

Digital Social Business Models

An Analysis of Building Blocks and Typology

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Abstract

Social businesses have a great positive impact on communities and are a sustainable way to do business today and in the future. This impact can be amplified through the means of digitalization. In the past, traditional for-profit business models have been used to understand the structures of business operations. However, the underlying business model of digital social businesses has not yet been explored. This study presents a building block analysis of business models and a subsequent typology. Digital and social business models are identified via a literature review. The building block analysis encompasses an assessment of the individual business activities contained in the business models. The typology is developed from existing literature utilizing a matrix for the evaluation of digital social businesses. Additionally, five semi-structured expert interviews are conducted to inform, extend, or content the findings of this study. To this end, an inductive coding procedure is applied to the transcribed interviews for the detection of themes within the text. This study contributes to social business model research by providing a first insight into the unique building blocks of digital social business models. It also creates a typology tool based on two parameters, which enables the comparison of digital social businesses.

1 Introduction

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic the global poverty and hunger crisis has been significantly amplified. Worldwide, an additional 70 to 161 million people have likely experienced hunger in connection to the pandemic in 2020 (UN Statistics Report 2021) and an estimated 119 to 224 million have fallen back into extreme poverty (UN Report 2022). Extreme poverty is defined by individuals living on less than 2 US Dollars a day (Gapminder 2021). The UN initiated a call to action in 2015 formulating 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were agreed upon by all UN member states (UN 2015). The first goal being no poverty and the second goal zero hunger across the globe by 2030. However, today we are further away than ever from achieving those goals.

Companies have a huge impact on the society through enabling labour, working conditions, social protection (Mohr et al. 2001). Thereby, this impact can be both positive and negative. Some companies have started to question their roles in society, how they are impacting the people involved in the respective business ecosystem (Yunus et al. 2010). A strong manifestation of this development are social businesses. Social business or social entrepreneurship is broadly defined as “a self-sustaining company that sells goods or services and repays its owners’ investments, but whose primary purpose is to serve society and improve the lives of the poor” (Yunus 2010, p. 309). Digitalization plays a crucial role in the upscaling of social impact.

With the broad diffusion of the internet in the 1990s firms such as Amazon, eBay, and Google have implemented new digital business models (Reman et al. 2016), revolutionizing the way we do business. Moreover, today the internet has more active users than in the 1990s, with almost 4.66 billion active users around the world (Statista 2021). This has greatly increased the access to digital resources and created a whole new type of business model. Combining the digital business model with social business, therefore, seems to be a promising tool to solve the globes’ most pressing problems. The foundations of digital social businesses, however, has not yet been extensively explored in research.

This study discusses the building blocks of a digital social business model and a typology of those models. The building blocks for a digital social business model are derived from literature as well as expert interviews. The identified business models are then assessed for commonalities and differences. Two main concepts are applied for understanding the foundations of digital social business models better, a) analysing the building blocks and b) developing a typology.

For the first aim of this study (building blocks of digital social business models), both literature and expert interviews are used. For the second aim, two typologies from the literature are combined to build a matrix tool which enables

the systematic assessment and comparison of digital social businesses. To apply the typology derived from literature, expert interviews are conducted to confirm, contend, and extend the qualitative findings.

The results contribute to social business literature and provide a tool for present and future digital social business owners to create more efficient and successful businesses which will aid in the fight against poverty and hunger. Finally, policy makers might use this study to create more targeted and functioning policies to incentives an influx in digital social businesses.

