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**“When gastronomy and food are at the service of education for a sustainable future: *the
School Garden model in Denmark*”**

Prof. Jesper Strandgaard Pedersen

Copenhagen Business School, Department of Organization, Frederiksberg, Denmark

e-mail: js.ioa@cbs.dk

Prof. Elisa Salvador (PhD, HDR)

ESSCA School of Management, Paris, France

e-mail: elisa.salvador@essca.fr (corresponding author)

Dr. Sophie Marie Cappelen

Copenhagen Business School, Department of Organization, Frederiksberg, Denmark

e-mail: smc.ioa@cbs.dk

Jesper STRANDGAARD PEDERSEN is Professor of Organization Studies at Copenhagen Business School (Denmark). He holds a M.Sc. in Political Science from Copenhagen University and received his PhD in Organization and Management from Copenhagen Business School. His research interests are concerned with organizational and institutional change, organizational identity, institutional action, studied across a range of cultural-creative and knowledge-intensive settings. He is Co-Director of ‘*imagine ... Creative Industries and Institutions Research Center*’.

Elisa SALVADOR holds a Higher Doctorate in economics sciences & management from Paris13 University and an international PhD in Institutions, Economics & Law from the University of Turin (Italy). She worked as a researcher at Ecole Polytechnique in Paris (2012-2015), investigating R&D and innovation in the CCIs. She is a Professor at ESSCA School of Management (France), where she coordinates the master’s course “Managing Creativity & Innovation”. She is Associate Editor of the International Journal of Arts Management.

Sophie Marie CAPPELEN is Postdoc at Copenhagen Business School (Denmark). She holds a M.Sc. Social Sciences in Management of Creative Businesses from Copenhagen Business School (CBS), and she received her PhD in Organization and Management from CBS. Her research deals with the role of temporality in the construction of identity in multisite nonprofit organizations. At CBS, Sophie is affiliated with the ‘Center for Organizational Time’ and ‘*imagine.. Creative Industries and Institutions Research Center*’. Her research interests revolve around temporality, organizational identity, and creative industries.

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ABSTRACT

In a context of a nation-wide diffusion of a *School Garden model*, this paper aims at addressing two main issues. First, *School Gardens* are described as a creative and successful strategy for promoting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), connecting with the environment, and providing food knowledge about organically grown vegetables, as well as understanding and respecting nature. Consequently, health, well-being, and social interactions are fostered through a new and *creative* pedagogical approach that is well-documented and appreciated by children and parents in Denmark. Second, following this great and unexpected success, the paper depicts how a non-profit organization, through temporal agency, addresses several identity challenges and gets back-on-track through processes of reorganization and reinterpreting its past by addressing SDGs and in particular SDG 12 ‘Ensuring sustainable consumption and production’.

Keywords: School Garden; Gastronomy; Sustainability; Organizational identity; Temporal agency; Non-profit organization.

Session/Track: Creative Industries

INTRODUCTION

Gastronomy and food are one of the cultural and creative industries (CCIs) that is attracting an increasing interest. To oppose the so-called “McDonaldization” of society (Ritzer, 1996) movements working to reaffirm regional and national distinctiveness by reinventing culinary traditions have become a global phenomenon (e.g. Rao, Monin and Durand, 2003; Byrkjeflot, Strandgaard and Svejenova, 2013; Altuna, Dell’Era and Landoni, 2017; Cappelen and Strandgaard, 2021; Cappelen and Strandgaard, 2024). Linking food, culture, and social change, Petruzzelli and Svejenova (2014) states that “New waves of gastro-entrepreneurs have opened up opportunities for value creation not only in business, but also in society through culinary movements and events, pursuing cultural and social change” (Petruzzelli and Svejenova, 2014:1). Yet, new ventures often struggle having to balance both establishing *legitimacy* towards investors and customers in their industry and, at the same time building *identity and distinctiveness* (Svejenova, Mazza and Planellas, 2007). In social identity theory, Brewer (1991) coined this balance as *optimal distinctiveness*. But how can new ventures build identity while adapting to changing external legitimacy demands without losing their identity?

