITIS at Kudumbashree starts with a development mission but adds in an element of business concern, typically in order to achieve financial viability and sustainability. Both are examples of business—development hybrids.

### Research methods

As indicated, this research adopted a case study strategy, selecting two IT impact sourcing initiatives – Alphacorp and Kudumbashree<sup>6</sup> – that provide complementary and aggregative perspectives given their differing weights of business and development missions. The ITIS components in both cases have sustained for more than a decade; thus offering potential insight into literature concerns either that it is difficult for organizations to survive with hybrid missions or that hybridity must be effectively managed if such organizations are to sustain (D'Espallier et al. 2017).

The research follows Biggs and Lewis' (2009) call to study hybrid organizations in development by investigating the specific actions taken within the organizations, especially over time and in response to arising events and issues. We undertook a qualitative research approach, focusing particularly on the actions of managers within Alphacorp and Kudumbashree over time. With Alphacorp, this involved two periods of fieldwork undertaken in the US and Pakistan in 2014 and 2015; taking a historical perspective on the decision to locate operations in AJK, and the subsequent implementation of that decision. With Kudumbashree, this also involved two periods of fieldwork undertaken in India but with a much greater separation; one set of fieldwork taking place in 2004–2005 and the second in 2014–2015.

In both cases, data was primarily gathered through a set of semi-structured interviews, though supplemented

by observation and gathering of secondary documentation (brochures, organizational reports, website pages). For Alphacorp, eight higher-level managers and 24 middle managers were interviewed; alongside 44 workers and supervisors. For Kudumbashree, in the first phase of fieldwork, interviews were conducted with four public officials responsible for managing Kudumbashree, alongside 34 leaders of the cooperative units and 99 other women employed in the units. In the second phase, again, interviews were conducted with four public officials with managerial responsibilities in Kudumbashree and Unnathi,<sup>7</sup> alongside five leaders of cooperative units. The interviews covered issues outlined above from the literature review on logics: the main goals of the organization, strategic decisions, and operational practices, alongside discussion of business and development impacts such as profitability, job creation, profile of those employed, etc.

Analysis of aggregated primary and secondary data was guided by iterative template analysis using NVivo (King 2004). High-level inductive analysis and coding of both sets of case data had identified the presence of differing worldviews, which were associated with institutional logics. Iterative reading of the logics literature alongside more detailed coding of the logics dimensions via a template derived from the literature as discussed above – goals, legitimacy, authority, strategic practices – led to identification of a business logic present in the organizations but, as also described above, required elaboration of a development logic from the literature as part of the iteration. From this also emerged a set of key strategic management decisions or practices in which some element of logic hybridity could be identified. Further reading of literature led fairly directly to the three hybrid organization strategies outlined above for managing competing institutional logics. There then followed a second phase of more detailed analysis of the key strategic decisions and practices; again iterative between literature and data but also iterative between the four co-authors. This used the concepts of combining, compromising and decoupling in order to categorize dependent on whether the elements of the two logics as per the template were seen to be co-existing within a decision/practice (combining), merged into some new logic (compromising), or reflecting a separation of symbolism from practice (decoupling). As noted below in the Discussion, what emerged from the analysis did not always exactly fit the template of ideas from Pache and Santos (2013) and some further refinement of those ideas was required. As also noted below, this meant we did not identify other possible logics and other possible hybrid strategies.

## Findings

Patterns reflective of the three hybrid logics strategies – combining, compromising, decoupling – were identified in the case study organizations, as illustrated below in relation to particular strategic management decisions or practices.

### Combining logics

#### *Alphacorp locational decision*

As noted earlier, in 2009, Alphacorp opened an additional Pakistan-based office outside Islamabad-Rawalpindi; in a town in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, which we will call 'Azadmir'. The principles underlying this strategic decision were described by Alphacorp's General Manager:

First of all, we needed to have a contingency office, just in case anything happens to the main operational office in Islamabad, there should have been another office where operation can continue without any interruption. The founder of the company belongs to [Azadmir] actually. He wanted to do something for people of his home town... majority of the people in [Azadmir] are educated, they move to cities to complete their education and find the work... We knew that if we open an office in [Azadmir] we will be able to get the human resource easily.

As this quote suggests, there was evidence of a combination of business and development principles. On the one hand, interviewees discussed business-related drivers. The impetus for a second office came in 2007 as Alphacorp's Pakistan Vice-President explained:

If something goes wrong in Rawalpindi and Islamabad, work stops; like it did for four to five days when Benazir Bhutto [Ex-Prime Minister of Pakistan] was killed. Everything has stopped... investors and also clients feel some comfort that there are two outsourcing centres operational in Pakistan to provide them continuous services.

Because of this need for continuous operations in order to serve clients, Alphacorp wanted a 'backup office' well away from the main urban locations in Pakistan which were subject to disruption during political crises and flashpoints.

