

JOURNAL OF BUSINESS MODELS

Sources of Dependence and Non-Profit Business Model Trajectory: Evidence from Lyon e-Sport

Authors

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Abstract

Purpose: This article uses a dynamic approach to analyzing the role of resource dependence on the BM trajectory of a non-profit organization. Non-profit organizations are particularly dependent on access to external resources and advanced partnerships to create, deliver and capture value. Because they have little or no control on these external resources, this dependence may influence the business model orchestration and its evolution over time.

Design/methodology/approach: Based on an in-depth case study of a major French e-sport association, the qualitative methodology relies on 15 semi-structured interviews and a large amount of secondary data covering a period of 12 years (2011-2023).

Findings: This article identifies various types and intensities of the sources of dependence that shape the BM trajectory. It specifies this influence on the mechanisms of value creation, proposition, and capture and describes the dynamics of reinforcement or reduction of dependence, according to the strategic actions deployed.

Practical implications: The article encourages non-profit organizations to consider addiction as a positive phenomenon, in order to structure their value logic and acquire a short-term reputation. In the medium term, dependence needs to be controlled and rebalanced as the BM continues to grow.

Originality/value: The originality lies in the use of resource dependency theory to analyze the BM trajectory. Knowing that the BM is theoretically grounded in the resource-based view, this view of dependence contributes to better understand the internal and external factors influencing a BM's evolution process.

Keywords Business Model, Resource Dependence, Non-Profit BM, E-Sport

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1. Introduction

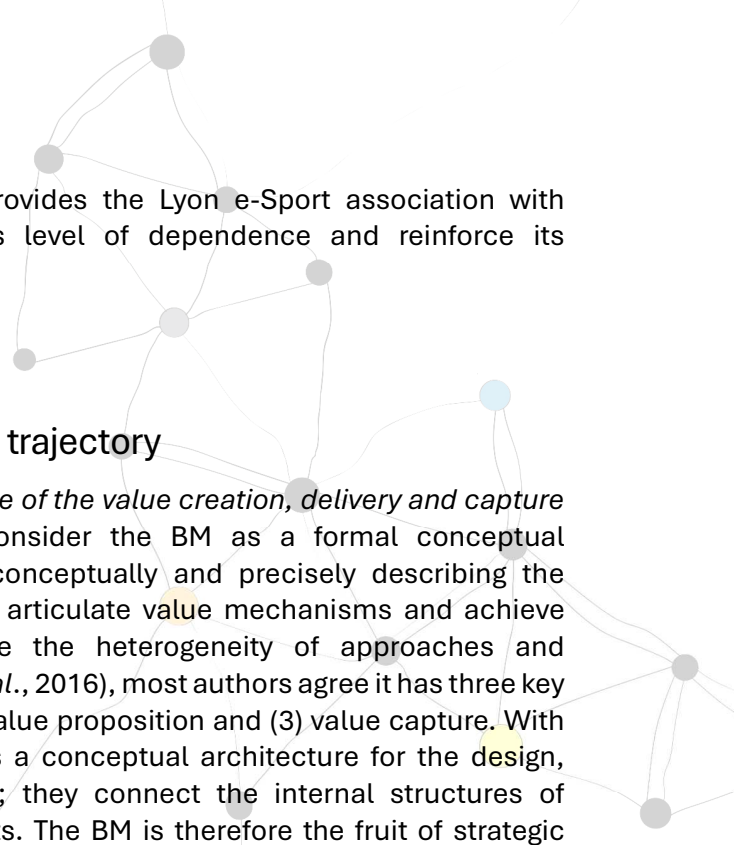
In the past ten years, business model (BM) has greatly enriched strategic management research. It refers to a model for designing and formalizing the corporate strategy (Baden-Fuller and Morgan, 2010). By focusing more precisely on design and articulation of value creation, delivery and capture mechanisms, firms can adjust their strategic decisions to become more responsive and agile (Winterhalter *et al.*, 2016), design better sources of competitive advantage in the short, medium, and long terms (Johnson *et al.*, 2008), take more effective advantage of technology and market opportunities (Teece, 2010), better organize or reorganize their resources and activities within their value chains and networks (Appleyard and Chesbrough, 2017); and optimize innovation, including collaborative innovation (Foss and Saebi, 2018).

Yet despite the increasing research into BMs, many aspects remain understudied (Wirtz *et al.*, 2016). There is a lack of knowledge about the BMs' processual approaches, especially with regard to their transformative and evolutionary dynamics (Chesbrough, 2017)—even though the process is subject to many changes over time (Demil and Lecocq, 2010). Accordingly, there is an interesting research opportunity to understand how organizations transform and renew their BMs under the influence of internal and external factors.

BM is theoretically grounded in the resource-based view (Massa *et al.*, 2017). It is a dynamic, rather than static, model that depends on the evolution of internal and external resources mobilized to create, deliver, and capture value (Demil *et al.*, 2015). Consequently, access to external resources, the evolution of which may be beyond the control of BM-owning organizations, suggests the BM trajectory could be partly subject to and constrained by these resources, calling into question its sustainability. To our knowledge, despite the importance of sources of dependence, their effects on the evolutionary trajectories of BMs are understudied.

Resource dependence theory (Davis and Cobb, 2010; Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978) seems particularly relevant for studying this issue. Organizational access to external resources for developing BMs may imply resource dependence on external partners, which may constrain the strategic choices of companies in the short, medium, and long terms (Afuah, 2014), particularly for small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which rarely have the necessary resources to develop and manage their BMs internally. This dependence seems exacerbated in the case of non-profit BMs (Bocquet *et al.*, 2020), which rely massively on access to external resources. Thus, we aim to understand the evolutionary trajectory of a BM from a resource dependence perspective and, more specifically, to answer a relevant question: *What influence do resource dependence sources have on the evolutionary trajectory of a non-profit BM?*

To answer this question, we study the unique case of the Lyon e-Sport association, which organizes the annual "LeS," a major French e-sport competition. Our work produces several contributive findings: First, it identifies the types and intensities of the sources of dependence of the non-profit BM and their influence on the three BM mechanisms of value creation, value proposition delivery, and value capture. Second, it reveals how sources of dependence influence the evolutionary trajectory of the non-profit BM. Third,



it shows how the evolution of the BM provides the Lyon e-Sport association with opportunities to manage and reduce its level of dependence and reinforce its sustainability.

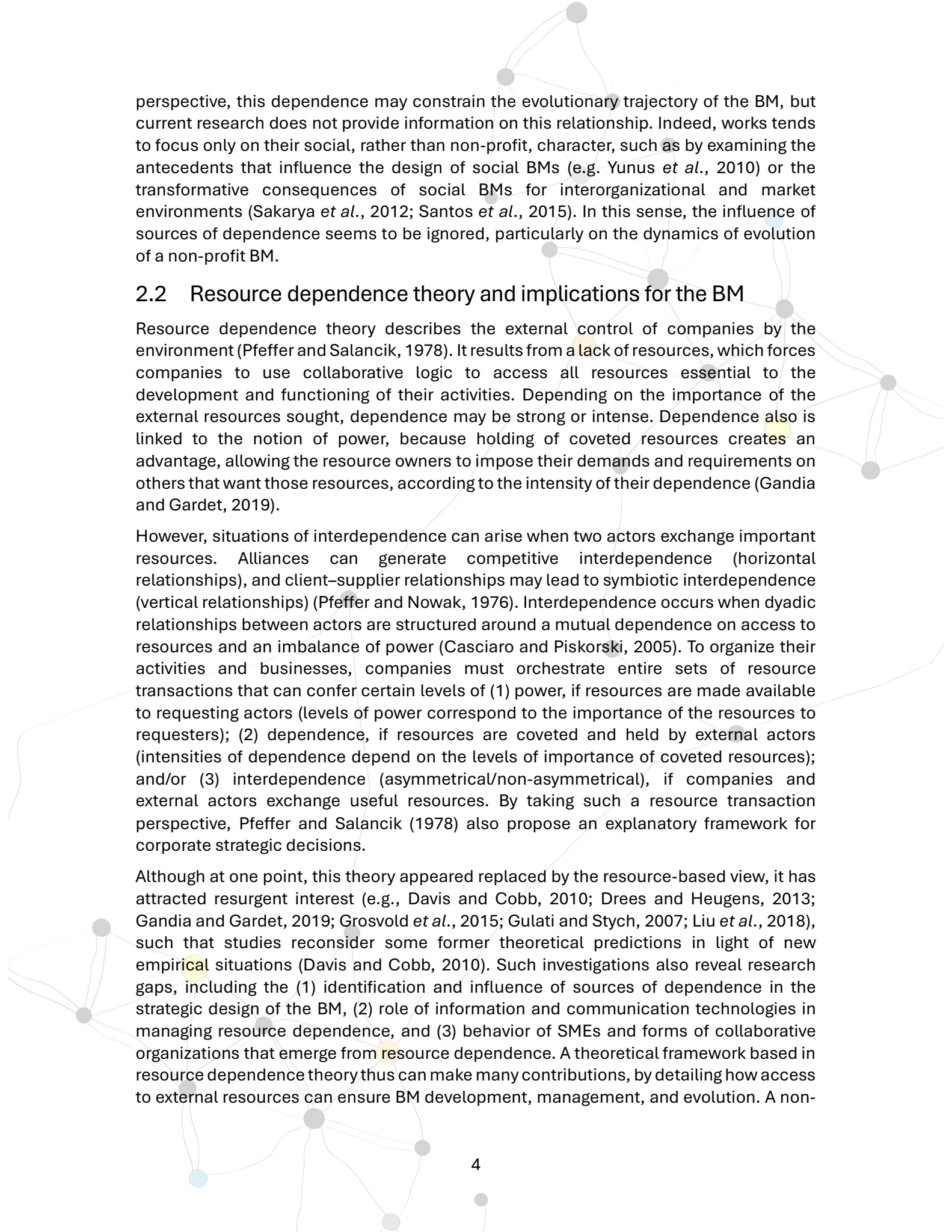
2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Non-profit BM, resources and trajectory

The BM describes the “*design or architecture of the value creation, delivery and capture mechanisms*” (Teece, 2010: 172). We consider the BM as a formal conceptual representation that simplifies reality by conceptually and precisely describing the organization of resources and activities to articulate value mechanisms and achieve objectives (Massa *et al.*, 2017). Despite the heterogeneity of approaches and conceptualizations of the concept (Wirtz *et al.*, 2016), most authors agree it has three key value mechanisms: (1) value creation, (2) value proposition and (3) value capture. With these three mechanisms, the BM provides a conceptual architecture for the design, formalization, and evolution of strategies; they connect the internal structures of companies with their external environments. The BM is therefore the fruit of strategic thinking and serves as a basis for decision-making but can also influence strategy in return (Hacklin and Wallnöfer, 2012). Whereas the overall purpose of the BM is economic, it can be applied to profit or non-profit approaches (Yunus *et al.*, 2010).