In their seminal work Albert and Whetten (1985) suggested that organizational identity revolves around three identity claims – what is claimed to be central, distinctive, and enduring. Through the time-related notion of ‘duration’ the concept of identity coherence over time is introduced, whereas identity uncertainty is seen as being associated with the crumbling and gradual loss of clarity of the founding vision (Albert and Whetten, 1985). Emirbayer and Mische (1998) coined the phrase ‘the chordial triad of agency’ for the temporal notions of ‘past’, ‘present’ and ‘future’ and these notions of time are seen as indivisible and intertwined (Reinecke and Ansari, 2016). Building on the different temporal orientations of agency, empirical studies of the use of the past in organizations demonstrate how historical narratives are used for a broad range of strategic purposes, serving to create both continuity and change (Suddaby and Foster, 2017). Some studies (e.g. Anteby and Molnár, 2012) showed how change and variability were suppressed through selective forgetting by the management team in an effort to make organizational history and identity more coherent.

In this context, we must highlight the specificity of the CCIs: flexibility and creativity characterize these industries, thus influencing their capacity to react and adapt to external or internal changes. Benghozi, Salvador and Simon (2021) identified two main new strategies, not forcedly classifiable according to traditional theories, following the consequences of the digital age: a static but flexible strategy, where flexibility and ambidexterity for absorbing the shocks of changing environments are prevalent, and a dynamic and liquid strategy, characterized by quick movements, rapid adaptations, and constant changes to be in tune with the new configurations emerging externally.

This paper is focused on an original case-study analysis about a non-profit organization¹ established in 2006 in Denmark as a spin-off from a for-profit organic food-box provider. The non-profit organization was founded with the explicit aim of strengthening awareness and commitment of children concerning food culture, health, and sustainability, by establishing the ‘best classroom in the world’. The *School Garden* is promoted as an ‘alternative classroom’ and has been proven to strengthen food culture, health, social competences, and the environmental awareness of children (Hoover et al., 2021; Plaka and Skanavis, 2016; Wistoft, 2013). As such, the socially innovative organization holds the potential of creating more food-knowledgeable children and sustainable local communities through its creative and educational concept.

By analysing the evolution of the school gardens’ creative venture through a qualitative, in-depth, ethnographic case study of a non-profit organization whose goal is to establish a national network of local school gardens, this paper highlights the plasticity of organizational identity and how identities are subject to ongoing change, by drawing attention to the temporal agency of organizations (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998). We build on previous research that views identity construction as an unfolding process of searching in response to events, transitions, and turning points (Maclean, Harvey, Gordon, and Shaw, 2015). Previous results have shown how organizations look at the past to mobilize present memories towards the future (e.g. Schultz and Hernes, 2013). While findings indicate that temporal agency matters, yet, *how* the temporal orientation is carried out in identity construction is less studied, and even less in the context of a non-profit organization focused on a creative mission. The temporal agency is seen as the degree to which organizational actors deliberately direct and focus their attention on the past, present, and/or future in identity construction. This study of identity construction shows how organizations must balance continuous adaptation to changing environmental conditions while simultaneously remaining true to themselves.

This paper aims at describing the original mission and subsequent evolution of a creative organization focused on establishing school gardens. To address this objective, we investigate how a Danish non-profit organization, dedicated to developing school gardens, tries to remain true to itself as it moves through the changes imposed by internal resource needs as well as by external stakeholder pressures. We show how a series of incidents and actions over time influence and challenge its identity construction. Project applications, high staff turnover and requirements from external benefactors are examples of elements that fuel this process, with consequences for the organizational identity. We argue that such processes might lead to the production of loosely coupled identity narratives that question and displace the original organizational identity and core purpose. However, the study also shows that identity narratives may be rebalanced through temporal agency and efforts devoted to revisiting and remembering the past. The case-study highlights how creativity and flexibility can make the difference for survival or failure.