The specific selection of Azadmir was then driven in part by the developmental concerns of Alphacorp's CEO. As noted, he wanted to 'share his success with people of his home town', which had been devastated by the 2005 earthquake, with thousands killed and around two-thirds of all buildings destroyed. By 2007, reconstruction work had progressed and tertiary education institutions were again operational, producing



hundreds of graduates each year, many of whom were then unemployed. For young men, the CEO – echoing the GM's quote above – was motivated to reduce the extent of out-migration but there was a particular perceived value of creating work for young women.

Since 2002, Alphacorp had worked with a local NGO in Islamabad to provide a female-only training course that would give women access to IT outsourcing work. Linked to this earlier thread, the opening of the Azadmir office was in part to help provide employment for women, who had few local opportunities for work but who also – in line with local norms – were rarely able to migrate to nearby cities to find work:

Our intention was to create ICT-based employment opportunity in this small district, especially for young educated females, whom majority won't get permission from their family to move to other cities for work. (Manager Compliance; Islamabad)

The CEO's aspiration was that Alphacorp's decision would create a generational change in Azadmir:

We will see the real change in this community twenty years down the line, when these girls, who now have got empowerment, awareness and professionalism will bring up a new generation.

However, alongside these developmental goals – 'beyond the consideration of monetary profit' according to the Islamabad company spokesperson – Alphacorp managers knew that there were no IT outsourcing competitors in Azadmir, which might have caused problems with attrition and led to upward pressure on labor costs. And they also ensured that local infrastructure – particularly ICT infrastructure – was available and adequate for the planned volume of outsourcing work to be sent to Azadmir.

The location decision can be understood as an example of combining logics. The business logic – of a safe backup location with ready access to cheap labor – and the development logic – of providing (particularly female) employment in an earthquake-devastated, relatively-remote area – co-exist and are integrated into the single strategic locational decision. The principles embodied within each logic are combined into practice via a unitary strategic outcome without a necessity for compromise.

### **Formation and operation of Unnathi**

As noted above, the problems facing Kudumbashree IT units from the late 2000s onwards led managers to realize a more business-like approach would be needed to secure contracts, which led to the formation of Unnathi in 2012. The intention was to leverage the collective capacity of the units to secure large-scale

contracts since previously, according to an Operational Director, 'they were not able to compete with larger players ... they couldn't fight with the competition they found', and there was a need to try a 'private sector perspective'. To enable competition for large-scale contracts, Unnathi would use marketing and project management expertise to encompass three main elements:

- Capacity-building: providing training to members of the individual IT units in necessary technical skills but also in entrepreneurship competencies like client negotiation and relationship management; and providing loans for purchase of IT equipment.
- Contract acquisition: through a sales and marketing operation focussed particularly on Kerala's main ministries and public agencies but also aspiring to target the private sector. As a Strategic Director indicated, it had, for example, negotiated an (ultimately unimplemented) agreement with Intel that would have involved members of the IT units cascading IT skills teaching across the state.
- Contract management: allocating work between IT units, monitoring progress and quality with work undertaken, and client liaison including output delivery, sign-off and payment.

And the future aspirations were even more business-oriented as a Tactical Director indicated in relation to the technical and entrepreneurial training:

What I'm trying is that, I'm making these people, to start make their units as a ... private setup like what you see in DTP [*desktop publishing*] centres you know I'm giving them the training and we are ... we are even planning to give them training on Photoshop and web-based trainings, we are planning so that they can get some work from outside.

Yet alongside these commercial goals and values and practices, Unnathi was still very much imbued with the development values and practices of Kudumbashree. The main staff of Unnathi were Kudumbashree civil servants and its organizational location was described by both managers and IT unit leaders as being 'within Kudumbashree' rather than being a separate entity. They still stated its main goal to be 'poverty alleviation and the socio-economic empowerment of women'. Thus, for instance, it was providing free health insurance and medical support for the members of the IT units, and it took a paternalistic approach to those members; for example, taking decisions about which units should be included in contracts and how much units should be paid based on the particular income and employment

needs of the unit members rather than commercial considerations.

As the Strategic Director noted, 'these people still depend on Kudumbashree' and as a result there were several examples of sourcing contracts on a non-commercial basis. Work was created from within Kudumbashree itself, so that a number of interviewed units were undertaking internal IT training work that appeared to have been contracted for employment rather than organization development reasons: 'just for getting the jobs'. And contracts were seen to come to Unnathi from a few government bodies by means other than open competitive contracting because of the case made to those clients about the wider social value of giving work to the IT units.

In its formation and operation therefore, Unnathi reflects a combination of business and development logics. As with the Alphacorp example, the formation was a single strategic decision that integrated a business emphasis on competition and entrepreneurialism with the continuing developmentalism of providing jobs and incomes for women from poor families. And this integration was also materialized in practice, with Unnathi simultaneously undertaking private sector contract pursuit while creating and directing work to units solely to help maintain women's income levels.