Non-profit BMs, or social BMs, usually are linked to non-profit organizations (e.g., foundations, associations, non-governmental organizations [NGOs]) that seek to achieve social objectives while maintaining operations like those of traditional businesses (Yunus *et al.*, 2010). They are distinct in their strategic approach to managing their activities, which requires access to resources to cover all costs (Berger *et al.*, 2004) through non-profit collaborations or social alliances (Sakarya *et al.*, 2012). Although these organizations do not seek to make a profit, they do need to generate income to achieve their social objectives (Shoham *et al.*, 2006). The pursuit of their non-commercial mission therefore requires a permanent reinvestment of income and, at the same time, a daily search for additional financial resources to support strategy execution (e.g. fundraising, donations, sponsorship) (Gratton, 2018). From this perspective, the value capture of BMs of non-profit organizations covers all or part of the costs generated by the mechanisms of value creation and value proposition delivery. Another strong characteristic of non-profit BMs is the presence of complementary partners and resource providers, which must be retained (or partially renewed) to persist in the quest for sustainability (Yunus *et al.*, 2010). This characteristic can be a source of resource dependence because the strategy and governance must be aligned to serve the interests of stakeholders (Oliveira *et al.*, 2021). The sustainability of this type of BM is therefore a challenge for non-profit organizations, and access to external resources—such as financing, technological and communication/marketing support, management skills, and skilled and volunteer labor—is crucial (Berger *et al.*, 2004). Organizational reputation also is very important in negotiating access to resources (Sakarya *et al.*, 2012).

Due to their intrinsic characteristics, non-profit BMs often require financial and other forms of support from external resources. Organizations can therefore be beholden on external resource providers, resulting in resource dependency. From a temporal



perspective, this dependence may constrain the evolutionary trajectory of the BM, but current research does not provide information on this relationship. Indeed, works tends to focus only on their social, rather than non-profit, character, such as by examining the antecedents that influence the design of social BMs (e.g. Yunus *et al.*, 2010) or the transformative consequences of social BMs for interorganizational and market environments (Sakarya *et al.*, 2012; Santos *et al.*, 2015). In this sense, the influence of sources of dependence seems to be ignored, particularly on the dynamics of evolution of a non-profit BM.

2.2 Resource dependence theory and implications for the BM

Resource dependence theory describes the external control of companies by the environment (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). It results from a lack of resources, which forces companies to use collaborative logic to access all resources essential to the development and functioning of their activities. Depending on the importance of the external resources sought, dependence may be strong or intense. Dependence also is linked to the notion of power, because holding of coveted resources creates an advantage, allowing the resource owners to impose their demands and requirements on others that want those resources, according to the intensity of their dependence (Gandia and Gardet, 2019).

However, situations of interdependence can arise when two actors exchange important resources. Alliances can generate competitive interdependence (horizontal relationships), and client-supplier relationships may lead to symbiotic interdependence (vertical relationships) (Pfeffer and Nowak, 1976). Interdependence occurs when dyadic relationships between actors are structured around a mutual dependence on access to resources and an imbalance of power (Casciaro and Piskorski, 2005). To organize their activities and businesses, companies must orchestrate entire sets of resource transactions that can confer certain levels of (1) power, if resources are made available to requesting actors (levels of power correspond to the importance of the resources to requesters); (2) dependence, if resources are coveted and held by external actors (intensities of dependence depend on the levels of importance of coveted resources); and/or (3) interdependence (asymmetrical/non-asymmetrical), if companies and external actors exchange useful resources. By taking such a resource transaction perspective, Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) also propose an explanatory framework for corporate strategic decisions.

Although at one point, this theory appeared replaced by the resource-based view, it has attracted resurgent interest (e.g., Davis and Cobb, 2010; Drees and Heugens, 2013; Gandia and Gardet, 2019; Grosvold *et al.*, 2015; Gulati and Stych, 2007; Liu *et al.*, 2018), such that studies reconsider some former theoretical predictions in light of new empirical situations (Davis and Cobb, 2010). Such investigations also reveal research gaps, including the (1) identification and influence of sources of dependence in the strategic design of the BM, (2) role of information and communication technologies in managing resource dependence, and (3) behavior of SMEs and forms of collaborative organizations that emerge from resource dependence. A theoretical framework based in resource dependence theory thus can make many contributions, by detailing how access to external resources can ensure BM development, management, and evolution. A non-

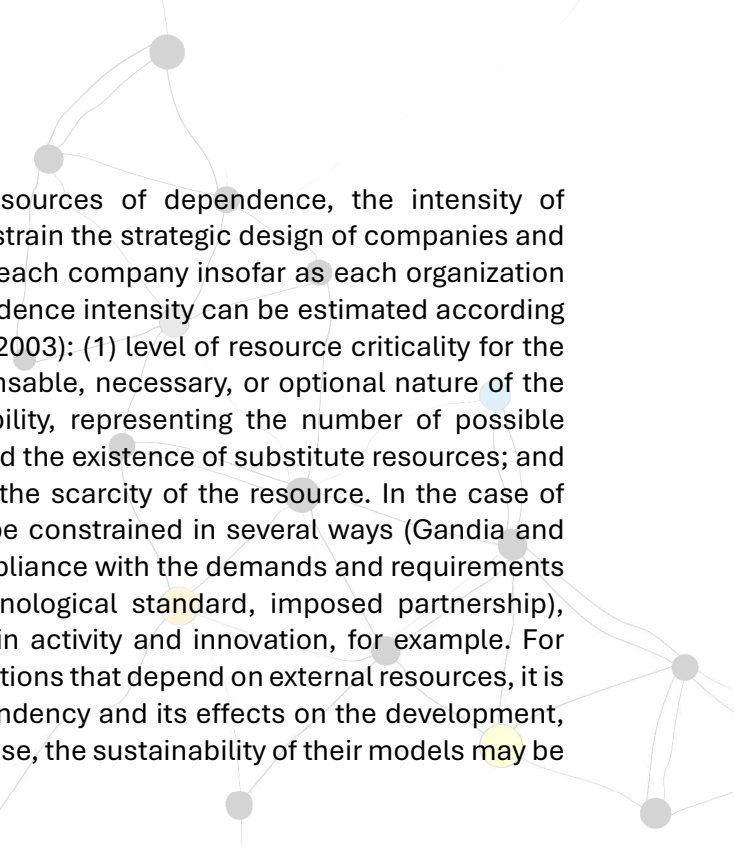
profit organization might confront many sources of dependence, and we analyze them to understand their effects on the BM trajectory.

2.3 Types and intensities of sources of dependence

Gandia and Gardet (2019) distinguish internal and external sources, asserting that internal sources correspond to companies' internal needs for resources to design and develop their day-to-day business. They can be tangible or intangible. External sources come from the environment, which companies encounter in conducting their business; they include positions within value chains, which may be advantageous or disadvantageous, depending on companies' positions (upstream or downstream) in the chains, as well as the supporting technology that companies use to conduct their business or access markets (e.g., digital marketing platforms). Products and services on the market also may have more less advantageous positions depending on competing offers (Takashima and Kim, 2016) and sets of rules in policy/legal frameworks that favor or disfavor firms (Shu and Lewin, 2016). This typology is reinforced by peripheral research that deals with particular sources, such as positions in value chains (Bode *et al.*, 2017); financial resources (Xia *et al.*, 2014); the organization of human resources, boards, and management teams (Grosvold *et al.*, 2015; Nam *et al.*, 2018); knowledge transactions (Liu *et al.*, 2018); and supporting technologies such as digital platforms (Irani, 2015) and social networks (Xia *et al.*, 2016). Table 1 provides a summary of the Sources of dependence identified by literature.