Identity construction and temporal agency

For the past decades organizational identity has been considered evolving around three claims – that is, what is asserted to be the central, distinctive, and enduring features of the organization – all three

¹ The Danish non-profit organization asked to be anonymous.

claims noted to become particularly salient during moments of crisis or transition (Albert and Whetten, 1985). These three claims have long been considered to derive from past experiences and commitments, in which change, and variability were suppressed through selective forgetting by organizational management. Since then, the enduring feature of identity has been further nuanced and complimented with a more dynamic and temporal perspective, in which identity is considered as both changing and enduring at the same time, as organizational members engage in temporal work when using elements from both the past and ongoing present to guide the construction of future identities (Schultz and Hernes, 2013; Hatch and Schultz, 2017). This view considers identity as a process of continuous change and consequently means that identity is “by definition always in the making and never settles” (Schultz, 2016: 96). Scholars grounded in process studies (e.g. Reinecke and Ansari, 2016) have shed new light on how organizational members engage with temporality – the ongoing relationships between past, present and future – as a way of constructing identity. These contributions have shown how the future is continually enacted from past experiences by using materials available in the present (Schultz and Hernes, 2013; Hatch and Schultz, 2017). The past should therefore not be regarded as an objectively fixed entity but rather as something that is subjectively interpreted and given meaning through individual and collective sensemaking processes. Not just the future but also the past should be considered as malleable and open to re-interpretation and re-negotiation.

In this manner, “working the past” (Linde, 2009) by re-enactment of past textual, material, and oral memory in the present may enable a projection of historical coherence and authenticity on identity; a phenomenon framed as ‘organizational historicizing’ (Hatch and Schultz, 2017). To strengthen organizational legitimacy and membership identification, organizations may therefore “actively work their history through organizational and institutional memory to fuse the memory and identity of the individual and the community in a process that serves the ultimate goal of reproducing the organization as an institution” (Suddaby, Foster and Trank, 2016: 306). For mature organizations, this entails selecting historical material from the organizational past (Anteby and Molnár, 2012), while more nascent organizations lend symbols from their institutional environment when engaging in this process (Kroezen and Heugens, 2019). The act of assigning particular significance to past events in the present has also been conceptualized as ‘organizational remembering’ and is defined as “the process by which actors use both rhetoric and history to socially construct membership with an organization” (Suddaby et al., 2016). Other scholars (e.g. Chreim, 2005; Ybema, 2010) have studied how organizations engage in *discontinuity* talk and construct demarcations between past and present to promote identity change.

Different types of temporal agency may take place during the process of organizational identity construction. The *first form* of temporal agency refers to organizational historicizing and selective remembering and occurs when a (glorious) past is evoked to narrate the ongoing present identity. The *second form* of temporal agency refers to strategic attempts to break with the past by creating discursive narratives, through which identity change is achieved. A *third form* for organizations to engage with temporal agency involves invoking narratives of the past to resurrect identity. These appeals to the past are employed to promote the return to an idealized past that is perceived decaying or forgotten.

Starting from these assumptions, this paper studies how a non-profit organization with a strong mission tries to navigate multiple temporalities and identity challenges when trying to respond to external demands and opportunities. As continuity and change can be regarded as mutually constitutive, these strategies may be particularly pertinent for organizations whose identity is grounded on claims of being both *old and new*. Thus, we argue that temporal agency is key for organizational identity construction, even when a creative organization is implied. We argue that identity confusion and uncertainty results from a failure to continuously adapt to changes and integrate lived experience into the temporal identity narrative. Finally, we highlight how identity

uncertainty and confusion motivates the organization to reengage with its non-profit past and recraft its identity narratives around a broader sense of purpose, encompassing its role in the school garden movement and UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Data and Methods

The analysis is based on a *non-profit organization* whose goal is to establish a national network of school gardens. The school gardens are presented as “alternative classrooms” and as a strategy to strengthen the food and social competences, health, and environmental awareness of children (Wistoft, 2013; Hoover et al., 2021; Plaka and Skanavis, 2016; Otte et al. 2019). Following from the principle of ‘Farm to Table’ the organization aims at creating more food-knowledgeable children and sustainable local communities through its educational concept.

The organization operates in a context in which non-profit organizations have played a substantial societal role ever since the “freedom of association” was written into the Danish democratic constitution in 1848 (Henriksen, Strømsnes, and Svedberg, 2018). Following the advance of the welfare state in the aftermath of World War II, Danish non-profit organizations gradually began cultivating their role as interest organizations (Henriksen and Bundesen, 2004). Although the non-profit sector has grown in prominence, over the years public resources to fund its operations have nevertheless slowly declined. To fill this gap, privately owned industrial foundations have gradually gained a more prominent role in securing continued funding for Danish non-profit organizations. This shift has entailed a reorganization of the non-profit sector that is characterized by project-based organizations and short-term funding schemes.