### **Compromising logics**

#### **Management of Alphacorp's Azadmir office**

In a general sense, the structures and processes of Alphacorp management were commercially-driven, as one of the US-based Directors indicated: 'we try to make it a uniform system with centralized policies and procedures'. The company has a centralized and hierarchical set of governance and control structures, with lower-level staff continuously reporting on – and having to adhere to – centrally-determined performance measures including adherence to international standards such as ISO9001 (the international standard for quality management often required by IT outsourcing clients). Operational procedures were also centrally-determined as those which provide the greatest efficiency and profit for the firm, and they were intended to be applied consistently across all parts of the company. As one example, in Pakistan generally, Eid observance attracts a three-day (for Eid-ul-Fitr) and four-day (for Eid-ul-Azha) public holiday. But, given such a long break would interfere with Alphacorp's ability to provide continuous client service, it allowed only a single-day holiday for each.

However, management of the Azadmir office was allowed some latitude to amend central policies in

order to accommodate the developmental goal of providing employment in this remote region; what the US Director referred to as, 'local issues that need to be dealt with differently' via 'localised strategies'. For example, the consistent approach across the company was that pay rates should be set based on prevailing norms in each individual location. But in Azadmir, there was a desire to maximize local incomes, so staff were paid at the same rate as those in Islamabad despite that being well above other local pay rates with the Financial Planning Manager in Pakistan stating of this practice:

Sometimes it's not only financial gain you are looking for, sometimes it's other things like corporate social responsibilities which you have to fulfil.

Similarly, Alphacorp norms across the organization were that men and women worked together. However, in Azadmir that would have conflicted with their goal of female employment: local gender norms would have meant few women would have come forward to work in a mixed-sex environment. To achieve the goal, they deviated from the standard approach and created a dedicated working shift for women only. This imposed some additional costs: for example, lack of access to the morning shift for male employees was a source of dissatisfaction and led to some raised level of turnover among male staff. It also required variation to standard hiring practice in order to ensure the whole female shift could be filled, but it was the only way to meet the CEO's aim as stated earlier.

Finally, Alphacorp had a standard induction and training package used for all digitization staff coming into the organization. But the more limited experience and expertise of Azadmir recruits – as the local HR manager put it, 'we don't get human resources according to the company standards in AJK' – meant this was not suitable. Therefore, and despite the additional cost, an extra week of training was provided for these recruits, and additional quality monitoring was put in place during an initial induction period:

To maintain the service quality, in the beginning for a month or two months, we put in more checks on the work produced by newly hired employees in AJK. But after a little they achieve the certain level. (Operational Manager, Islamabad)

In all three cases, in order to achieve the developmental goals of the Azadmir office, based around development logic, managers in Pakistan compromised on what would have been the standard business practices of the organization. In all three examples given above, this imposed additional costs on the organization – via

higher pay, turnover and training costs – with the practices of the organization's general business logic having to be adjusted. This was only possible because a deviation was allowed from the hierarchical norms of centralized management in order to accommodate the development logic present within Alphacorp.

### **Management of Kudumbashree IT units**

Where Alphacorp had compromised on some of the elements of its business logic in order to accommodate developmental goals; Kudumbashree had experienced the reverse: compromising some of the elements of its development logic in order to accommodate the requirements of business logic.

For example, the initial aims of Kudumbashree were to bring the benefits of IT work to women from below-poverty-line families right across the state of Kerala. As a result, 30 of the initially-created 80 data entry units were located in rural areas. But, as the later interviewees reported – 'geographical location matters' (Strategic Director) – and these units had really struggled during the second half of the 2000s due to the poor quality of both power and telecommunications 'infrastructure, and the low standard of education of rural women'. As a result, attempts to deliver IT employment to rural areas had been side-lined, and the focus had been switched to urban areas.

Even within the urban IT units, there had been problems. As the Tactical Director noted, 'if I grade according to the unit structure and also according to the performance, I have a division': meaning that those IT units scoring well according to development criteria (e.g. employing women from the poorest backgrounds) were often scoring worst on business performance-related criteria such as quality or timeliness of work completion. As a result, two requirements had been relaxed. First, the requirement that ten members should come from below-poverty-line families had been loosened: 'now, for our IT units, there should be five members minimum'. Second, the requirement that members should be women had also been removed; for example some of the hardware IT units now solely consisted of men, who were seen to have fewer restrictions on location, mobility and hours of work; thus enabling them to more readily meet client needs for hardware installation and maintenance as, when and where required. As the Operational Director put it, previously selection of unit members was based mainly on family needs and potential benefits but 'now it is more looking at individual themselves, whether they can succeed'.

Finally, and as noted above, where initially the Kudumbashree IT units had been operating in a relatively

protected market, they were finding increasing competition in various aspects of their work as IT-related skills became more widely available in Kerala. This had led to a number of contracts being taken at below-market rates. Leaders in the IT units complained, 'we face loss rather than profits': when taxes and other overhead costs were taken into account, the daily rates earned by members were sometimes insufficient to raise them across the poverty line threshold; for example forcing payments per data entry record down from Rs.5 to Rs.2 or even Rs.1 in some cases; or pushing the cost of scanning a document down from Rs.10 to Rs.2.