Category	Types of sources of dependence	Description	Authors
Internal	Financial	Equity (e.g., liquidity, capital, cash flow, profit level, debt capacity) External funds (e.g., grants, donations, high-risk debts, customer credit).	Bode et al., 2017; Gandia and Gardet, 2019; Grosvold et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2018; Nam et al., 2018; Shu and Lewin, 2016; Xia et al., 2014, 2016; Zona et al., 2015
	Physical	Factories, offices, industrial equipment, raw materials, products, stock, stores	
	Human	Individual knowledge and skills, business functions and capacities (e.g., creative, operator, manager, director, governance, hierarchical structure, training)	
	Technical	Organizational, technological and social capital (including trademarks, intellectual property rights, patents, manuals, procedures, certifications, copyrights)	
	Reputation	Determined by level of reliability, trust, loyalty, and market share and perceived quality of products, services and brands	
External	Position in value chain	Position of the company (upstream/downstream) in relation to the other players in the value chain (depends on the level of concentration of the players).	
	Support technology	External support technology (standard) that is indispensable for carrying out the activity or accessing the market (e.g., technology license, e-commerce platform)	
	Market position	Position of products and/or services on the market relative to competitors (depends on the type of market: competitive, oligopoly or monopoly)	
	Political and legal environment	Set of policy rules, regulations and legislation related to the sector(s) and market(s) in which activity is carried out	

Table 1. Sources of dependence identified by literature



Depending on the importance of these sources of dependence, the intensity of dependence can vary and more or less constrain the strategic design of companies and thus their BMs. This intensity is specific to each company insofar as each organization has specific resource requirements. Dependence intensity can be estimated according to three dimensions (Pfeffer and Salancik, 2003): (1) level of resource criticality for the firm's activity, indicating the highly indispensable, necessary, or optional nature of the resource; (2) level of resource substitutability, representing the number of possible alternative routes to access the resource and the existence of substitute resources; and (3) level of resource availability, indicating the scarcity of the resource. In the case of strong dependence, strategic activity can be constrained in several ways (Gandia and Gardet, 2019; Gulati and Stych, 2007): compliance with the demands and requirements of dominant partners (e.g., imposed technological standard, imposed partnership), unequal distribution of income, or locked-in activity and innovation, for example. For organizations, especially non-profit organizations that depend on external resources, it is essential to understand the origins of dependency and its effects on the development, management, and evolution of BMs; otherwise, the sustainability of their models may be called into question.

3. Methods

Our exploratory research aims to study the role of resource dependence on the evolutionary trajectory of a non-profit BM. Because our study object is relatively unexplored, we adopt a qualitative methodology (Miles and Huberman, 1994) that uses a single, in-depth case study (Yin, 2009), of the Lyon e-Sport association.

3.1 Lyon E-Sport case study

The French e-sport market has over 5 million consumers, accounting for 12% of total Internet users, which includes more than 2 million practitioners (5% of Internet users) and 2 million viewers. Since 2018, France has emerged as a key player in the e-sport industry, ranking as the third-largest European market with a value of \$30 million (according to PayPal's Super Data research). By 2022, France solidified its leadership in the global e-sport market, contributing to the \$800 billion industry with \$90 billion generated domestically (BPCE, 2023). This growth aligns with the French President's commitment to support and invest in e-sports, further enhancing the country's position in the global landscape. The market encompasses a diverse range of participants, including:

- Players, both amateur and professional.
- Consumers (spectators via the Internet or at physical events).
- Existing brands (e.g., Orange, PMU, PSG, EDF) that sponsor teams or sporting events or create their own teams.
- Event organizers, such as Lyon e-Sport.
- News media, such as Web TV and the specialized press.
- New structures (e.g., agencies designed to monitor the professionalization of players, the body responsible for monitoring e-sport in France).

Our study examines a key player in the e-sport ecosystem: Lyon e-Sport, an association founded in 2011 under the 1901 law in France. Its primary objective is to professionalize and promote video games and e-sport, particularly in France. With over 60 volunteer members, Lyon e-Sport organizes various e-sport events, including "lan parties" that attract players, visitors, press, streamers, and influencers. Notably, since its inception, it has hosted the LeS competition, primarily focusing on League of Legends, and added a Fortnite tournament in 2018. In February 2020, Lyon e-Sport held the 13th edition of the event at the Lyon Convention Centre (see Box 1). Following this, the COVID crisis and the global growth of e-sports led to significant changes in Lyon e-Sport's business model, particularly in resource management and dependency. Thus, our study focuses on the LeS event's business model as it was organized before the COVID-19 pandemic (see Table 2).

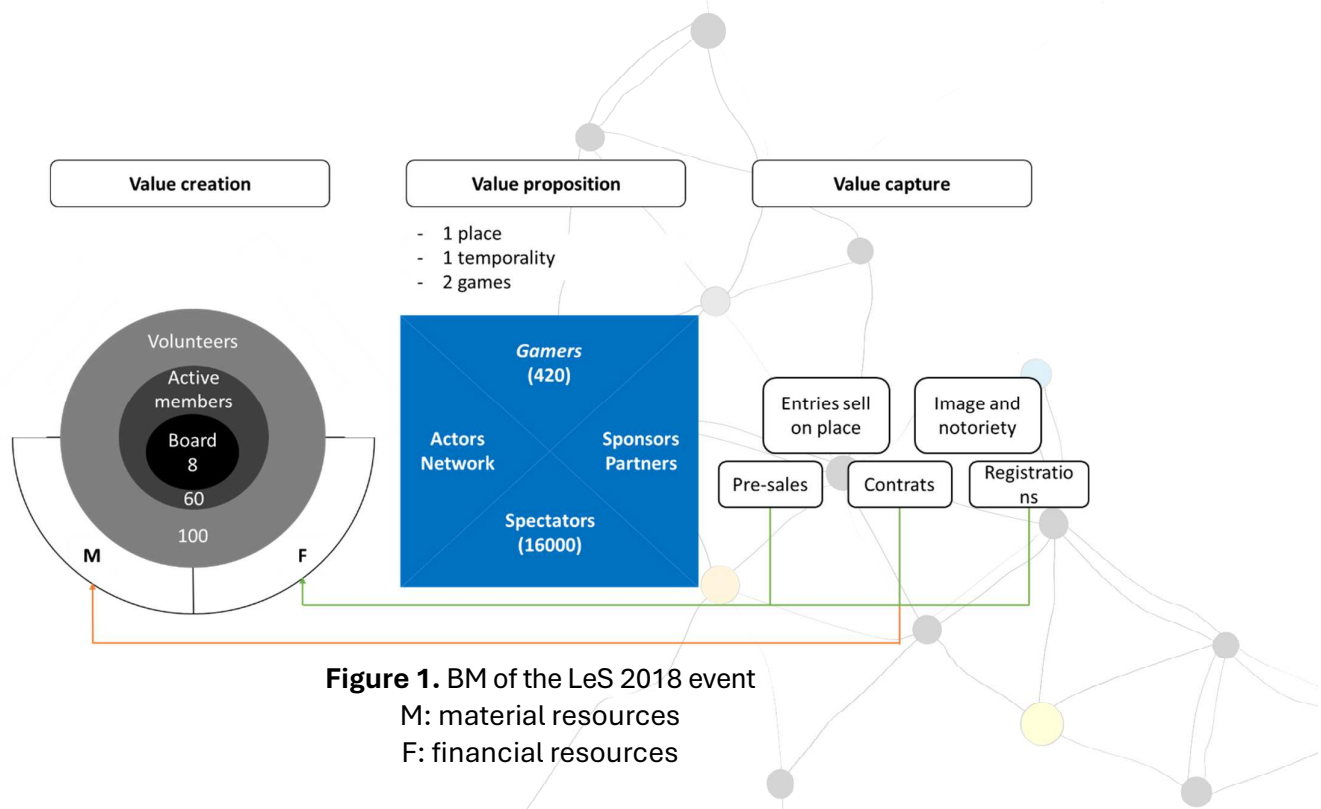
Events	Place	Number of visitors	Number of players
LeS 4 (2012)	Ecole Supinfo Lyon	2500	160 players (LoL), 32 teams
LeS 9 (2016)	Palais des Sports of Gerland	8700	320 players (LoL), 64 teams
LeS 2018 (2018)	Cité des Congrès of Lyon	16040	320 players (LoL), 64 teams, and 100 players (Fortnite), 48 teams

Table 2. Examples of the evolution of the LeS event

LeS 2020

In February 2020, the 13th edition of Lyon e-Sport took place at the Cité des Congrès in Lyon. It brought together more than 17,000 physical visitors over three days, with almost 590 players of the *League of Legends*, *Trackmania* and *Fortnite* games. It generated more than 10 million streaming views on 25 different web channels, testifying to the growing success of the event in the French e-sports landscape.

More specifically, we're interested in the trajectory of the event's BM (see Figure 1). This non-profit BM was conceived of the association's initial strategic objectives to promote and structure e-Sport in France. We study the role of resource dependence and its influence on the BM mechanisms of value creation, value proposition delivery, and value capture. Whereas the resources mobilized by the association have evolved as events have unfolded, the organization of the LeS relies on several types of generic resources (see Table 3).




Human resources	60 volunteer members active year-round; more than 100 additional volunteers as reinforcements during the LeS event
Material resources	Miscellaneous material and network equipment owned by the association and used during each LeS (e.g., cables, cabinets), enabling it to technically ensure the event
Financial resources	Three main sources: sponsorship, partners, ticket sales to attend (visitors) or participate (players) and any profit made from the previous event

Table 3. Main resources mobilized within the framework of the organization of LeS by Lyon e-Sport

3.2 Data collection and analysis

To answer our research question, we collected primary and secondary data sources on 2 different period. Our case study first relies on 15 semi-structured interviews of various volunteer members of the Lyon e-Sport association (Table 4). We conducted interviews during June–October 2018. During our interviews, we were careful to avoid using the term “dependence,” so as to not bias the responses. This initial period corresponds to a major trajectory of LeS (Table 6). Then, for the 2019 and 2020 editions, we conducted complementary interviews – from 2020 to 2023) to update the data (Table 4). Interviews averaged about one hour in length and were recorded and transcribed (206 pages) (Eisenhardt, 1989).

To complement our primary data, we utilized a substantial amount of secondary data to support triangulation (Quinn Patton, 2002). The longitudinal nature of the collected documents, primarily the association's internal records from 2011 to the present, allowed us to reconstruct the evolutionary trajectory of the business models (BM) of both the event and the association. We accessed a variety of documents, including press releases, brochures, financial statements, partnership monitoring reports, and preparation and post-event documents for each LeS event. Additionally, we analyzed Lyon e-Sport's social media presence.