2 Literature Review

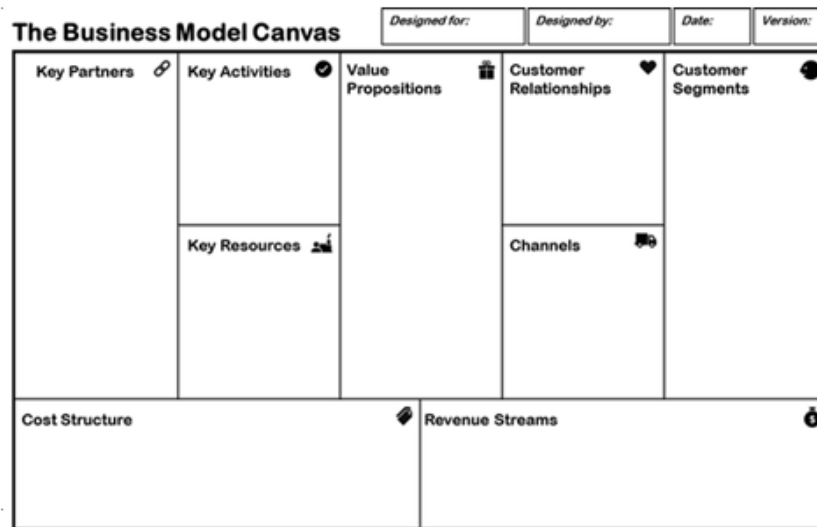
The following section describes the traditional for-profit business models as well as digital and social business models from existing scientific literature. For the course of this study, business models (BMs) are defined as a set of assumptions about what businesses do, for whom and how. The business model identifies who the customers are, what is the value that the business generates for them, how this value is financed, produced, and delivered, and how the customers pay for that.

2.1 For-Profit Business Models

In today's world, business conditions are constantly evolving. With the rise of new technologies, changing consumer preferences and the formation of social trends, the greatest challenge for businesses is the correct definition of the current business model of a company (Gorevaya & Khyrullina 2015). However, the importance of business models is not a novel occurrence, but it is more prevalent than ever before and a powerful tool for social, digital, and for-profit businesses alike. In order to gain a better understanding of what a digital social business model looks like it is necessary to take a closer look at existing for-profit business models first. A for-profit business strives to generate profits and value for their shareholder (George et al. 2022). The business model concept first gained popularity in the early 1990s during the emergence of e-commerce and the dotcom boom (Zott et al. 2011). Today, it is viewed as a tool for systematic analysis, planning, and communication of the configuration and implementation of complex business structures including organizational units and relevant parts in their environment (Doleski, 2015; Knyphausen-Aufsess and Meinhardt 2002). One of the most widely applied for-profit business models is the Business Model Canvas (BMC) from Osterwalder and Pigneur (2010). The Business Model Canvas lists 9 building blocks of a business model, which are nine types of activities or assumptions that help understand what a business is and how

it operates. These building blocks are Customer Segments, Value Propositions, Channels, Customer Relationships, Revenue Streams, Key Resources, Key Activities, Key Partners & Cost Structure. The building blocks of the BMC are illustrated in Figure 1.

Business Model Canvas



Source: Osterwalder & Pigneur (2010)

The term “building blocks” was first coined by Margiono et al. (2017) and describes the different activities of a business in a business model; for example, Key Partners is one important building block of the BMC. The BMC is adaptable to not only for-profit businesses but also digital and social businesses which is explained in the following sections.

2.2 Digital Business Model

In a world that rapidly embraced the digitalization and successfully adopted technologies to address some of the planets most urgent problems, new business models have been developed to meet the unique challenges of digital business (Richter et al. 2017). In the literature digital business is referred to as “the use of digital technologies and resources to drive day-to-day business operations, develop revenue, performance, and deliver personalized, meaningful experiences to customers” (McKendrick 2020). According to Wind (2008), digital businesses represent a “shift from traditional management approaches to ‘network orchestration’”. New models have started to emerge, coinciding with the digitalization along the whole supply chain of businesses. Yet, they appear to have quite a few

distinct building blocks such its dynamic nature and the gap between business strategy and business process due the rapidly changing nature of the Information Technology (IT) sector (Al-Debei et al. 2008). In Table 1. these differences are summarized.