In all of these examples, elements that were central to the development logic of Kudumbashree had been watered down in the face of business logic and in order to improve the commercial viability and sustainability of the IT units. Development goals had been weakened, statements reflected an erosion of developmental values, and development practices and impacts were moderated by commercial considerations.

### **Decoupling logics**

#### **Presentation of Alphacorp external image<sup>8</sup>**

As just noted, the creation of the Azadmir office by Alphacorp in part reflected the concerns of development logic. This was also reflected in interviews with middle- and higher-level managers in the Islamabad and AJK centers, who spoke repeatedly about the social initiatives the company was taking, e.g. to facilitate female employment. And it was reflected in the operational practices of the Azadmir office noted above around pay rates and the women-only work shift.

However, these developmental values and practices were purely internal to the organization. Indeed, in detail, they were internal to managers in Pakistan and the Pakistan-origin directors in the US. Other US-based directors talked in general terms about social responsibility but did not know the specifics of the Azadmir office, as one Vice-President stated: 'I think I can hardly provide an answer in detail if you need to dig deeper about the AJK centre'.

These development values and practices appear nowhere in the marketing literature for the firm nor in any other external documents. For example, in Alphacorp's filing for an initial public offering (IPO) in the US, it mentions the Azadmir office but only in commercial terms; as a 'backup operations center' or 'disaster recovery site' (SEC, n.d.). Instead, the company goals as reflected in such literature – including annual reports – are solely commercial: 'Our objective is to become the leading provider of end-to-end software and business

service solutions to healthcare providers practicing in an ambulatory setting' (SEC, n.d.).

On the company's website, there is no direct reference even to Pakistan, let alone the Azadmir office. Such references are restricted as per the IPO document to formal filing reports required by the US Securities and Exchange Commission. Marketing literature and narrative presented to US clients focused solely in general terms on the cost-saving and regulatory-compliance benefits to those clients. When asked about the reaction of external groups to the development-related actions taken by the firm, interviewees pointed out that there was no reaction as these groups were not aware of such actions.

The handling of Alphacorp's external image can therefore be understood as an example of decoupling. Both inside and outside the organization, both discourse and practice adhere to the company's business logic. Its development logic is restricted to one enclave of the organization: those dealing directly with the Pakistan operations. The external image of the organization – that presented to both clients and shareholders – is decoupled from this internal logic; offering no reflection of it.

## Discussion

### *Business and development logics*

The two case studies represent the intersection of multiple logics and we could, for example, have brought a state logic into discussion of Kudumbashree or a corporation logic into discussion of Alphacorp (Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury 2012). But given our particular interest in hybridity of business and development, the fieldwork and analysis chose to focus on logics representing those values. Business logic was already fairly well-characterized within the literature and findings here were consistent with that characterization.

Development logic was less well-characterized, particularly translating ideas from the literature on social enterprise. We see the features of development logic identified above as being instantiated here and shaped by the developing country context. The particular nature and severity of development challenges – poverty, unemployment, gender inequality in these cases – shapes the particular goals of development logic. The context of resource, infrastructure and formal institutional challenges and informal institutional norms shapes the nature of values and practices that form development logic. Examples include the intentions of Alphacorp managers to address foundations of gender and geographic inequality, the paternalism of

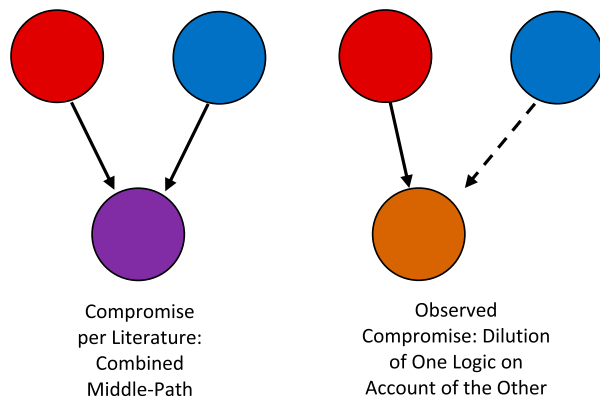
Kudumbashree managers, and their actions to provide medical and health support. The work here also argues the notion of intersection of a commercial and a non-commercial logic to apply to a much broader range of organizational forms than seen in the social enterprise literature, given neither of these two cases was a social enterprise.

In some degree, the two cases are mirror images. Alphacorp is a private firm dominated by business logic but holding an enclave of development logic associated with one location of operation and with those staff who selected and support operation in that location. Kudumbashree – at least in relation to its IT units – is somewhat more mixed but development logic is the dominant form into which it has attempted to integrate some business logic.