Date	Function	Member since
June 2018	Stage assistant - stage team (1)	2013
June 2018	Deputy Secretary General & technician - technical team (2)	2011
June 2018	Editor-in-Chief - marketing Team (3)	2016
June 2018	Community manager - marketing team (4)	2011
June 2018	Technical manager - technical team (5)	2016
June 2018	President (6)	2011
July 2018	General Secretary, Head of partnerships & Web TV - marketing team (7)	2016
July 2018	Vice President & Marketing Manager - marketing team (8)	2013
July 2018	Technician - technical team (9)	2013
July 2018	Press manager - marketing team (10)	2014
July 2018	Tournament manager - tournament team (11)	2011
July 2018	Tournament administrator - tournament team (12)	2014
July 2018	Stage manager - stage team (13)	2013
September 2018	Head of cosplay - stage team (14)	2014
October 2018	Technician - technical team (15)	2011
February 2019	Vice President & Marketing Manager - marketing team (8)	2013
April 2019	Vice President & Marketing Manager - marketing team (8)	2013
January 2020	President (6)	2011
June 2020	Press manager - marketing team (10)	2014
September 2023	Vice President & Marketing Manager - marketing team (8)	2013
September 2023	Tournament manager - tournament team (11)	2011

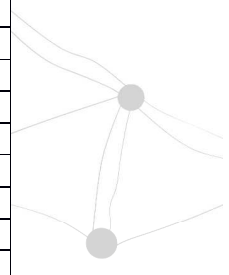


Table 4. Interviews

For data analysis, we employed thematic coding to condense and classify quotes into analytical units (Miles and Huberman, 1994), utilizing NVivo software. The software's matrix coding query facilitated connections among different variables, such as resource types and BM mechanisms (see Appendix). We focused on identifying dependence sources and their intensities through our textual analysis, noting phrases like "we are dependent on" and "it is important." This approach led to the construction of a reading grid based on relevant literature, linking BM trajectories with sources of resource dependence and revealing emerging categories.

4. Findings

4.1 Types and intensities of sources of dependence and effects on the non-profit BM

We identify the influence of 10 sources of dependence, with varying degrees of intensity and influence on the value mechanisms of the Lyon e-Sport non-profit BM and its event (Table 5).

4.1.1 Types of sources of dependence

The non-profit nature of Lyon e-Sport reveals the first source of high intensity dependence: *financial resources*. Because the association does not seek or share profits, organizing the event is extremely costly, and it increases every year. The

association must find external sources of funding; 80% of the funding is external. The associative nature of Lyon e-Sport limits the desires of potential partners to invest:

If we were a company, it would be much better, because you can discuss business, whereas there are entities that we would like to work with but they don't want to work with us because we are an association and we don't generate money, so for them, high risk and lower profitability. (Stage assistant)

Beyond the financial resources that are mandatory for the feasibility of the event, our interviewees indicate that the tournament and the competition remain priorities. Specifically, our research suggests that *physical* and *technical resources* are of paramount importance. From a physical point of view, every two years, the association must find a place to host the event. Beyond satisfying logistical requirements, this venue must be coherent with the growth objectives of LeS, which poses certain constraints on Lyon e-Sport:

If we want to welcome everyone, we have to change venue; we do it every two years. So every two years, it's the same story, we have to find a new venue. (Tournament manager, board member)

From a technical perspective, the success of the event also depends on the acquisition of specific equipment. If the association manages, through endowments, to acquire this equipment, high financial costs are expected:

We have critical equipment needs. If we don't have it, it may prevent the event from functioning. (Technical officer, board member)

Proper functioning of the network also is essential to ensuring a quality event. During the 2018 LeS, a problem with a fiber connection, independent of Lyon e-Sport, momentarily stopped the competition. The event thus lacked competitive content for several hours:

We had to go through the connection of the hall and we had some very bad surprises. And now it sucks because the whole event depends on that. The organization can be perfect, but if the connection doesn't work nothing works and there is no more event. (President, founding member, board member)

The event also depends heavily on *human resources*; even though it takes place in a defined space and time, it requires months of preparation and organization and relies on the mobilization of diverse and varied skills. Fortunately, because of the association's reputation and notoriety, one of its strengths is that it attracts many volunteer members who have specific skills, thereby guaranteeing the success of the event:

Our strength is the volunteer members, who are all very great professionals in their field, each of them. (Community manager, founding member)

We also identify another source of high-intensity dependence that influences access to financial, technical, physical, and human resources: *reputation*. Today, Lyon e-Sport enjoys an excellent reputation among the various categories of players involved, including players, visitors, and influencers. Furthermore, LeS is perceived as a serious and credible event, and even as a mandatory stopover for *League of Legends* players. However, it requires a lot of effort to maintain and sustain this reputation. The e-sport event sector is regularly marked by scandals due to poor organization or even dishonesty.

Moreover, the sector features very strong competition among organizing entities and their events.

In line with sources of dependence that are linked to the reputation and size of Lyon e-Sport, its *position in the sports sector* is less influential than other sources. The French e-sports sector is currently under construction. In addition to its seniority in the sector and its expertise in the *League of Legends* game, Lyon e-Sport's notoriety gives it a relatively secure, dominant position in the French e-sport event landscape and allows it to enjoy a very favorable position in relation to other organizations:

Today, our event is known and recognized. And in 100% associative, we are by far the biggest. (President, founding member, member of the board)

Lyon e-Sport's position in turn helps it attract partners, sponsors, players, visitors, and influencers. Two sources of high-intensity dependence related to the specificities of e-sport emerge from our analysis. First, the LeS event depends on the *game of League of Legends*, which largely defines its expertise, image, and notoriety. This creates dependence risks. That is, *League of Legends* has more than 100 million players, but it faces the strong competition that is inherent to the video game industry.

[League of Legends] LoL, I don't know how long it will last. You make the choice very early on to position yourself on a single game, it's more readable, clearer, but in return, you depend on the game. (Vice-president, board member)

Moreover, the event can be controlled by the game's publisher, Riot Games. Although the association and Riot Games work together to offer players the best possible experience, Lyon e-Sport does not rule out the possibility that Riot may one day limit the operations:

You are dependent on a game, and the game belongs to a publisher. Tomorrow, if Riot Games forbids us to do LoL, Lyon e-Sport has to change the game, while LeS is known for LoL, that's going to be the biggest problem. (Stage manager)

Second, because the e-sport sector is specific, a source of dependence relates to *user behavior*. E-sport, like many other emerging sectors, is subject to a new category of actors—influencers—who, in the context of e-sport, disseminate content related to the most-played games through platforms such as YouTube and Twitch. The influencers are followed by communities that can reach, for the most famous, several million followers. Although Lyon e-Sport maintains excellent relations with a several influencers in France, the sports community, like the sector, is adopting codes that could put this type of event at risk:

The evolution of the behaviors of consumers of e-sport events is difficult to manage.... It also comes from the rise of influencers, people are used to believing everything they want, when they want. Everything is very instantaneous with e-sport.... So people are going to be much more critical, but not in a good way ... we can't make mistakes anymore. (Community manager, founding member)

All these sources of dependence exhibit high intensity. Furthermore, we identify two other sources of less influential dependence: *size* and *regulation*. Although the size of the LeS does not have a large influence on its BM, the constant evolution of the event affects its trajectory and influences its dependence on other types of resources, particularly financial and physical ones. The evolution of the LeS is part of a well-defined strategy,

whereby the impetus to move toward a more qualitative and quantitative event takes place every two years and requires new partners to pursue growth:

LeS has grown enormously, so we have to find the money we need, so we have to find new partners, to evolve, to find partners who are not yet there, but who can finance up to what we need. (Tournament manager, board member)

This temporal strategy allows Lyon e-Sport to stabilize and improve its event by limiting certain difficulties. However, the association also faces a major difficulty: Its geographical identity (i.e., organization in Lyon) is threatened by the difficulties of gaining access to a more important place than the Cité des Congrès. Although the association still has other spaces available in Lyon, the size of the event will be limited by this element and may push the association to reinvent itself or innovate to pursue its strategy.

Finally, because the French e-sport sector is in the process of being structured, it is subject to relatively vague regulations. Although the LeS event is not very dependent on the regulations that surround e-sport, Lyon e-Sport ensures that its competition modalities (e.g., origin and source of cash prize) respect any existing regulations. Beyond these modalities, no regulations formally frame e-sport practices, players, and events. The influence of this source of dependence is thus minimal according to the interviewees.

4.1.2 Effects of sources of dependence on non-profit BM value mechanisms

According to our previous results, several sources of dependence influence value creation. The organization of the event—the preparation for which begins several months before it takes place—relies mainly on the association's ability to find financial resources. Also, depending on the budget raised by the association, the creation of value (e.g., nature of the event, size, content) may vary:

When the President budgets the event, he does it according to expenses: We will spend so much because we have so much to spend. And if the event is not balanced before it starts, we don't do it. (Technician, founding member, board member)

The search for partners and sponsors relies mainly on the association's human resources; during the months of preparation, the involvement of volunteer members is essential. To a lesser extent, the size of the event, its reputation, and its positioning in the sports event sector also influence the creation of value. We thus observe a relational effect among the different types of resources that influence Lyon e-Sport's access to financial resources to create value:

We have war machines in sponsoring. They spend an astronomical amount of time trying to find partners to make the event possible. This is our one and only recourse to go and find partners and money. (Tournament manager, board member)

According to our results, the value proposition delivery is the only mechanism influenced by all sources of dependence; it depends particularly on physical and technical resources. As previously indicated, the event, in its defined space-time, is primarily an e-sport competition. Therefore, any element that, in whole or in part, might call into question the tournament would directly and negatively affect the event's value proposition:

It's got to turn. If it runs, no problem ... if it doesn't run, only problems. As long as the network is running throughout the event, no one will notice that there is a technical team, if there are problems, no event or very slow event, so no competition and no visitors. (Technical manager, board member)

Moreover, the LeS involves the real-time organization and management of a complex event, calling on all association teams in situ. Yet volunteer members alone are not enough to ensure the event is held. Lyon e-Sport occasionally calls on additional non-member volunteers for the duration of the LeS. These volunteers, known as "lion cubs," provide support and assistance. Although Lyon e-Sport has no difficulty attracting these additional human resources, their numbers remain insufficient:

This year, there were 180 of us [member volunteers and lion cubs] in total, and I would have needed 30 more to do it right. (President, founding member, board member)

Finally, human resources have a key role. Lyon e-Sport's members support value capture, both tangible and intangible. Hard-working members collect financial and material endowments needed for the event.