Traditional vs. Digital Business Model

Traditional Business Model	Digital Business Model
Based on physical assets	Based on digital
Buildings, Machinery, Labor, Distribution	Digital Platforms, Business Intelligence, Information
Traditional Governance (slow iterations > 12 months)	Agile Governance (fast iteration < 12 months)
Increase productivity	Increase customer experience & value
Low and growth and profit margins	High growth and profit margins

Source: Adopted from Gillior (2018)

In Table 1., Gillior (2018) points out the difference in assets. Traditional for-profit business models have physical assets, an inventory which needs to be stored before it is sold. In addition to the characteristics named by Gillior (2018), Al-Debi et al. (2008) describes the emerging world of digital business as "complex, dynamic and enjoys high levels of uncertainty and competition."

Dutot and Van Horne (2015) found that digital business models can be summarized into four building blocks: the appearance of goods and services, digitization of the distribution channel, digital communication with stakeholders and internal processes carried out on a digital basis. Digital business models have many advantages compared to the traditional ones. A) With the internet granting relatively easy access to information and decreasing transaction costs significantly, Hair et al. (2012) argues that digital ventures are easier to found than traditional ones. B) With an increase in digitalization and internet communications technology (ICT), information and digital tools have become increasingly accessible to a greater amount of people. Not only the number of people being able to use these technologies has increased significantly but also the customers who are able to access the products and service has gone up. C) Digital businesses are easier to scale up compared to the traditional for-profit businesses (McKinsey, 2020). Therefore, the scalability of digital business will create an impact beyond just the physical communities surrounding the business. Making it an ideal business model for greater social impact.

2.3 Social Business Models

Social businesses are unique in the sense that they combine the logic of different sectors (Battilana and Lee 2014, Doherty et al. 2014). The Nobel-Peace-Prize winning economist Mohammad Yunus describes social businesses as a “new kind of business introduced in the marketplace with the objective of making a difference in the world” (Yunus 2010). Essentially, social businesses are designed and operated like a private business, but the profit maximization principle is being replaced with a social mission. Figure 2.

The Social Enterprise Model Canvas

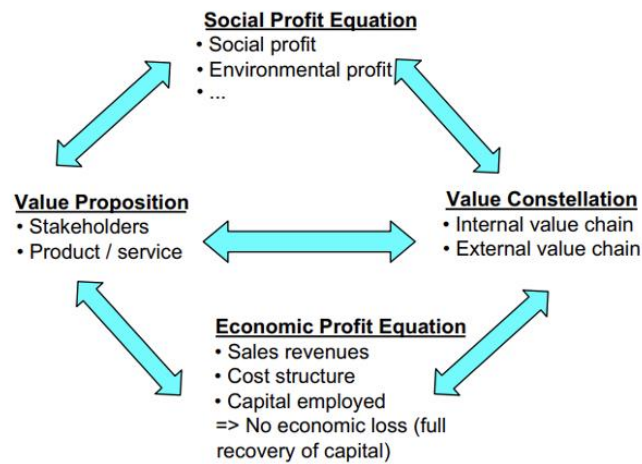
Governance (GOV)			
Non-Targeted Stakeholders (NtS)	Key Resources (KR)	Channels (CH)	Customers & Beneficiaries (C & B)
	Key Activities (KA)	Customer & Beneficiaries Engagement (C&B E)	
Mission Values (MV)		Social Value Proposition (SVP)	Impact Measures (IM)
Objectives (Obj)			Output Measures (OM)
Cost Structure (C\$)		Income (I\$)	

Source: Sparviero 2019

In the BMC from Sparviero (2019), the Social Value Proposition (SVP) is in the center of the model. The location indicates the centrality of this building block for social businesses, which are “more cause than profit driven” (Yunus et al. 2010). However, this aspect of social business is crucial in order to provide stakeholders and other interested parties with a measurement of success.

In the literature, other illustrations of social business models exist. Although, they differ in labelling of building blocks, they do have value proposition, social profit equation, value constellation, and economic profit equation in common. Yunus et al. (2010) identified these commonalities and developed an overview of the 4 building blocks of social businesses which are summarized in Figure 4.