It was noted above that a principal narrative in the development studies literature on hybrids, echoed in the hybrid logics literature, was one of tension and discord. This was seen in practice with the differing values and practices of the two logics creating a tension within both organizations: the pressures of business logic forced Kudumbashree to deviate from some of its development logic-based goals and practices; conversely, Alphacorp faced a set of commercial challenges brought on by the partly-developmental decision to locate in Azadmir. However, the secondary narrative of the literature – synergy between logics – was also instantiated as the two logics of business and development were not always in conflict. Operating in an increasingly-commercial environment meant that Kudumbashree needed to increasingly integrate business logic into its values and operations in order for its delivery of development goals to sustain; and in Alphacorp, better working conditions for Azadmir employees as per the tenets of development logic have meant lower staff turnover, greater productivity and hence better organizational commercial performance.

### *Hybrid strategies*

Three overall patterns for management of the two logics were seen. While novel for the development studies literature, these were resonant but not entirely congruent with the patterns identified above from the institutional logics and hybridity literature; particularly the work of Pache and Santos (2013). The first hybrid strategy seen was combination of logics, in which intact values and practices from two logics co-exist within the same organizational locus. We noted above a differentiation relating to the extent of components drawn from each of the two logics; fewer in selective coupling, more with combination (Pache and Santos 2013; Mair, Mayer, and Lutz

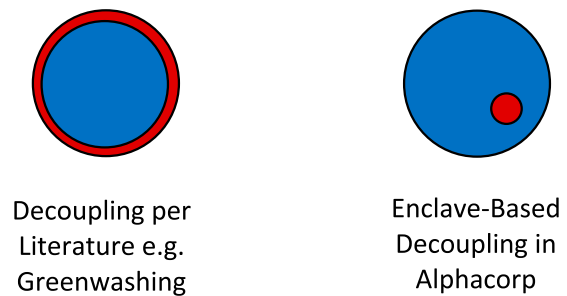


**Figure 1.** Compromise of logics: representation in literature vs. case evidence.

2015). Our inductive differentiation of the two cases focused less on extent of components and more on the scope of activity within which logic combination took place. The Alphacorp example sees combination of the two logics within the narrow scope of a single decision: where to locate the back-up office. The Kudumbashree example sees a combination within a wider scope of a new organizational unit: Unnathi. Of course this is in part the outcome of an analytical decision: we could potentially have chosen narrower- or broader-scope illustrations of logic combination.

The second hybrid strategy seen was compromising of logics. The hybrid logics literature (Pache and Santos 2013; Carlsson-Wall, Kraus, and Messner 2016) describes this as shown on the left side of Figure 1, representing some combined middle-path that adheres to neither of individual logics. This is not quite the notion of compromise that emerged from our two case studies. These reflected more the variant sense of compromise, meaning the watering-down of values and practices of one logic because of the exigencies of the other logic; a deviation in the path of a logic rather than a shared middle ground. In graphical terms, this is better represented by the right side of Figure 1: for Alphacorp, within the Azadmir office, practices associated with business logic were altered to take account of development logic; for Kudumbashree, it would be vice versa: practices associated with development logic were altered to take account of business logic.

The third hybrid strategy seen was decoupling of logics. In the literature (e.g. Pache and Santos 2013; Holm et al. 2017), decoupling is generally understood as shown on the left side of Figure 2. It is the external presentation of one logic that is merely a veneer unconnected to the core logic of the organization as per the example of greenwashing. The Alphacorp example shares some features of this: an external presentation



**Figure 2.** Decoupling of logics: representation in literature vs. case evidence.

that differs from an internal logic within the organization. But this was no veneer. Business logic was the core logic guiding the main values and practices of the organization. Development logic was restricted to one minority part of the organization, unconnected to the business logic that operated in most of Alphacorp and to the business logic that guided Alphacorp's external presentation to clients, shareholders and others. Hence, captured more by the right side of Figure 2.

Past work – again, drawn from business and management literature due to its absence in development studies publications – has tended to associate a hybrid organization with one specific strategy of intersection of logics: combining (Battilana and Dorado 2010) including selective coupling (Pache and Santos 2013), or compromise (Carrick-Cagna and Santos 2009), or decoupling (Crilly, Zollo, and Hansen 2012). Here, though, we find two aspects of heterogeneity in logic hybridity.

First, that multiple hybrid strategies can be identified within any one organization. The findings presented above show combination, compromise and decoupling within the same organization. We must add some clarifications here. We are not claiming these three are always found in all business—development hybrids: evidence of decoupling within Kudumbashree was largely absent. We are not claiming these to be the only hybrid strategies: they were the only ones we identified through our iterative cycles of interrogating data and literature, but it may be that others exist.<sup>9</sup> And these may not be proactive and deliberate selections of ways in which to manage business—development tensions: while interviewees recognized the two logics and their potential contradictions as they emerged during the interview process, they did not describe their actions in terms of the three analytical categories identified. However, the hybrid selections made have enabled each of these organizations to survive for several years.