The paper is based on a qualitative approach and in-depth case study. This implies collecting and analysing various sources of *archival data* (e.g., organizational documents, web pages, reports etc.) as well as public media material (news-clippings etc.). The archival material is supplemented by and triangulated with extensive *on-site observations* (e.g., School Garden events, seminars, meetings etc.) and *interviews* with informants from the non-profit organization as well as with representatives from several local School Gardens. Thus, the results are largely drawn from observational data - field notes, photos, and material collected during events - (150 hours) generated over the course of three years (2016-2019)². To supplement the observational data, 26 interviews were conducted (eight interviews with the main organization; thirteen local school gardens were visited, with interviews carried out with local school garden representatives; and five interviews with representatives from foundations operating in different industries to inform the organizational context of non-profit organizations). Interviews were transcribed, validated by the interviewee, and analysed through NVivo software. All data were compiled into a linear timeline that formed the starting point for a final coding process. We coded for narrative cues that presented expressions of identity, which enabled us to see a shift in temporal identity focus over time (See Appendix 1 for data overview and data use).

Findings

Following Sewell (2005) we present our findings as a linear sequence of events to account for their contingency. We outline a series of events, transitions, and turning points that represent and instigate shifts in organizational identity (See Appendix 2 for an overview).

The first phase (2006-2012): founding and identity formation

The non-profit organization is established in 2006 as a spin-off from a for-profit, organic food-box provider. The newly formed organization begins with the explicit mission to strengthen children’s

² Additional interviews were undertaken in March-April 2024 for updating the data collected in 2016-2019.

knowledge concerning food culture, health, and sustainability by establishing what they frame as the “best classroom in the world”. The vision is stated as,

We have a vision that in ten years school gardens will be present in all 98 municipalities and that the 1.1 million children will have experienced the school garden during their years in school (Webpage: authors’ translation)

Inspired by ‘Farm-to-table’ ideas, the non-profit organization develops, in collaboration with the Danish School of Education, Aarhus University, an innovative educational concept (‘The Eight Visits Program’) based on organic farming principles. The concept is based on eight theoretical and practical modules with three focus areas: school gardening, nature, and outdoor cooking (Internal Organizational manual, 2011). The concept and teaching material is currently evaluated by the Danish School of Education, which also documents the learning effects of the program.

The organization establishes an ongoing collaboration with the local municipality that helps financing regular visits of local schools. In addition, donations from two foundations helps to fund the initial actions. The non-profit organization is managed on an ad-hoc, informal basis, run by the founder, a manager, and a few part-time school garden instructors and volunteers (Ejlertsen, 2019).

As the concept of school gardens proves successful (Wistoft, 2013), gardening enthusiasts from various municipalities across the country soon contact the organization to ask for assistance to establish their own local school gardens. To accommodate the growing interest, the organization seeks funding from one of Denmark’s largest foundations to initiate a national dissemination of the educational concept in 2013 (Funding application, 2013). In its effort to attract financial support, the non-profit organization emphasizes a connection to its well-recognized for-profit, parent company in the funding application. Through its repeated mentioning of the parent organization (16 times), the non-profit organization’s identity remains closely connected to that of its parent company and founder. After successfully attaining the grant (€1.3 million) they applied for, the non-profit organization is ready to embark on the project of implementing school gardens across the country. Nevertheless, after receiving the grant, the school garden manager resigns.

The office was almost completely empty for 4–5 months, where I, as the Chairman, was thinking: ‘Wow!’ At that point we’d just received 10 million kroner [€1.3 million] from [the foundation] that were just hanging in the air. And... with whom will I do this? (Chairman interview, 2017)