Sources of dependence	Degree of intensity	BM components
Financial	+++ Criticality: indispensable Substitutability: no Availability: rare, difficult to access	Value creation (Value proposition)
Physics	++ Criticality: indispensable Substitutability: yes Availability: not rare, not difficult to access	Value proposition
Technique	++ Criticality: indispensable Substitutability: no Availability: not rare, not difficult to access	Value proposition
Human	++ Criticality: indispensable Substitutability: no Availability: not rare, not difficult to access	Value creation Value proposition Value capture
Reputation	+++ Criticality: indispensable Substitutability: no Availability: rare, difficult to maintain and conserve	Value creation Value proposition Value capture
Sector position	++ Criticality: indispensable Substitutability: no Availability: rare, difficult to maintain and conserve	Value creation Value proposition Value capture
Game and publisher (support technology)	+++ Criticality: necessary Substitutability: no Availability: rare	Value proposition
User behaviors	+++ Criticality: necessary Substitutability: no Availability: rare	(Value creation) Value proposition
Size	+++ Criticality: indispensable Substitutability: no Availability: rare	Value creation Value proposition
Regulations	+++ Criticality: NA Substitutability: no Availability: NA	Value proposition
Notes: +++ (strong intensity) ++ (moderate intensity) + (low intensity)		

Table 5. Summary of sources of dependence and effects on BM components

4.2 Effect of sources of dependence on the trajectory of Lyon E-Sport's non-profit BM

The Lyon e-Sport BM has undergone several evolutions related to the progressive structuring of its event. We identify three major stages: (1) initialization, during which the BM was built, (2) development, when the BM became formalized and began to grow, and (3) maturity, which is the vector of its consolidation (see Figure 2 and Table 6).

4.2.1 Positive externalities and uncertainty of the sources of dependence over time

Although the sources of dependence are constraining for the association, successful access to various resources every year creates a positive effect that gradually increases the association's access to resources. Although the intensity of the sources of dependence does not necessarily change, their recurrence provides a positive externality that facilitates easier access:

When you work with a big partner for the first year, the following years, it encourages other big partners to come, it's a logical ripple effect. (General secretary, head of partnerships and Web TV marketing team)

This reinforcing effect is particularly important, in that the sometimes-negative image of the e-sport sector can complicate its access to partners and financial sponsors. However, even when a partner commits to supporting the event, its long-term commitment is not guaranteed:

Today we have sponsors, we hope to renew them for the following years, but it is uncertain. (Technician, founding member, board member)

Our analysis of resource dependence sources and their impact on the non-profit business model (BM) underscores their interdependence. The Lyon e-Sport BM illustrates this, as securing a key partner attracts additional partners and enhances resource access, ultimately improving event quality. However, the association faces challenges, such as difficulty in finding larger venues in Lyon, which may necessitate scaling back events or exploring new strategies for renewal.

In terms of space, we're going to start to be limited in Lyon. (Tournament manager, board member)

A similar issue arises for sponsors and partners who have access to Lyon e-Sport:

And the real concern we have today is that we need to do bigger, we need more money, and the sponsors who are inclined to our event are finding it harder and harder to keep up. (Tournament manager, board member)

Even though we observe this virtuous circle that has enabled Lyon e-Sport to bring its BM to maturity since its creation in 2011, the non-profit specificity of the model constantly questions its sustainability; its evolutionary trajectory is not linear. Therefore, the association must find ways to limit the intensity of dependence on these different sources.

4.2.2 Diversification and control of resources to reduce dependence and support sustainability

Despite its current success, Lyon e-Sport's dependence on external resources weakens the event's business model (BM), a fragility compounded by its associative status and non-profit nature. However, the organization effectively manages and minimizes this dependence by diversifying its resource sources and implementing control mechanisms. For instance, it has reduced funding dependency risks by expanding its partner and sponsor network. Since the 2018 edition, Lyon e-Sport introduced an exhibitor area, enhancing visitor content and creating a new income stream. Recognizing the importance of financial resources, the association has diversified its funding sources, evolving into a festival that offers a broader range of entertainment and activities beyond its LAN party to attract more attendees and increase ticket sales.

Merchandising is the exhibition part too, which is not sponsoring, it's selling space, so diversifying our sources of income like that ... it makes us less dependent on the sponsor who can stop funding us overnight. (President, founding member, board member)

Similarly, it has opened up to include competition in *Fortnite*, as a complement to the *League of Legends*; this expansion attracts more players and visitors:

With Fortnite, we attract a new audience, we renew ourselves, we protect ourselves from LoL's small loss of momentum, and we complete our offer, without spreading ourselves over 20 games as some other events do. (Cosplay manager)

Whereas this diversification allows Lyon e-Sport to limit its dependence on any one actor or resource, it does not guarantee the complete autonomy of its BM. To do so, the association also controls its dependence by playing on its reputation and emphasizing its dominant position in the sports events sector. However, this form of control remains difficult to exercise, even for Lyon e-Sport as a recognized player in the field of e-sports events. Once again, the difficulty of controlling external players is reinforced by the non-profit nature of the BM. Partner loyalty also is complicated:

It's complicated to retain a partner. So to get more, to negotiate anything, and to ensure a partnership over time, I'm not even going to tell you.... Plus, we're an association, it can be scary. (Vice-president, board member)

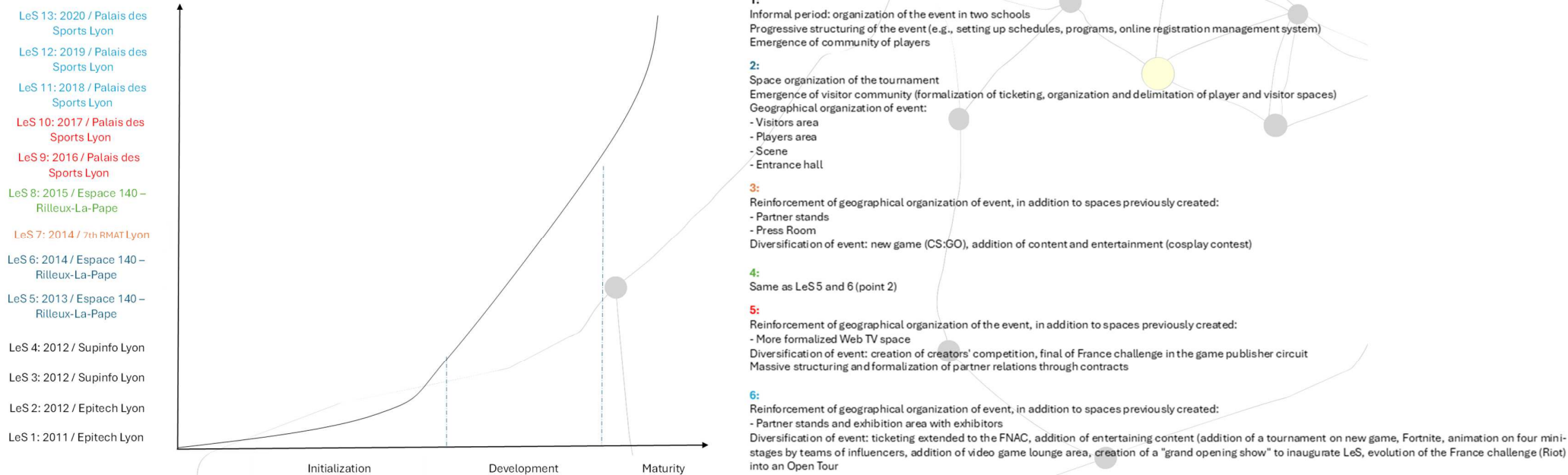



Figure 2. Evolution of LeS



Date	Event	Stage of the BM's evolutionary trajectory	Observed effects of the main sources of dependence
April 2011	LeS 1	Initialization	Event with restricted perimeter; strong dependence on human resources (to organize and manage the event), technical and physical resources (to ensure the tournament, the only content of the event during the first 2 editions)
April 2012	LeS 2		
May 2012	LeS 3		Evolution of the event with setting up of amateur competitive tournament; dependence on financial resources for access to larger venue and setting up of cash prize First partnerships with sponsors (notably for material prizes for winners)
September 2012	LeS 4		
March 2013	LeS 5	Development	Formalization of event in space that allows it to be organized in different areas; dependence on physical and financial resources for organization of the event Lyon e-Sport's reputation enables it to attract first-class partners to finance event
March 2014	LeS 6		
June 2014	LeS 7		Dependence on Lyon e-Sport's reputation because it organizes the event in partnership with the 7th RMA dependence on financial resources
February 2015	LeS 8		Dependence on financial resources
February 2016	LeS 9	Maturity	
March 2017	LeS 10		Dependence on physical resources: change of hall for the Palais des Sports Dependence on financial resources: event
February 2018	LeS 11 (LeS 2018)		Dependence on physical resources: change of hall for the Palais des Sports Dependence on financial resources: larger event (e.g., competition on two games, higher cash prize, more content offered to visitors) Dependence on technical resources: more content (including big opening show organized on stage), more widely distributed (via more than 25 Web TV channels) Positive effect of Lyon e-Sport's reputation to access financial resources
February 2019	LeS 12 (LeS 2019)		Dependence on physical resources: the event hosted a third game and more players (Rainbow Six Siege in 2019 and Trackmania in 2020). Therefore, the management of the venue and the physical resources required to host it had to grow Dependence on financial resources: larger event (e.g., competition on three games, higher cash prize, more content offered to visitors)
February 2020	LeS 13 (LeS 2020)		Dependence on technical resources: more content, more widely distributed (via more than 25 Web TV channels) by more casters with wider communities Positive effect of Lyon e-Sport's reputation to access financial resources In 2019, Lyon e-Sport also managed, in addition to its own event, all the tournament at a bigger European event (Dreamhack)