Second, that there is an unevenness in the patterns of logics across the value chain. Alphacorp, for example, interacts with its clients in a sub-context guided purely





**Figure 3.** Variation in logic strength across hybrid organizations.

by business logic – focusing on core commercial outsourcing issues such as cost, delivery time, and quality – and does the same for many parts of the internal organization outside Pakistan. But within its Azadmir operations and especially when dealing with its workforce, this sub-context is guided by a mix of business and development logics. Opportunities for heterogeneity are more limited for Kudumbashree because it operates within a single state in India; a state in which it is relatively well-known, for example to clients and workers. Nonetheless, one could detect differentiation. Client-facing interactions were more imbued with business logic (more so for potential private sector clients, less so for those in the public sector). Interactions with the IT units were more imbued with development logic (again with variation depending on how entrepreneurial the units were perceived to be). To some extent, then, one can summarize as shown in Figure 3 that expressions and practices of business logic have been stronger in interacting with clients; while the same is true of development logic in interacting with workers. There is some sense, then, of these two organizations having to be ‘Janus-faced’: presenting messages dominated by one logic in some fora, presenting messages dominated by the other logic in other fora.

### **Dynamics and sustainability of hybrid strategies**

Development studies literature suggests that the nature of business–development hybrids can change over time, with some finding it hard to or even failing to sustain (Cieslik 2016; D’Espallier et al. 2017; Vicol et al. 2018; Maitrot 2019). We can therefore discuss the dynamics and sustainability of the current hybrid strategies in each case organization.

Alphacorp operates in a solely-commercial client context. In the longer-term, this could challenge the development logic enclave particularly given the compromises with business logic that have had to be made to create and maintain the Azadmir office. However, the relative lack of competing employers and low staff turnover in AJK, and the physical and managerial distance from most US operations help to buffer this from the full force of business logic. Albeit relying on the presence of a few key managers including the CEO, the development logic is fairly-well institutionalized given

that the office has been – at the time of writing – running for roughly ten years.

One can only say ‘fairly-well’ because this does not follow the fully-institutionalized hybrid model, e.g. as prescribed by Battilana and Dorado (2010), where the hybrid logics are combined into the basic operating procedures and policies of the organization. By contrast, in Alphacorp, the hybridity is localized and partly reliant on informal and ad hoc decisions and practices. While less institutionalized, this may allow for more flexible and agile response to both development and business issues that arise in the AJK operations.

The context for Kudumbashree is more mixed. It operates in an increasingly commercial context that challenges the perpetuation of development logic; reflected in the declining number of operational IT units and what one Director referred to as ‘crisis’. As with Alphacorp, Kudumbashree’s IT operation had been able to utilize relatively protected contextual enclaves of development logic; for example, within the wider Kudumbashree organization which was a source of contracts, but also seeking to tap into development logic among potential public sector clients. But, as seen, the external pressure of business logic was forcing a watering down of development logic and outcomes.

There were examples of business logic seen: in the creation and operation of Unnathi, in the operation of some units which were for example renting additional premises and hiring external workers, and in the continuous search and aspiration for new ways to help the initiative sustain.<sup>10</sup> Yet, as an overall, business logic could not be said to be institutionalized. Beyond some aspirational statements by and about the IT units, there were few signs of commercial practices. IT units spoke of wanting to get private sector contracts, but could not give clear examples of having undertaken activities in order to do so. The stated aim for these units is that ‘they become competitive in the open market ... they should reach a stage, wherein, when government withdraws the support’ (Strategic Director). But the reality as noted above was a lack of self-sustaining commercial viability and instead a dependency, as reflected by the same source: ‘they are only surviving because of these [centrally-obtained] job works from registration departments, from various other sources’. As described above, Unnathi showed some greater signs of commercial

practice but, in some ways mirroring Alphacorp, it was something of an enclave within the wider Kudumbashree organization.

Looking overall at sustainability, the incorporation of development logic is largely irrelevant to the sustainability of Alphacorp. Yet the sustainability of that subordinate logic and its associated development outcomes appears relatively well assured with the current managerial team. For Kudumbashree, incorporation of business logic appears important to sustaining its delivery of development outcomes: development logic-based operation is wilting in the face of increasing commercialization of IT work in Kerala. But that business logic is the subordinate one and has not been effectively institutionalized to date: even in Unnathi it remains more an aspired value and attempted practice than a daily reality.

### ***Determinants of hybrid strategies***

Our focus in this paper has been on the strategies used to manage the intersection of business and development logics. But there are many other issues that could be looked at, as identified below in discussion of future research directions. One such is the question of what determines the strategic outcomes when business and development logics intersect. We end our discussion with three determinants that, while not the core focus for this study, did emerge from it.