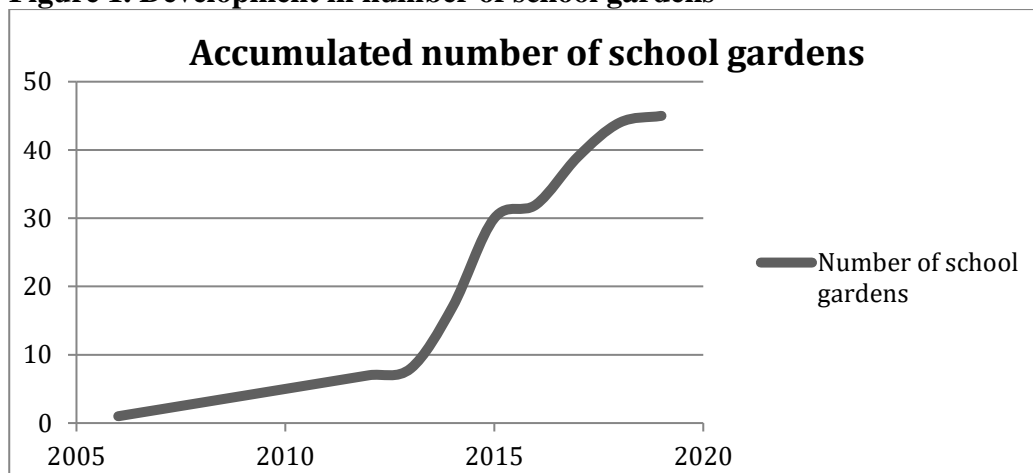
Several full-time employees are hired - a manager, a communications developer, and two school garden instructors overseeing teaching and developing the educational concept. However, the new employees are faced with the lack of basic organizational systems and routines for the nascent organization. The informal basis on which the organization has previously been managed left almost no organizational routines and administrative systems (describing formal procedures, rules etc.) to guide the employees in their task and identity narrative. Thus, the newly hired employees begin constructing a new organizational identity narrative, with the grant application as a blueprint, looking towards the present and near future by making sense of the promises made in the project application.

The second phase (2013-2015): rapid expansion in scale and scope

Between 2013 and 2015, the number of school gardens across the country grows from 8 to about 30 (see Figure 1). This growth coincides with the implementation of a national school reform in 2013, which, amongst other things, entails an increased focus on natural science, physical activity, and

longer but more flexible school hours, thereby making school gardens an excellent tool for meeting the new governmental demands (Olsen and Trier, 2013).

Figure 1. Development in number of school gardens



Source: authors' personal elaboration

In addition to the increasing number of school gardens across the country, the non-profit organization also pursues a series of new projects. Rather than staying within the boundaries of food education, the organization seeks to exploit the widespread societal interest in sustainable agendas and the growing number of green initiatives by expanding the organization's foundational mission to new areas.

Examining the widespread societal interest in green initiatives, the non-profit organization gradually finds itself in a cycle of writing applications to fund new initiatives, developing new concepts and procedures, while also trying to expand the number of school gardens. The decision to expand the organization's mission beyond school gardens results in venturing into other areas by trying to adapt the original school garden concept to fit other contexts (e.g., social housing). This development is further fueled by the non-profit organization's financial model, which is dependent on external grants and makes the organization vulnerable to the demands and expectations from its benefactors. As funding from foundations is primarily allocated to new initiatives rather than to maintain existing operations, the non-profit organization faces a problem: to keep afloat, promises of new deliveries will have to be made. To maintain legitimacy and a favorable relationship with potential funders, the non-profit organization continues to generate new ideas about how to adapt the school garden concept to other settings. One such initiative is to develop a children's cookbook³ with inspiring recipes that would enable children to expand their culinary curiosity, knowledge, and skills at home with their families. To support this initiative, the non-profit organization also establishes nationwide cooking clubs for children. Another project is aiming at improving quality of life in social housing communities through social gardening. In addition, the non-profit organization commits itself to create a digital learning platform, an annual food festival, developing five new pilot projects, and establishing an annual cycle of year-round activities (seminars, theme days, etc.).

Furthermore, programs to extend the school garden concept to other age groups (e.g., kindergarteners, teenagers, and retired seniors) and to vulnerable groups (e.g. refugees and people with various disabilities) are also considered as potential new projects.

³ 'My Cooking', published in 2015 in 170.000 copies: inspiring recipes for children, that can apply food knowledge and skills learned thanks to the School Garden model also at home.