The Four Building Blocks of Social Business Models



Source: [Yunus et al. \(2010\)](#)

Figure 3. contains similar building blocks to the business model canvas from Osterwalder & Pigneur (2010), such as the value proposition, sales revenue (revenue streams), and cost structure. However, the focus is on the interplay between value proposition and value constellation as well as the adding in of the social profit equation which differentiates the social business model from the for-profit business model.

2.4 Typologies

Typologies are a descriptive tool used in a wide variety of contexts and scientific disciplines (Bailey 2005). They are a form of theory-building tool and offer a way to organize complex, non-linear relationships (Fiss 2011; Doty & Glick 1994; Snow & Ketchen 2014). Heise (2015) describes a typology as “differentiating entities at a particular level of a taxonomy in terms of one or more properties” (Heise 2015). Many similar definitions exist in the literature but they essentially imply a systematic classification of things into types according to their common characteristics.

Typologies are also a popular tool in social business model research. Mair et al. (2012) developed a typology of social entrepreneuring models leveraging different types of capital. The authors assessed business models as well, however, they took a quantitative approach using cluster and discriminative analysis. Typologies are also applied in other research areas. Another study by Wells (2005) takes conceptual rather than an empirical approach to business model analysis and closed-loop supply chains. They developed four new categories of closed-loop systems and applied them to the automotive industry.

Lastly, typologies for digital business models have gained in popularity since the e-commerce boom (Look 2020). A study by Guggenberger et al. (2020) developed a typology of digital business models and found that 5 different research streams of digital business models exist in scientific literature as well as a typology which differentiates between data-driven business models and platform-based types. The term digital business is very broad and the study by Guggenberger et al. (2020) provides a great approach to differentiating between the business models.

To summarize the literature review, it can be said that many different for-profit, digital, and social business models exist in scientific literature. However, it is not clear what the structures and building blocks of a digital social business models look like, therefore this study asks:

RQ1: What are building blocks of digital social business models?

The development of a digital social business model can be supported by a typology rooted in existing literature in order to develop a tool for the assessment of digital social businesses. As a result, this study aims to answer the following question:

RQ2: Can we perceive a typology of digital social business models?

In the following sections, the methodology and results of this study are presented, followed by a discussion and conclusion of the findings.

3 Methodology

3.1 Framework Development based on Literature.

A literature review of business models was undertaken to inform the building block analysis and typology, using the Web of Science database as well as Google Scholar. Following the snowballing principle outlined by Cleas Wohlin (2014). To summarize the snowballing procedure, it can be said that the researcher uses the reference lists of academic papers to expand the list of sources used for a literature review. Hereby, the identification of digital and social business models as well as digital business model typologies and social business model typologies, were the main goals.

For answering the two research questions, literature analysis and expert interviews are used. In the following, the two sub-chapters will investigate the approaches in more detail.

3.1.1 Building Block Identification

After screening the selected papers, a final database of business models will be constructed. The following information was extracted from the papers: title, author’s name, type of BM (digital or social BM), visual representation of BM, adaptive capacity, distinction of building blocks.

The criteria of Visual Representation of BM were adopted from existing literature. Di Valentin et al. (2012) developed a conceptual framework for adaptive BMs in which core elements of business models are analyzed regarding their dependencies with aspects of strategy and business process design. The distinct building block criteria assesses if the individual activities and processes of a business model can be easily differentiated from one another visually. Additionally, the criteria of visual representation of business models are adapted from a BM analysis by Gaspareto & Henriqson (2020). They argued that the visualization is crucial for an easy understanding and application in praxis and science alike. Thus, enabling a systematic understanding and holistic view of a businesses’ activities and operations (Gaspareto & Henriqson 2020), summarized in table 2. below:

Business Model Selection Process

Business Model	Author	Digital or social business model	Visual Representation of BM	Distinct Building Blocks	Adaptive Capacity
The Four Building Blocks of Social Business Models	Yunus et al. (2010)	Social	Yes	Yes	Yes
The social stakeholder layer of the triple layered business model canvas	Joyce et al. (2016)	Social	Yes	Yes	Yes
The Social Enterprise Model Canvas	Sparviero (2019)	Social	Yes	Yes	Yes
The conceptual framework of “digital”	Bican & Brem (2020)	Digital	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hybrid Business Model	Endres, Sotiber and Wenzl (2020)	Digital	Yes	No	No