The first is the importance of key individuals in driving forward hybridity. In both cases, there was a kind of ‘Trojan horse’ individual, carrying elements of one logic into a domain dominated by the other logic. For Alphacorp, it was the Pakistan-born CEO who brought a concern for development of a devastated area into the bottom line-focused world of US IT services contracts. For Kudumbashree it was the originator of the IT initiative, TK Jose, who brought business ideas into the welfarism of Kudumbashree’s poverty alleviation mission. We cannot conclude that such individuals are essential for hybrid organizations but they also appear in other hybrid case studies; for example, termed ‘champion’ (O’Neil and Ucbasaran 2011) or ‘institutional entrepreneur’ (Thornton and Ocasio 2008) or ‘social entrepreneur’ (Biggs and Lewis 2009). Their presence may therefore be one success factor in establishing business—development hybrids about which more needs to be known.

Sustaining such hybrids may require a second determinant worthy of further investigation: some form of institutionalization of both logics. Experience from the case studies would indicate institutionalization is inherent to the dominant logic: business logic in the case of Alphacorp; development logic for Kudumbashree. Attention would thus turn more to

institutionalization of the subordinate logic and/or of some truly hybrid values, practices and structures, as part of management strategy for business—development hybrids. As discussed above, Alphacorp had achieved this fairly well in relation to its AJK-based operations. For Kudumbashree, it was much more of a challenge, in part because of the absence of clear champions or drivers or structures of business logic within the organization during the 2010s. Thus, more needs to be understood about the mechanisms, enablers and barriers to institutionalization of logics.

Finally, for both organizations, we could identify a third factor, arising from their operating within client-driven value chains. This created a pressure to drive business logic into the organization, and meant that development logic had to be buffered or protected in some way. In Alphacorp, the protection arose because development logic was enclaved relatively ‘deep’ within the organization. Kudumbashree protected development logic either by compromising it to commercial pressures, or by seeking out alternative contextual enclaves of development logic as found within the wider organization or within some public sector clients. Again, knowledge is limited about the mechanisms, enablers and barriers to this protection of development logic, and additional research is needed to investigate this and other processes that determine strategic outcomes of hybrid logics.

### ***Summary and conclusion***

Hybrid organizations which bring together a focus on business and a focus on development, are increasingly involved in the delivery of development. Despite growth of development studies research on these organizations, to date, there has been limited conceptualization and limited focus on the management of business—development tensions. Our aim in this paper was to address these knowledge gaps, which we did by ‘importing’ into development studies a conceptual frame well-developed in other fields but barely used in our discipline: institutional logics.

Specifically, we applied one sub-area of institutional logics – logics in hybrid organizations – to two IT impact sourcing business—development hybrids. Summarizing our findings, hybridity of business and development logics was neither universal nor evenly-balanced in our case organizations. Alphacorp was dominated by business logic, with only one enclave of development logic that then mixed with the business logic in the operation of the Azadmir office. Kudumbashree’s IT unit initiative found evidence of business logic in both the central organization and some of the IT units but it did

not flow through the whole organization in the way that development logic did. As seen, then, the two cases were in some ways mirror images: business logic being dominant in Alphacorp with development logic subordinate; and vice versa in Kudumbashree.

Business and development – as reflected in the two logics – were not always in tension. In both cases, there were examples in which presence of the values and practices of business logic assisted the achievement of the development goals that were central to development logic. This was especially seen in the examples where business and development logics were combined: in selecting Azadmir, and in creating Unnathi. Conversely, Alphacorp's developmental attendance to good working conditions in Azadmir appeared good for business in helping motivate staff and reducing staff turnover.

This is the first way in which our aim of understanding the management of business—development hybrids was addressed: the two logics were managed by combining them; undertaking organizational decisions and processes that mixed together elements drawn from both business and development logics. But tensions did emerge between business and development: they incorporated values and practices that were not commensurate. This was managed in two ways. Compromising logics involved the dilution of one logic – an erosion of the values and practices associated with that logic – by the other logic. Decoupling logics involved the presentation of a single logic, typically to an external audience, that made no reference to the other logic, despite its existence within the organization.

In sum, the lens of institutional logics provides development studies researchers with a language, a framework and a set of insights to understand business—development hybrids; in particular, to understand how the business—development intersection is managed within organizations seeking to deliver development goals within a commercial or partly-commercial environment. While this involved the use of existing ideas on 'business logic' it led us to specify and instantiate the meaning of 'development logic'.

With our focus on development studies research, it was not a particular intention to contribute to the literature on institutional logics. Nonetheless, some incremental contribution did emerge. Our work challenged that literature's earlier notion which associates whole value chains and all organizational actors with a particular balance of logic. Our cases, instead, demonstrated a different balance in different parts, and different logic adherences of different actors. Our evidence on the three hybrid management approaches – combining, compromising, decoupling – is largely consistent with

that identified in earlier institutional logics literature. However, compromising and decoupling had particular expressed formats not previously described. In addition, prior work has assumed a single collective hybrid response whereas here, we find evidence that all three approaches can operate simultaneously as a way to manage the two logics.