The third phase (2016-2017): identity confusion and uncertainty

As the non-profit organization develops it gradually becomes preoccupied with forming an identity separate from that of its founder and parent organization. Thus, the non-profit organization becomes increasingly focused on its future potential rather than its past achievements. The non-profit organization's identity increasingly becomes defined and informed by its ongoing projects and future aspirations that are encouraged and legitimized by funding foundations, who prefer that explicit mentioning of the non-profit organization's past is kept to a minimum. Conversations that take place during meetings and workshops further demonstrate how the organization increasingly perceives its main task to be developing new projects. Although the core purpose is deemed "*too limited*" and "*lacking focus*" (field notes, 2017), the management finds difficulty in articulating what are then the organization's current identity claims. When asked about the organization's different roles, most employees describe their roles as primarily related to "*development*" while depicting the organization as "*a developer of ideas*" (field notes, 2017). These notions come to form the basis for the emerging organizational identity, which is guided by new project applications, temporally located in the future, and almost completely detached from the past.

The new, emerging identity centered around future development is further reflected in how and which tasks the non-profit organization performs and prioritizes. Numerous working hours and efforts are devoted to searching for and identifying new funding possibilities and subsequently developing project applications to fund potential future initiatives. The continuous search for new project ideas resulted in a culture that likened "new" to "better" at the expense of ongoing tasks.

While the range of projects expands and more efforts are put in developing new projects and funding applications, ongoing operations are gradually neglected. Reinforced by an organizational culture that celebrates innovation and development, administrative tasks and present activities were given less priority. As the organization becomes increasingly development-driven, the focus on school gardens that previously informed the non-profit organization's original mission and identity drifts into the shadow. Identity confusion and uncertainty emerges as the non-profit organization's identity is questioned and a new identity is in demand to create coherence and make sense of all the divergent projects being developed. An emerging new identity is gradually constructed in which "development" is the core element while the organization's original mission and focus on school gardens becomes secondary.

The fourth phase (2018-2020): Re-discovering the school garden model

Over time, a growing awareness emerges among employees that the non-profit organization has departed from its original mission, which results in confusion over the organization's identity and strategic direction. Uncertainty concerning the organization's core mission makes identity questions emerging: Are we still a school garden organization, and if not, what are we? The organization's mission and identity concerning "who we are, and where we come from" is being questioned.

At the beginning of summer 2017, the growing frustration among non-profit members culminates concerning what is the core mission, identity, and strategic direction. Efforts to address the rising dissatisfaction results in two layoffs, a managerial transition, and changes in the top management team. A new manager, who has previously been responsible for the contact to the local school gardens is internally recruited. This transition means a change in management style and a strict focus on school gardens as the core task.

The change entails a back-to-basics approach as the non-profit organization begins to rediscover itself as a school garden organization, thereby re-centering its identity and core mission.

Through a series of meetings, the organization begins revisiting its relatively short past in search of its identity. In examining its past, the non-profit organization becomes aware of a broader history of school gardens that extends farther back in time. In this way, the non-profit organization *redefines*

and extends its history by acknowledging how it is part of a wider and older school garden movement. Thus, the organization expands its retrospective outlook to encapsulate a more distant history, than merely by referring to its own founding past. The organization expands its future horizon by moving from a focus on near future temporal horizons (defined by each project-funding period) to adopting a longer time horizon and goals stipulated by UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. In particular, the non-profit organization focuses on SDG 12 ('Ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns'), SDG 3 ('Good health and well-being'), and SDG 4 ('Quality education'). In September 2017, the new orientation is revealed at a joint seminar at 'Fasangården' hosted by the non-profit organization and its parent organization. The broadening of past-future horizons further assure the importance of the original mission and core task: "to strengthen children and youth's commitment to sustainability, food culture and health" (Webpage authors' translation). In 2018, a new nationwide strategy ('Nurture Life') was being launched by the non-profit organization following up on the previously formulated SDGs commitment. The overall strategic focus is on health and well-being combining sustainability, learning, health, and community. At the end of 2019, the major funding from the main foundation comes to an end and the non-profit organization must revise the existing strategy for the school garden concept. This is followed by a major re-organization and downscaling of activities. This entails hiring a new managing director, seven layoffs of permanent staff and change of chairman of the board. This means a de-facto separation from the parent and founding for-profit organization as the non-profit organization moves the central office to a new location in Copenhagen and is now hosted by an existing NGO (Strategy document, 2020). A new strategy for 2020-2025 is formulated and by 2020 the nationwide number of school gardens is about 40. However, in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, a major re-organization and downscaling of the number of school gardens has taken place and by 2024 the non-profit organization runs 7 school gardens nationwide (See Appendix 2 for an overview).