Source: Own representation of BM selection criteria

According to IBM's Global CEO study, CEOs are increasingly forced to adapt their business models to dynamic factors for staying competitive within the continuously changing business environment (IBM, 2010). Thus, emphasizing the adaptability of business models. Visual thinking is not only indispensable to working with business models (Osterwalder & Pigneur 2010) but it also provides a tool for people from different educational backgrounds that is easily understood and applied.

3.1.2 Development of a Typology

Typologies are a form of theory-building tool and offer a way to organize complex, non-linear relationships (Fiss 2011; Doty & Glick 1994; Snow & Ketchen 2014). In other words, a typology is a systematic classification of things into types according to their common characteristics. There are two aspects to the typology of digital social business models. There are two types of business models: the digital business model and the social business model. They each possess distinct characteristics, for example, the social value creation by social business models and the digitalized form of value creation in the form of assets by digital business models. In this study, two existing typologies were used to build a typology for digital social business models. This study selected a typology of digital business models by Kreutzer & Niendorf (2017) and a typology of social business models by Hull et al. (2007).

The typology of Kreutzer & Niendorf (2017) assesses social business models based the integration of beneficiaries. They differentiated between (1) beneficiaries as customers; (2) beneficiaries engaged as employees in the process of value creation; (3) beneficiaries as suppliers; or (4) beneficiaries without a role in the process of value creation. This study adapts the idea of beneficiary integration as a measure for social business models.

Finally, combining the two existing typologies contributes to scientific literature by providing a toll to compare and measure digital social businesses, which previously does not exist.

This study follows the typology framework from Kreutzer & Niendorf (2017), assessing social business models based on two parameters: the degree of beneficiary integration and allocation of resources to create economic and social value. For the purposes of this study, one parameter is from social business models and the second parameter is from digital business models. So, the parameter of allocation to resources is replaced with the parameter of degree of digitalization.

Hull et al. (2007) considers three categories to measure the level of digitalization. Each category ranging from mild to moderate to extreme digital entrepreneurship, considered every aspect of a business including production, the

goods or services themselves, advertising, distribution, and the customers. Resulting in a typology based on the degree of digitalization adapted by this study. The three degrees of digitalization are: (1) mild digital entrepreneurship, (2) moderate digital entrepreneurship, and (3) extreme digital entrepreneurship. They define the three categories as follows:

(1) Mild: involves venturing into the digital economy as a supplement to more traditional venues.

(2) Moderate: requires a significant focus on digital products, digital delivery, or other digital components of the business.

(3) Extreme: the entire business is digital, including production, the goods or services themselves, advertising, distribution, and the customers.

These categories capture the characteristics of digital business models and provides the first parameter. Digital social businesses can differ significantly in the degree of digitalization, all the way from solely operating a website, to the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) within business models. Therefore, it is necessary to capture in which category they fall in order to compare them with one another. The second parameter is the social business model typology. Here, the study borrows directly from Kreutzer & Niendorf (2017) by adopting the parameter of beneficiary integration. Kreutzer & Niendorf (2017) ranked social business models from differentiated to integrated beneficiaries. A business model with differentiated beneficiary integration, indicates that the beneficiary has no involvement in the process of value creation of the social business (Kreutzer & Niendorf 2017). On the other hand, an integrated social business model can be either or both a customer and/or employee involvement in the value creation (Kreutzer & Niendorf 2017).

3.2 Expert Interviews

3.2.1 Sample

The sample consists of five experts on digital social businesses, 3 females and 2 males, were interviewed. These experts were selected through a social media search using LinkedIn. The search included the following keywords: digital social business, digital business model, and social business model, A total of 8 potential interviewees were identified and all eight were contacted between April 20220 and May 2022. Five responded and were willing to be interviewed. The interviews were scheduled and conducted between May 2022 and June 2022. Three different

industries were represented: a social business startup, academia, and a non-profit organization. Interviewees A, B, and C are located in Germany. Interviewee D is located in Kenya and interviewee E in Uganda.