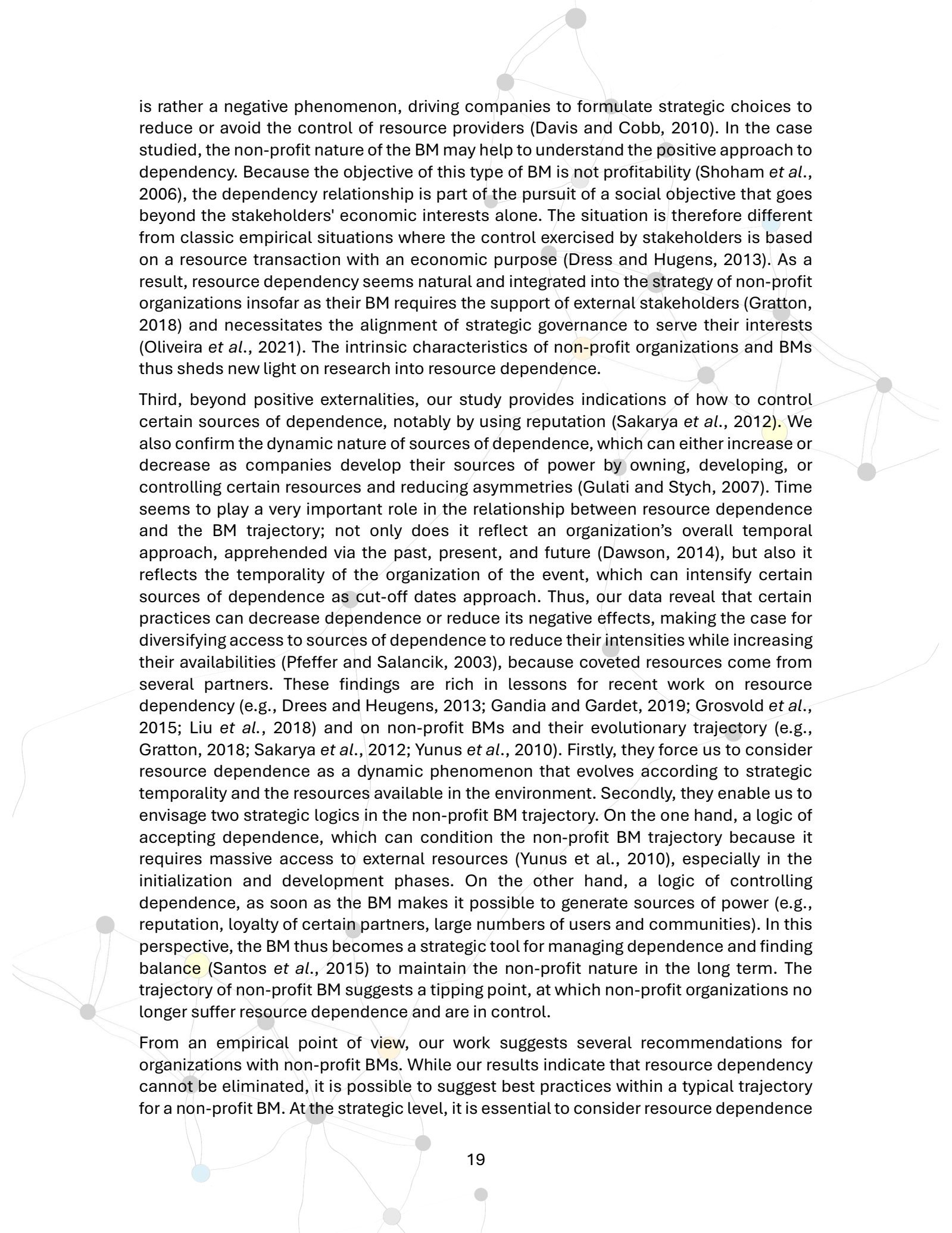
Table 6. Evolution of the BM trajectory of the LeS event

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Our research makes several theoretical and empirical contributions that provide topics for discussion in both BM and resource dependence literature.

First, our results reveal clearly which elements influence the evolutionary trajectory of a non-profit BM, particularly subject to uncertainty (Nielsen and Aagaard, 2021). We thus enrich previous work that has adopted a dynamic, transformative approach to BMs (e.g., Chesbrough, 2017; Demil *et al.*, 2015) by showing how the types and intensities of dependence sources can condition the evolution of a non-profit BM over time. This is in line with Maier *et al.* (2014: 16) recommendations for more “*comprehensive and evidence-based understanding of effects of becoming business-like is needed.*” More specifically, our contribution lies in the use of resource dependence theory (Pfeffer and Salancik, 2003) as a framework for analyzing the trajectory of a non-profit BM. To the extent that the development, management, and evolution of this type of BM requires massive access to external resources (Yunus *et al.*, 2010), the trajectory can be explained by analyzing sources of dependence. We further show that the non-profit organization's understanding of dependence is essential to the sustainability of the BM, thus enriching the growing literature increases on sustainable BMs (e.g., Raith and Siebold, 2018). Contrary to the findings of most previous research (e.g., Drees and Heugens, 2013; Gandia and Gardet, 2019; Grosvold *et al.*, 2015; Liu *et al.*, 2018), we find that the organization does not suffer from dependency or seek to fight it; instead, it uses dependence as a source of value creation and innovation. These results go in the same direction as previous work on creativity and innovation, which shows that internal organizational tensions (e.g., vision versus operational, objectives versus means), voluntary risk-taking, and a taste for challenge can stimulate creativity and innovation at both the individual and collective levels (e.g., Dewett, 2007). As the LeS case shows, the non-profit nature of the BM pushes the organization to increase its need for external resources (and therefore its dependence) and voluntarily take risks to surpass itself, to make its event evolve and ensure its sustainable growth. Thus, we show that the sustainability of a non-profit BM depends on the way it positively manages its dependence on resources that support its access to the external resources, as are needed for its basic functioning (Berger *et al.*, 2004).

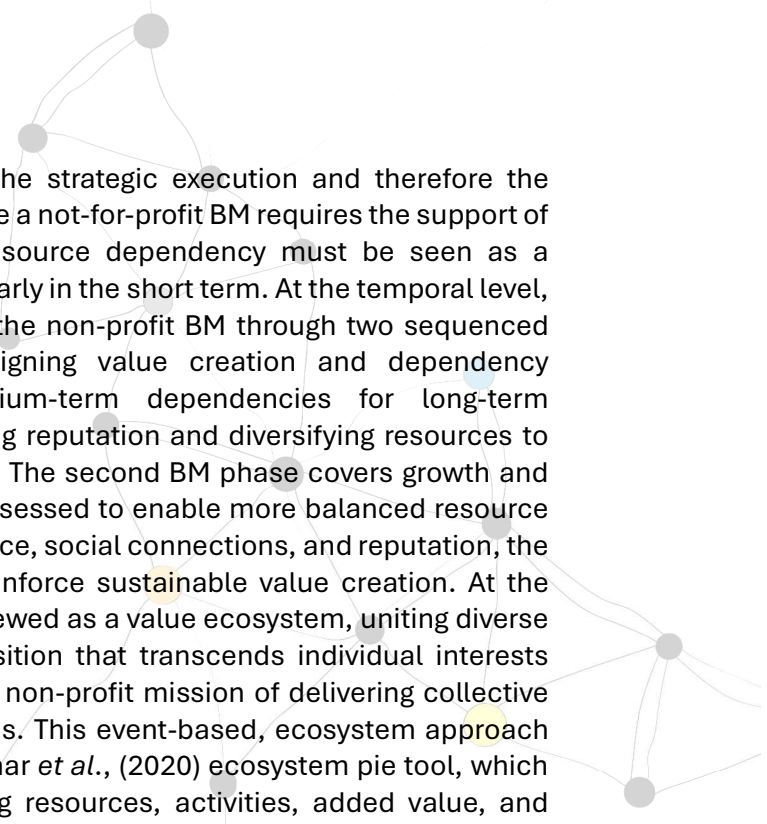
Second, our study enriches research on resource dependence by identifying several types of sources of dependence for the specific case of non-profit organizations. This extends the work of Gandia and Gardet (2019), who studied a similar sector (video game industry). We confirm the crucial importance of financial resources as a major source of dependence (Xia *et al.*, 2014) and find that is reputation, not size, that matters, because reputation provides bargaining power (Carpenter, 2014). Our results also show that beyond the constraints related to dependence, the recurrence of sources of dependence can provide an increasingly positive effect, as access to missing resources grows. This evolving path dependence (Thietart, 2015) creates a virtuous circle in which the learning, social ties and experience of successful access to resources facilitates future access (Ali *et al.*, 2020). This reveals a more positive approach to resource dependency, in contrast to the negative view taken by the historic theory which postulates the external control of an organization by the environment (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). Originally, dependence



is rather a negative phenomenon, driving companies to formulate strategic choices to reduce or avoid the control of resource providers (Davis and Cobb, 2010). In the case studied, the non-profit nature of the BM may help to understand the positive approach to dependency. Because the objective of this type of BM is not profitability (Shoham *et al.*, 2006), the dependency relationship is part of the pursuit of a social objective that goes beyond the stakeholders' economic interests alone. The situation is therefore different from classic empirical situations where the control exercised by stakeholders is based on a resource transaction with an economic purpose (Dress and Huggens, 2013). As a result, resource dependency seems natural and integrated into the strategy of non-profit organizations insofar as their BM requires the support of external stakeholders (Gratton, 2018) and necessitates the alignment of strategic governance to serve their interests (Oliveira *et al.*, 2021). The intrinsic characteristics of non-profit organizations and BMs thus sheds new light on research into resource dependence.