Turning to implications for practice, operationalizing business—development hybrids will require the use of tactics such as those identified: combining, compromising and decoupling logics. In contrast to the case organizations, this could be done in a more explicit and proactive manner. This could involve open discussion of the logics and their manifestations within the organization (potentially different in different parts and for different external audiences), and more deliberate consideration and selection of the hybrid tactics available. This would need to be a continuous process, with both cases – Kudumbashree especially – suggesting that business—development hybrids are never settled: patterns of intersection of logics are temporary, contingent, and always being negotiated.

The work reported here represents just two of the many business—development hybrids currently active, and future research would be needed to broaden the number and type of business—development hybrids investigated. This could extend further to use of institutional logics to analyze other types of hybrid of relevance to development studies noted above such as government—NGO, North—South inter-government and other forms of multi-stakeholder partnership. Alongside an agenda of broadening, we also see an agenda of deepening. For example, while we have analyzed and categorized the ways in which hybridity was managed, we have also identified a research agenda in not just explaining what happens in business—development hybrids but why: understanding the determinants of strategies and outcomes when business and development logics intersect.

## Notes

1. Other hybridities can be identified of relevance to development studies; intersecting missions that differ but not along a business—development axis. For example, development partnerships between government and NGOs (Gupta 2014; Gupta and Koontz 2019), or between government agencies in global North and South (Bontenbal 2013), or between NGOs with social vs. environmental missions (Novellino and Dressler 2009). While the analytical approach and implications of the cases studied in this paper may be relevant to such hybrids, they are not the focus for discussion here.

2. This involved a search in *World Development*, *Development and Change*, *The Journal of Development Studies*, *Development Studies Research*, *The European Journal of Development Research*, and *Public Administration and Development* for terms 'hybrid\*', 'social enterprise\*', 'fair trade', 'fairtrade', 'corporate social', 'philanthro\*', 'impact invest\*', 'impact sourcing', 'partnership\*'; a review of every paper in these journals published during 2016–2019; and a more general bibliographic search for literature on hybrids and development studies. This search returned 161 items of which 75 were relevant to this paper's focus (those excluded largely referred to the other types of hybrid footnoted above or to more technical hybrids e.g. hybrid seeds). While no search could capture every possible relevant paper, this was seen as capturing the main focus for relevant development studies literature.
3. A search was undertaken at the end of 2019 of the six development studies journals covered in the earlier-mentioned literature review, plus *Journal of International Development*, *Third World Quarterly*, *Development Policy Review*, *Sustainable Development* and *Development in Practice*. No papers used the idea of institutional logics in their title or abstract. Thirty-seven papers include the term 'institutional logics' but almost all just mention the term – typically just once – and do not use it as the focus for the paper. The only exceptions were the three papers cited in the next paragraph.
4. Our characterisation of 'business logic' is a composite of elements drawn from characterisations using that term (Jones, Livne-Tarandach, and Balachandra 2010) and others that can be seen as largely synonymous: 'market logic' (Thornton and Ocasio 2008, Thornton et al. 2012, Skelcher & Smith 2015) and 'commercial logic' (Pache & Santos 2013; Mair, Mayer, and Lutz 2015). In contrast, 'development logic' has had very limited characterisation to date: the only instance being drawn from the very narrow, specific case of two commercial microfinance organisations (Battilana & Dorado 2010). The 'community logic' concept (Thornton et al. 2012; Lee and Lounsbury 2015) is of limited relevance here as it has generally been seen as the bottom-up logic of a community which would hardly apply to the instances of business—development logic outlined above. More relevant is the concept of 'social welfare logic' (Pache & Santos 2013; Mair, Mayer, and Lutz 2015) though this has been developed based on features of social enterprises in the global North. As outlined above, business—development hybrids cover a much more diverse range of organisational forms and focus on the global South. Thus, our characterisation of 'development logic' has had to translate and expand past ideas. Nonetheless, we do not claim that our characterisation represents a major departure from past work. Instead, the notion of hybrids of business and development logics is an incremental and pragmatic development specifically intended to provide those in the development studies domain with concepts of direct relevance.
5. Skelcher and Smith (2015) identify five hybrid management responses. Three are similar to those already outlined: 'blended' to combining, 'assimilated' to compromising, 'segmented' to decoupling. One – 'blocked' – arises if logics are irreconcilable. One – 'segregated' – applies only to multi-organisational hybridity and so is not relevant here.
6. We will use 'Kudumbashree' as short-hand for the specific second case focus which is the IT unit initiative within Kudumbashree.
7. For purposes of anonymity, these officials will be referred to as a Strategic Director, Social Director, Tactical Director and Operational Director.
8. For the Kudumbashree case, while there were signs that different messages were being presented to different types of external clients, there was insufficient evidence available to enable inclusion in this section.
9. As noted above, Skelcher and Smith (2015) also identify 'blocking' but this relates to organisations unable to hybridize their logics: it is thus only found in dysfunctional organisations where hybrid strategies such as combining, compromising and decoupling do not work.
10. Ideas mentioned in interviews included local language typing, computer-aided design work, and working for local IT firms in the 'TechnoPark'.

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