3.2.2 Interview Procedure and Questions

Overall, the semi-structured interviews were approx. 35 min. in length and recorded with Zoom Video Conferences. After a pre-test, minor changes had to be adjusted. The developed interview guide started with questions about the interviewees career background on digital social business models, followed by questions about building blocks and ended with a discussion on the developed typology. The open-ended questions were posed in a way to make the interviewees.

3.2.3 Data Analysis

The recordings were transcribed manually and coded by using the software MAXQDA. For the analysis of the qualitative data, the inductive coding procedure as outlined by Thomas (2003) is applied. Step one is the clean-up of the data files, this includes formatting and proofreading the transcripts. Step two is the close reading of the text; this helps the researcher to gain a first understanding of the themes and details in the text. In the third step, the categories are created. Here, the upper level categories are derived from the research questions and the lower level categories are derived from multiple readings of the text. Further codes are derived from the parameters putlined in section 3.1. The fourth step is overlap coding and uncoded text. Overlap coding allows for one segment of text to be coded into more than one category (Thomas 2003). The author also points out that "a considerable amount of the text may not be assigned to any category, as much of the text may not be relevant to the research objectives" (Thomas 2003). In the fifth and last step, revision is continued, and the category system is being refined. Additionally, subtopics can be identified, or categories can be combined and linked under a superordinate category when the meaning is the same. Quotes that can convey the core theme are also selected in this fifth step.

4 Expected Results and Discussion

In this section, preliminary results are presented and discussed. This study provides a first insight into the building blocks of a digital social business model as well as a typology tool for the evaluation of digital social businesses. The

expected findings indicate that the digital social business models differ from for-profit, social, and digital business models.

4.1 An Analysis of Building Blocks

A total of 10 (6 social and 4 digital) business models were identified via the literature review and then assessed for building blocks. The expert interviews support the building block analysis and the inductive coding allowed for the detections of themes within the interviews. Table 3. summarizes the building block analysis and themes from the interviews. The themes are labeled major if they appeared in more than 80% of the business models and interviews. If they appeared in less than 80%, they are labeled minor.

Summary of Reoccurring Themes in the Building Block Analysis

Major/Minor Theme	Building Block	Business Models	Interviews	Summary
Major	Social value	6/6 Social business models	5/5 Interviews	Social value is the central point of digital social business models
Major	Customer/Beneficiary Relationship	6/6 Social business models 3/4 Digital business models	4/5 Interviews	Customers are often the beneficiaries of the digital social business and therefore essential to the business model
Major	Impact Measure	6/6 Social business models	4/5 Interviews	Literature and praxis is still missing a universal tool for impact measurement yet, this is a central building block to experts and businesses.
Minor	Channel of Distribution	2/6 Social business models 3/4 digital business models	2/5 Interviews	The digital tools used by the business can create both opportunities and risks for the beneficiaries.

Source: Own summary of reoccurring themes in the building block analysis

The building block social value is a major theme as 6 out of 6 social business models as well as 5 of 5 interviewees mentioned that this building block should be included in a digital social business model. However, interviewee C argued that solely the social value has should be added to the business model canvas by Osterwalder & Pigneur (2010), as it is already sufficient for a digital social business model because it contains all building blocks necessary to run any type of business. On the other hand, interviewee D argued that all building blocks of the BMC would need to be adapted to some extent, due to the fundamental change in the core mission and vision of the business.

This is in line with the primary focus of social businesses in their social value/mission rather than profit maximization (Nicholls 2006). Interviewee D added that the adaptation is necessary in order to increase the social impact.