Third, beyond positive externalities, our study provides indications of how to control certain sources of dependence, notably by using reputation (Sakarya *et al.*, 2012). We also confirm the dynamic nature of sources of dependence, which can either increase or decrease as companies develop their sources of power by owning, developing, or controlling certain resources and reducing asymmetries (Gulati and Stych, 2007). Time seems to play a very important role in the relationship between resource dependence and the BM trajectory; not only does it reflect an organization's overall temporal approach, apprehended via the past, present, and future (Dawson, 2014), but also it reflects the temporality of the organization of the event, which can intensify certain sources of dependence as cut-off dates approach. Thus, our data reveal that certain practices can decrease dependence or reduce its negative effects, making the case for diversifying access to sources of dependence to reduce their intensities while increasing their availabilities (Pfeffer and Salancik, 2003), because coveted resources come from several partners. These findings are rich in lessons for recent work on resource dependency (e.g., Drees and Heugens, 2013; Gandia and Gardet, 2019; Grosvold *et al.*, 2015; Liu *et al.*, 2018) and on non-profit BMs and their evolutionary trajectory (e.g., Gratton, 2018; Sakarya *et al.*, 2012; Yunus *et al.*, 2010). Firstly, they force us to consider resource dependence as a dynamic phenomenon that evolves according to strategic temporality and the resources available in the environment. Secondly, they enable us to envisage two strategic logics in the non-profit BM trajectory. On the one hand, a logic of accepting dependence, which can condition the non-profit BM trajectory because it requires massive access to external resources (Yunus *et al.*, 2010), especially in the initialization and development phases. On the other hand, a logic of controlling dependence, as soon as the BM makes it possible to generate sources of power (e.g., reputation, loyalty of certain partners, large numbers of users and communities). In this perspective, the BM thus becomes a strategic tool for managing dependence and finding balance (Santos *et al.*, 2015) to maintain the non-profit nature in the long term. The trajectory of non-profit BM suggests a tipping point, at which non-profit organizations no longer suffer resource dependence and are in control.

From an empirical point of view, our work suggests several recommendations for organizations with non-profit BMs. While our results indicate that resource dependency cannot be eliminated, it is possible to suggest best practices within a typical trajectory for a non-profit BM. At the strategic level, it is essential to consider resource dependence



as a positive phenomenon that can help the strategic execution and therefore the deployment and operation of the BM. Because a not-for-profit BM requires the support of external resources (Yunus *et al.*, 2010), resource dependency must be seen as a prerequisite for achieving objectives, particularly in the short term. At the temporal level, it is important to consider the trajectory of the non-profit BM through two sequenced logics. The first BM phase involves designing value creation and dependency management, accepting short- to medium-term dependencies for long-term sustainability. This phase focuses on building reputation and diversifying resources to limit dependency and strengthen the model. The second BM phase covers growth and scaling, where dependency sources are reassessed to enable more balanced resource transactions. By leveraging acquired experience, social connections, and reputation, the BM shifts toward dependency control to reinforce sustainable value creation. At the structural level, a non-profit BM should be viewed as a value ecosystem, uniting diverse stakeholders around a shared value proposition that transcends individual interests (Adner, 2017). This approach aligns with the non-profit mission of delivering collective value through external resource contributions. This event-based, ecosystem approach (Ruiz and Gandia, 2023) aligns well with Talmar *et al.*, (2020) ecosystem pie tool, which maps non-profit BM structures by analyzing resources, activities, added value, and captured value at each stage. This structural approach also incorporates risk and dependency analysis, bridging resource dependency with strategic value mechanisms within the BM, thus offering valuable insights for non-profit organizations.

Our research has limitations typical of single case studies; specifically, the findings are not generalizable due to the focus on a single organization (an association) within the e-sport sector. Further studies on various non-profit organizations could uncover different sources of dependency. Additionally, examining for-profit sectors would allow for comparisons of dependency impacts on the evolution of both non-profit and for-profit BMs. Given that Lyon e-Sport represents a mature non-profit BM, investigating a case of failure could reveal other unidentified dependency sources. Moreover, we assessed the intensity of dependency based on interviewee perceptions. While secondary data provided some triangulation, a study focused more on this aspect would exceed the exploratory nature of our research. Lastly, expanding on the concept of a BM's evolutionary trajectory by detailing its stages and incorporating the idea of temporal distance could enhance our understanding of the proximity or distance of various influencing factors.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank the University of Strasbourg (IDEX attractivité) for funding this research. The authors also warmly thank Lyon e-Sport.

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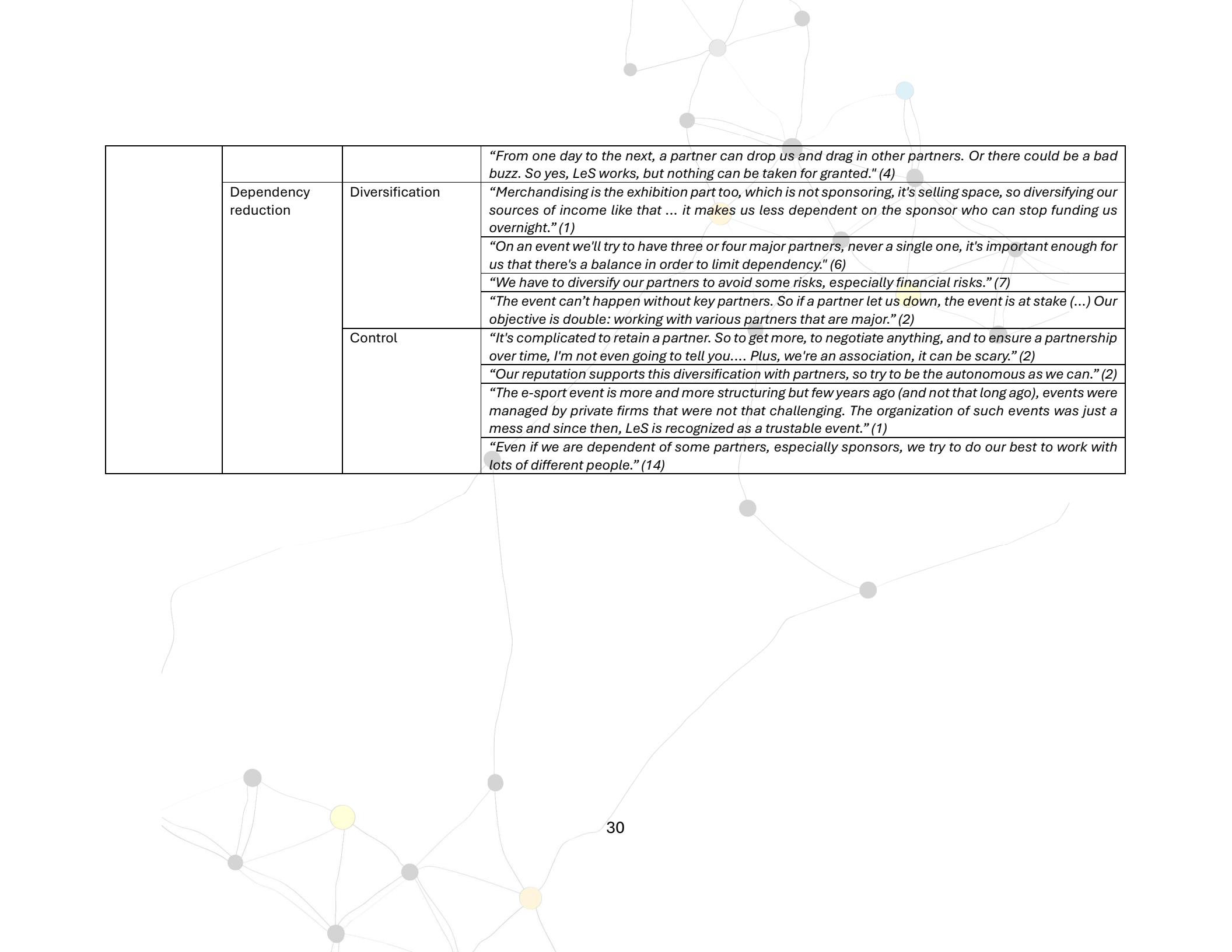
Appendix

Aggregate dimension	Second-order themes	First-order codes	Representative quotes
Sources of dependance	Types	Financial	<i>"the place is clearly the most budget-consuming." (7)</i>
			<i>"We are in a logic of having enough resources for the event." (9)</i>
			<i>"You have major partners who make a financial contribution, you have minor partners who make a lesser financial contribution (...)." (6)</i>
			<i>"today we can't refuse (financial) partners, well we can but we have to know why. Partners don't show up by themselves, we're still in a pro-active process." (9)</i>
			<i>"it's hard to find partners willingly agree to bring big budgets, because 1) management of these partners doesn't want to, 2) e-Sports is still scary, and 3) it's still a niche, so you're still in a power struggle with partners." (9)</i>
		Physical	<i>"we didn't need a lot of means, unfortunately, that tends to change. For 50 players, you can put three different switches, it's okay. If you start climbing on structures with 1000, even 500, like last year, it's not the same, because if your equipment doesn't communicate well, you're going to have problems." (15)</i>
			<i>"If we want to welcome everyone, we have to change the venue, we do it every 2 years." (12)</i>
			<i>"We have critical equipment needs. If we don't have it, it may prevent the event from functioning." (5)</i>
			<i>"If big companies give us this equipment, obviously they will be at the heart of the sponsorship, but if nobody does, we'll have to buy this type of equipment this year." (5)</i>
		Technical	<i>"On the LeS 2018 we had a huge technical problem. We've eared about a connection configuration problem on Thursday night, while the event started on Friday afternoon. The technical team that had been working for months on preparing a huge event on two routers and now, the owner of the venur tells us there is only one available... We also realized in situ that the Fortnite game had a problem that weekend. It was the first lan event for the game too... anyway, it was a technical nightmare. And the influencers started complaining about it on the social networks. The beginning of the end." (8)</i>
			<i>"when you have a network outage and / or a delay like we had on the previous edition, there necessarily, you take trolls, people insult you, they do it without thinking about the consequences it might have." (3)</i>
			<i>"This year, we had big connection problems, and everyone started to blame Orange, as they were partner of the event, while they weren't providing the connection. There was a discussion that Orange</i>