DISCUSSION

Spending time outdoors in nature brings several benefits, including bolstering mental health and managing stress and anxiety (Loebach et al., 2022). Focusing on school children, an innovative and creative model has been introduced in Denmark through the diffusion of School Gardens. These spaces enable children not only to take advantage of time outdoors, but also to discover vegetables, respect nature and become more healthy food knowledgeable.

To this aim, the description of our case-study suggests that narratives of the past can be forgotten due to rapid growth and staff turnover in the form of an almost complete change in organizational staff, supporting previous findings by Easterby-Smith and Lyles (2011). It illustrates how a non-profit organization engaged in *identity construction* defines and redefines its identity and core mission.

The non-profit structure of such organizations, mean that they remain *highly dependent on external funding*, as shown by Santos, Pache, and Birkholz (2015), and are highly vulnerable to the requirements and demands of its external benefactors. Such precarious relationships consequently result in an excessive external orientation focused on attracting external funding through future-oriented organizational projects and a decreased attention to past and ongoing operations. Hatch and Schultz (2002) have demonstrated how such an excessive external orientation would result in hyper-adaptation and could end in identity loss. The outcome of this external outlook, which also focuses largely on the future, is further reflected in, and supported by an organizational culture of innovation in which "new" becomes equated with "better", and humdrum tasks are under-prioritized. The newly constructed organizational orientation towards UN SDGs and the wider history of school gardens, together with reorganizing the management team, aims at creating coherency across the expanding portfolio of new organizational projects. Through re-organization and revisiting of the past, the non-profit organization manages to re-discover and re-center its identity by exercising temporal agency.

Thus, our findings suggest that in times of change, identity is critical for an organization's survival as claimed by Albert and Whetten (1985). In line with Maclean et al. (2018) we suggest that organizations may be less prone to hyper-adaptation, identity confusion and mission uncertainty when taking a longer-term view. Our study also demonstrates the enabling effects of the past for organizational resilience and survival (cf. Anteby and Molnár, 2012; Foster et al., 2011; Schultz and Hernes, 2013). We find that the past, present, and future are inseparable entities that are inherently bound together as proposed by Emirbayer and Mische (1998). The development of the non-profit organization, nevertheless, also shows how flexibility and creativity can make the difference through helping the resurgence of the original mission and the strength of the School Garden model has been reaffirmed thanks to the focus on SDGs. This enabled to rediscover the mission of educating children for a sustainable future.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Our analysis contributes to the literature on 'uses-of-the-past' and the agency of temporal orientation and identity construction. While agency of temporal orientation may be employed to revisit the past to make sense of and construct temporal coherency between different organizational actions, we claim that this also has the potential for thwarting the organization's optimal distinctiveness balance (Brewer, 1991) and its sense of identity and direction. By being overly concerned with responding to external demands and pleasing external stakeholders, the non-profit organization generated *hyper-adaptation* (Hatch and Schultz, 2002), which led to identity confusion and uncertainty. The newly constructed temporal orientation towards SDGs and identifying with the wider history of school gardens, together with reorganizing the management team, created coherency across the expanding portfolio of new organizational projects. We thus theorize a link between agency of temporal orientation and identity construction by showing how several (unintended) events, transitions, and turning points influence and shape the organizational identity construction process. Our contribution is focused on temporal agency, not merely as a strategic choice and the result of deliberate action, but also as result of the *unintended* effects of a series of actions and decisions made. This follows from the organization's financial dependency on external funding, the recruitment practices, massive staff turnover, organizational growth, a cultural inclination, and a strategic orientation concerned with development and innovation. Although an organization has temporal agency (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998), we show how it, nevertheless, may not always deliberately exert it, given its creative nature.