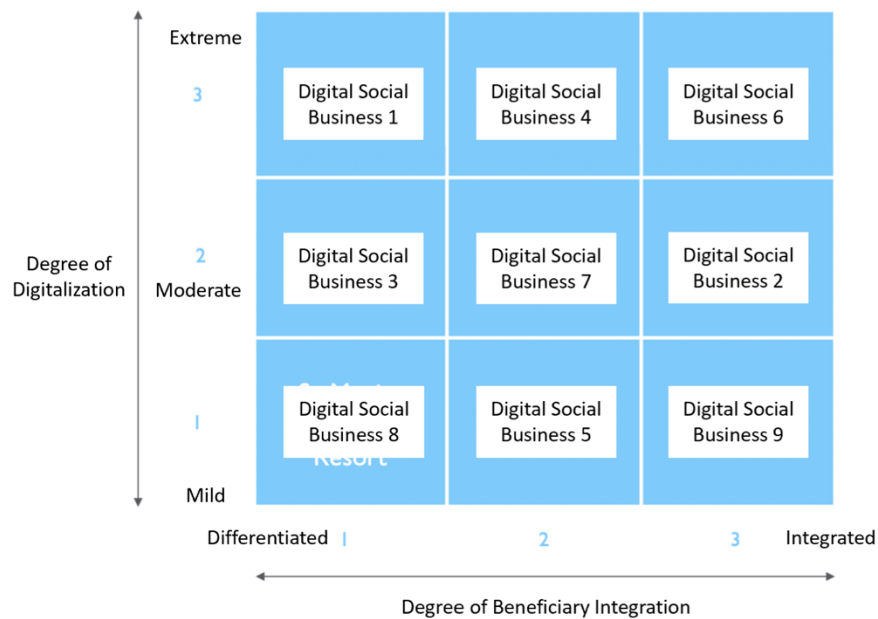
The building blocks customer relationships and customer segment, also called beneficiary in social business models, were important in 6 out of the 6 social business models, in 3 out of 4 digital business models while all 5 interviewees mentioned the significance of the customers. Social businesses serve people who have been neglected by the conventional system (Chell et al. 2016) therefore, representing a specific target customer segment. Interviewee A raised an interesting point when saying all digital social businesses should be designed either in direct cooperation with the beneficiary or at least with the beneficiary in mind because the business will only have an impact if the beneficiaries deem the product or service useful.

A minor theme is the channel of distribution. Jamali et al. (2016) explored the differences of social enterprises in the global north versus the south and found that not every social business that is successful in the global north also creates impact in the south. Jamali et al. (2016) lists a variety of reasons but one argument that also aligns with the findings of this study is that target customers or beneficiaries from different geographical locations have different needs and abilities to access the products or services of businesses. This concept also plays an important role in the channel of distribution. In the analysis 2/6 social business models and 3/4 digital business models mentioned this building block, as well as 2/5 interviewees. Interestingly, access to digital tools and digital literacy can limit the impact of digital social businesses as opposed to increasing it. Interviewee C said: "If the digital tools are too complex, certain groups will not be able to access them. Therefore, they are left out and this could even increase the social divide." So, the channel of distribution should be designed to create opportunity for the beneficiaries rather than leaving some of them behind.

4.2 Typology Development

This study found that a typology based on the degree of digitalization and degree of beneficiary integration, can be used to compare digital social businesses with one another. The five expert interviews were conducted to test the typology matrix, illustrated in Figure 4.

Typology of digital social businesses



Source: Own concept of typology matrix of digital social businesses

All five experts were asked to place the following three digital social businesses on the matrix: Goodwill Thrift Store, Grameen Bank, and ChildGrowth Monitor. These three businesses were selected based on their very different digital social business models. Each representing one degree of digitalization from mild to extreme and ranging from differentiated to integrated in regard to degree of beneficiary integration.