			<p><i>might not renew its partnership because its image was degraded. Yet Orange is the main partner. You see how bad fake information shared on Twitter can have hard consequences..." (3)</i></p> <p><i>"It's got to turn. If it runs, no problem ... if it doesn't run, only problems. As long as the network is running throughout the event, no one will notice that there is a technical team, if there are problems, no event or very slow event, so no competition and no visitors." (5)</i></p>
		Reputation	<p><i>"when people like Zerator help us, it raises our notoriety." (7)</i></p> <p><i>"our strength is our notoriety, in terms of image, visitors like us and we have very good relations with partners and influencers." (7)</i></p> <p><i>"notoriety is interesting, because now that we have implemented "The Forum", we have new partners (brands) renting a stand to show their product. We went through it last year pretty hard." (9)</i></p> <p><i>"It's up to you to prove, even though you've been a serious event for many years, you still have to prove you worth it." (9)</i></p>
		Size	<p><i>"We've reached such a size that we can't leave partners alone in the event. This requires special organization, accreditation, coordination, etc." (7)</i></p> <p><i>"we now so big that we need the biggest location in Lyon, something professional, requiring lots of means" (7)</i></p> <p><i>"LeS has grown enormously, so we have to find the money we need, so we have to find new partners, to evolve, to find partners who are not yet there, but who can finance up to what we need." (12)</i></p> <p><i>"We have so many visitors, we've reached such a size, that we have to give up, and it's very hard for me to say that, the idea of 100% satisfaction because it's impossible." (6)</i></p>
		Industry position	<p><i>"LeS was among the first to provide them with professional screens and equipment making them feel like we are in huge US or korean events. "(8)</i></p> <p><i>"No one tries to copy the LeS. The LeS is quality of service, a damn huge scene, and since 2 years, we have resources like never before. It's really the e-Sport event that has the most beautiful stage every year and that is always a step ahead, we have a level of light, sound, staging, scenography of everything you want, it's pretty incredible, we spend a lot of time and money for the spectators and for the players who came to play on these scenes." (12)</i></p> <p><i>"Today, you can't create an event like ours without being us, without being a historical actor." (3)</i></p> <p><i>"we became a big player in the business, because it worked, people liked us. LeS is a brand, it's an association, but it's mostly a brand. People identify with LeS." (2)</i></p>
		Regulation	<p><i>"but e-Sport wasn't legal a few years ago, it was tolerated, but it was illegal to hold competitive e-Sport events because the government didn't know what it was, they though it was kind of gambling activities." (8)</i></p> <p><i>"There is a typical model where the organizer will say that its takes the resources from the ticketing system, and if its anticipates that there will be €10K, then that's €10K of cash prize. This is the most</i></p>

	Effects on BM components	Value creation	common model, but it's illegal, because the state considers it to be betting money. I pay to enter a tournament, and the reward I hope to win is the total amount of the bets. So it's not possible. " (6)
			"we must remain very, very attentive to the situation of publishers. Whether we are a company or an association, we generate revenue on intellectual property that is not ours. At any time the game publisher can say that we no longer have the right to organize events on their game, or we have to pay a license fee. And that's a real issue because publishers are asking more and more questions." (6)
			"We need to coordinate all the teams to carry out the projects" (7)
			"our strength is in the relations with all these people, recently we have developed this community spirit around LeS" (7)
		Value proposition	"integrating and keeping partners is something we care about. It's a strength. If you change every partners every year, it's questionable and doubtful." (1)
			"Professionalism is a value that we are attached to, even if we are volunteers, we work professionally, the internal sharing of knowledge is very important." (1)
			"the press is essential to the success of our event, especially the general press, because the specialised press, they know us, they come to follow the tournaments, unlike the general press who come to discover us and make people discover what an e-sport event is like, so they are all important." (10)
			"If we want to welcome everyone, we have to change the venue, we do it every 2 years." (12)
			"Influencers, as soon as there's something they don't like, they take a bloodbath and you get insulted..." (11)
			"For your competition, to have views, you need famous streamers. So for me, visibility tool number one is to have the most famous casters or the most famous influencers on stage." (13)
		Value capture	"we do an event starting at 0, or there's a little cashflow from the last event, and then it's funded by sponsorship." (13)
			"the Lyon e-Sport is still a lan that has the hype, tickets sell out in a few minutes." (1)
			"streamers contribute greatly to the event's notoriety." (10)
			"There is a typical model where the organizer will say that its takes the resources from the ticketing system, and if its anticipates that there will be €10K, then that's €10K of cash prize. This is the most common model, but it's illegal, because the state considers it to be betting money. I pay to enter a tournament, and the reward I hope to win is the total amount of the bets. So it's not possible. " (6)
Consequences on BM trajectories	Trajectories	Initialization	"So at the beginning, the ratio was 80, even 90% of sponsorship, so today we are at 50, it's still a lot, but it's getting less and less." (6)
			"At the beginning, there was nothing. We needed everything." (1)
		Development	"The sale of TV rights, which has been going on for the last two years, is small but growing." (6)
			"In the past years, influencers helped a lot to increase notoriety." (14)

			<i>"gaming media, trade press, AAA, Millennium, etc. It has brings a lot of visibility when the event became something important." (13)</i>
			<i>"For your competition, to have views, you need famous streamers. So for me, visibility tool number one is to have the most famous casters or the most famous influencers on stage. (...) Now we are much more autonomous and even if they still support that, they have been key from LeS5 to 8 I would say." (13)</i>
		Maturity	<i>"On the LeS 2018 we had a huge technical problem. We've eared about a connection configuration problem on Thursday night, while the event started on Friday afternoon. The technical team that had been working for months on preparing a huge event on two routers and now, the owner of the venur tells us there is only one available... We also realized in situ that the Fortnite game had a problem that weekend. It was the first lan event for the game too... anyway, it was a technical nightmare. And the influencers started complaining about it on the social networks. The beginning of the end." (8)</i>
			<i>"we don't have any financial support at this point, not from the city, the region, the government. We are the only ones and we have a more elaborate and strategic vision than the others e-sport events, even the ones supported by their region... But one day, things will get complicated because the other events are more and more subsidied by public actors while we do not." (6)</i>
			<i>"It's very complicated, especially this year we're in a very expensive venue, the "Amphitheatre 3000", but it's all financed by sponsorship." (12)</i>
			<i>"And the real concern we have today is that we need to do bigger, we need more money, and the sponsors who are inclined to our event are finding it harder and harder to keep up." (12)</i>
	Effects over time	Virtuous circle	<i>"When you work with a big partner for the first year, the following years, it encourages other big partners to come, it's a logical ripple effect." (7)</i>
			<i>"We came up with a plan with a clear strategic vision, which was to put together a fairly strong event over a few years, going through the steps that needed to be taken ... start developing the "players" part, so we started with just lan, there were just players. Little by little, we added the notion of spectators, which has even today become a show ... and the third step was to add the participative part with the lounge part.... So these are the key stages, but the goal was to get there from the start in fact" (1)</i>
			<i>"Then, LeS became "the place to be", meaning that influencers came easily because they saw other influencers coming the previous years." (14)</i>
			<i>"When potential sponsors know that we work with [large company] or [large company], this makes things easy to work with them too." (7)</i>
		Uncertainty	<i>"Today we have sponsors, we hope to renew them for the following years, but it is uncertain." (9)</i>
			<i>"In terms of space, we're going to start to be limited in Lyon." (11)</i>
			<i>"And the real concern we have today is that we need to do bigger, we need more money, and the sponsors who are inclined to our event are finding it harder and harder to keep up" (11)</i>



	Dependency reduction	Diversification	<i>"From one day to the next, a partner can drop us and drag in other partners. Or there could be a bad buzz. So yes, LeS works, but nothing can be taken for granted." (4)</i>
			<i>"Merchandising is the exhibition part too, which is not sponsoring, it's selling space, so diversifying our sources of income like that ... it makes us less dependent on the sponsor who can stop funding us overnight." (1)</i>
			<i>"On an event we'll try to have three or four major partners, never a single one, it's important enough for us that there's a balance in order to limit dependency." (6)</i>
			<i>"We have to diversify our partners to avoid some risks, especially financial risks." (7)</i>
			<i>"The event can't happen without key partners. So if a partner let us down, the event is at stake (...) Our objective is double: working with various partners that are major." (2)</i>
		Control	<i>"It's complicated to retain a partner. So to get more, to negotiate anything, and to ensure a partnership over time, I'm not even going to tell you.... Plus, we're an association, it can be scary." (2)</i>
			<i>"Our reputation supports this diversification with partners, so try to be the autonomous as we can." (2)</i>
			<i>"The e-sport event is more and more structuring but few years ago (and not that long ago), events were managed by private firms that were not that challenging. The organization of such events was just a mess and since then, LeS is recognized as a trustable event." (1)</i>
			<i>"Even if we are dependent of some partners, especially sponsors, we try to do our best to work with lots of different people." (14)</i>