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APPENDIX 1: Overview of data

Type of data collected	Specification	Data use
Observations: ca. 150 h.	Workshops and meetings: 80 h. in total School garden networking events: 30 h. in total School garden visits: 43 h. in total	Provided us with narrative cues, as we were able to observe shifts in identity and purpose over time.
Interviews: 26	<p>Organizational management team: 7 interviews conducted in person. Duration: 1–2 h. each</p> <p>Organizational founder and chairman of the board: 1 interview conducted in person. Duration: 1-2 h. each</p> <p>School garden representatives: 13 interviews conducted in person. Duration: 1-2 h. each</p> <p>Foundations: 5 interviews in person: notes taken. Duration 30 min. each.</p>	Interview statements were used to identify temporal orientation, organizational identity, and agency. The interviews provided insight into how actors made sense of the organization’s past, present and future.
Examples of organizational documents	Project applications: 227 pp. Project evaluations: 212 pp. Organizational strategy proposals: 6 pp. Organizational statutes and description: 63 pp. School garden manuals: 90 pp. Press releases: 16 pp. Email correspondence with organizational members Webpage material, descriptions of organizational vision, purpose, educational concept etc.	Project applications and evaluations provided insight into how temporal orientation and focus developed over time. We consider both the number of applications and their content. Organizational statutes, descriptions and strategy proposals provided insight into organizational changes, organizational purpose and shifts in temporal orientation and focus and identity over time. Public material (i.e. press releases and webpage material) provided depictions of organizational purpose, vision, and self-presentation in the public domain to supplement narratives collected via observations and interviews.
Media material	Press clippings containing interviews and portrayals of the organization from 2003-2019 from mainly national sources.	Providing external audiences’ view on the organization and used to provide contextual understanding of historical background and present political and socio-economic context.
Photographic material	Self-captured photos during site visits, meetings, and school garden events.	Documented physical-material manifestations of the activities during meetings and events.

APPENDIX 2: Major events, transitions and turning points.

Year	Major events, transitions and turning points
2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For-profit founding organization initiates activities that later will evolve into the non-profit organization
2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-profit organization is established and hosted on the for-profit founding organization's premises.
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major batch of funding is attained. For-profit founding organization mentioned 16 times in the application. Identity described as a synergistic, close relationship between the two organizations. • Some focus on outside recognition and (local) legitimacy. • Six school gardens in operation
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete personnel turnover in the organization. School garden managing director resigns. • New hirings (without lived experience of the organizational past). • Rapid growth in number of school gardens
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New project(s) added to the portfolio (cooking books and social gardening projects in three social housings). • 30 school gardens in operation.
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New major project funding attained – promise of additional 10 school gardens. • Relation to for-profit founding organization not mentioned (partly based on wishes of the external funder). • A new managing director and an administrative leader are hired for the non-profit organization. • New employees unaware of organizational past
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-profit organization's vision questioned as too narrowly focused on children. • Wishes are expressed to enhance focus on development and broadening scope beyond schools. • A series of new project initiatives are launched. • Promise of establishing another five pilot projects • Identity uncertainty and confusion. Who are we? In search of the core identity of the organization (who do we want to be? a school garden provider or concept developer?). • Another change in management - lay-offs and re-organization. New managing director recruited internally.
2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Sustainable development goals (SDGs) and school garden history becomes part of the revised identity narrative. • The newly constructed organizational orientation towards SDGs and identification with the wider history of school gardens' narrative aims at creating coherency across the portfolio of new organizational projects.
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The recently hired managing director goes on sick leave. A new, internally recruited managing director is constituted as temporary managing director. • Financial challenges due to end of main funding and lack of renewal of key existing contracts as well as funding for new projects.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of funding results in layoffs and re-organization. Only six to seven employees are re-hired for the new season. • New Chairman at the end of the year.
2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The temporary managing director is hired as permanent managing director. • Covid 19 and initial closing of activities. School gardens are decentralized and are re-opening as they represent the out-door activities the schools need. • The non-profit organization ends its residence at the for-profit organization's premises.
2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No new permanent residence for the non-profit organization during the pandemic. Many school gardens close. • At the end of the year, the non-profit organization relocates and, is hosted by a NGO in Copenhagen.
2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A couple of new school gardens are opened, which are run by the non-profit organization. • New residence for the main organization • New Chairman and new board members at the end of 2022
2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tight historical link between the parent company and the non-profit organization is changed and its temporal orientation and identity is redefined.