Five out of five interviewees placed Goodwill Thrift Store at Digital Social Business in the lower right corner of the matrix. They argued that the level of digitalization is low because the company only operates a website and online customer service. Interviewees A, C, and D placed Goodwill at a moderate level of digitalization while interviewees B and E placed it at the mild level. However, the degree of beneficiary integration was argued to be integrated by all five because Goodwill employs people who are typically left out of the job market due to disabilities or other challenges thus, directly integrating the beneficiary into the business operations. Kreutzer & Niendorf (2017) also found that social businesses who employ the beneficiaries in the business, in any role such as customer facing or production, are considered highly integrated.

In the interviews the experts were asked to provide feedback on potential negatives of digital social businesses, and these are some points that were mentioned:

- Social isolation due to increased virtual interactions.
- More digital social businesses designed without the end-user in mind, which essentially makes them useless.
- Scaling of digital social businesses. Not every country has access to the same technologies.
- Digital education varies widely amongst people.
- Negative environmental impact due to increased use of digital technologies

Many of these problems are already experienced today and can likely be amplified by an increase in the number of digital social businesses. Therefore, it is crucial to design policies and businesses with these issues in mind. Nevertheless, all experts are convinced that digital social businesses will contribute to more economically healthy communities and aid in the fight against poverty and hunger across the globe.

5 Implications and Future Research

By providing an analysis of building blocks, this study presents entrepreneurs with a tool to structure and better understand their own business operations. Further, it summarizes their value creation, value capture, value network, and strategic choices (Shafer et al. 2005). Additionally, the building blocks are easily understood, therefore, making it accessible to entrepreneurs and business owners from different types of backgrounds. The building blocks can be adjusted during a businesses' lifetime, thus, creating a highly versatile business tool. It is also inexpensive for the business owner to gain access to the building blocks. The cost-factor and simplicity of the building blocks incentivizes for-profit companies to create a digital social business alongside their core business operations (Joyce and Paquin 2016).

It has been proven that policy alone will not solve problems like poverty and hunger (Carletto et al. 2015). A typology enables a closer look at the existing digital social businesses in the marketplace and how they are positioned. Thus, enabling policy makers to develop better policies which could promote incentives for entrepreneurs and established companies, to build a digital social business. Being able to compare digital social businesses could also help entrepreneurs to know where their business would be positioned and make better informed business decisions based on that. Another advantage of this typology can be drawn by for-profit companies. It is important for the companies to be able to show their stakeholder how and where the money will be spent. A typology could be used to present stakeholders with concrete evidence of market evaluation and positioning (Meyer et al. 2019). Research has

contributed to the development of many business models and could also provide data-backed decision tool for policymakers and entrepreneurs alike.

Future research may consider a complete digital social business model and other tools to help entrepreneurs and established companies to conceptualize better digital social businesses which will increase the social impact and contribute to economically healthy communities.

Appendix

Table 1A: Interview Guidelines

Research Question		Analytical Dimension	Subject	Question	Literature/Theory
<p>RQ1: What are building block of digital social business models?</p>	1	Professional and personal information of the respondent (general)	Personal Questions	Where do you work?	
				What is your current role the institution/company?	
	2	Business Model	Definition of Business Model	Considering the 9 building blocks of the BMC, which one you think would need to be adapted?	Osterwalder & Pigneur (2010)
				3	
	How could a DSBM contribute to the success of start-ups? What would support the development of DSBs?				
		Application Barriers	What barriers do you see in the application of DSBMs? How could these barriers be overcome?		
<p>RQ2: Can we perceive a typology of digital social business models?</p> <p>Can established typologies of social business models and digitals business models be combined to develop a typology of digital social business models?</p>	4	Typology of Digital Social Business Models	Classification by characteristics of DSBs	Hull et al. (2007) Kreutzer & Niendorf (2017)	
			Validation of Typology		Where would you put the following companies (name 3 for then interviewees)
					Guiding question: who are the beneficiaries of the business? What are the digital components of the business?

				In your opinion, does a higher level of digitalization coincide with a greater social impact or do you see potential negatives? (Maybe it is less personal...?)	
	5	Outlook	General Development of DSBs	How do you personally view the development of digital social businesses?	
				Are DSBs the future?	
				Will they contribute to economically healthy communities?	

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