

Digital Technology in Swedish Faith-Based Organizations

*A Study of Information Systems in a
Resource-Constrained Context*

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Abstract

This thesis examines what shapes digital technology adoption in faith-based organizations (FBOs) in Sweden, where minority FBOs operate under public scrutiny and reputational risk while majority organizations work from a more secure institutional position.

The study uses a qualitative multiple-case design (Yin, 2018) with six semi-structured interviews: four Muslim minority FBOs and two organizations within the majority Christian tradition. These are supplemented by a comparative digital footprint analysis of four civil society organizations and two expert field conversations. The material is analyzed through Framework Analysis (Gale et al., 2013) and pattern matching against the TOE framework (Tornatzky & Fleischer, 1990), institutional theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983), and legitimacy theory (Suchman, 1995).

Adoption is shaped at three layers. Technology, organizational capacity, and the institutional environment all matter, and digital capacity follows whether technical responsibility is a defined role rather than organizational size. Institutional pressure and legitimacy then separate the two groups. Three findings extend the frameworks. Coercive pressure runs in three concurrent forms: direct regulatory, privatized (banks, platforms, discretionary funders), and anticipated (built on what has happened to peer organizations). Three of the four minority organizations actively avoid public funding to escape its conditions, settling their technology choices before any tool is considered. A fourth, affective form of legitimacy work, internalized uncertainty about belonging, sits beneath the strategic legitimacy Suchman describes and is absent in both majority cases.

Keywords: digital technology adoption, faith-based organizations, information systems, institutional theory, legitimacy theory, civil society, Sweden

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1 Introduction	9
1.1 Background	9
1.2 Problem	9
1.3 Research Question and Aim	10
1.4 Delimitations	10
1.5 Thesis Structure	11
2. Extended Background	11
2.1 Faith-Based Organizations in the Swedish Institutional Context	11
2.2 Information Systems Adoption: Theoretical Frameworks	12
2.3 Digitalization in Civil Society and Resource-Constrained Organizations	13
2.3.1 Technology adoption	13
2.3.2 Technology use	13
2.3.3 Technology outcomes	14
2.3.4 Resource constraints and organizational capacity	14
2.3.5 Technology categories relevant to FBOs	14
2.4 Institutional Pressures on Minority Faith-Based Organizations in Sweden	15
2.5 Research Gap	15
2.6 Synthesis	16
3 Methodology	16
3.1 Research Strategy	16
3.2 Alternative Methods Considered	16
3.3 Research Methods	17
3.3.1 Case Selection	17
3.3.2 Data Collection	17
3.3.3 Comparative Digital Footprint Analysis	18
3.3.4 Data Analysis	19
3.4 Research Quality	19
3.5 Use of AI Tools	20
3.6 Ethical Considerations	21
3.7 Expected Patterns Before Coding	22
4. Results	23
4.1 Caution in external digital presence (Pattern 3 confirmed)	24
4.2 Coercive pressure in three concurrent forms (Pattern 1 confirmed and expanded)	25
4.3 Defensive strategy at three levels (Pattern 2 confirmed and expanded)	27
4.4 Legitimacy work and an affective dimension (Pattern 4 partially confirmed and expanded)	28
4.5 Fragmented and person-dependent practice (Pattern 5 confirmed)	29
4.6 Mimetic pressure: institutionalized or informal (Pattern 6 confirmed)	30
4.7 Synthesis of cross-case patterns	31
4.8 Supplementary analysis: digital footprint and expert conversations	31

4.9 Conclusion	32
5 Discussion	33
5.1 Theoretical contributions	34
5.1.1 Coercive isomorphism beyond formal authority	34
5.1.2 Strategic disconnection	34
5.1.3 Affective legitimacy	35
5.1.4 Demographic and generational factors not captured by the frameworks	35
5.1.5 Where the findings sit uneasily with existing work	36
5.2 Practical implications	37
5.3 Ethical implications of the findings	38
5.4 Limitations	39
5.5 Future research	40
Reference List	42
Appendix A — Informed Consent (Swedish)	46
Digital teknik i trosbaserade organisationer	46
Samtyckesformulär	46
Medgivande för samtycke	46
Appendix B — Intro and Demography (Swedish)	47
Digital teknik i trosbaserade organisationer	47
Intervjuintroduktion	47
Demografisk information	48
Appendix C - Interview Questions	49
Appendix D — Matris	52
Appendix E - Codebook	52
Codebook — Framework Analysis	52
TOE — Technological context	52
TOE — Organizational context	52
TOE — Environmental context	53
Institutional pressure	53
Legitimacy	53
Inductive code	53
Theory-developing extensions	53

List of Tables

Table 4.1.	Pattern matching: predicted versus observed patterns	23
Table 4.2.	One coherent dynamic seen from three angles	31

List of Figure

Figure 2.1.	Collage of Swedish news reports and opinion....	16
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Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
DSV	Department of Computer and Systems Sciences (Institutionen för data- och systemvetenskap)
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
FBO	Faith-Based Organization
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
IS	Information Systems
MUCF	Myndigheten för ungdoms- och civilsamhällesfrågor (Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society)
SÄPO	Säkerhetspolisen (Swedish Security Service)
Sida	Styrelsen för internationellt utvecklingssamarbete (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency)
TOE	Technology–Organization–Environment
I1–I6	The six interview cases (I1–I4 Muslim minority FBOs; I5–I6 majority Christian contrast cases)

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Faith-based organizations (FBOs) constitute an important part of civil society and often provide services that extend beyond religious practice, including charitable aid, education, and counseling or support services. These activities require the coordination of administrative and operational processes such as outreach, fundraising, financial monitoring, service documentation, volunteer coordination, and reporting to donors and other stakeholders. At the same time, faith-based organizations frequently operate under organizational conditions characterized by limited financial resources, small administrative units, and a strong reliance on volunteer labor (Nah & Saxton, 2013; OECD, 2020).

In other sectors, digital technology and information systems are commonly used to support similar administrative and operational demands, by enabling coordination, standardization, and organizational overview. As expectations regarding transparency, traceability, and accountability increasingly extend to civil society actors, faith-based organizations face growing pressure to digitalize their operations accordingly (OECD, 2020). However, existing research indicates that digitalization in civil society organizations often develops in a fragmented manner, through isolated digital tools rather than integrated systems, which can lead to duplicated work, inconsistent data, and limited organizational overview (Cipriano & Za, 2024; Godefroid et al., 2024).

Recent scholarship has therefore called for empirical studies that examine how information systems are actually used in everyday organizational practice within civil society, particularly in resource-constrained contexts. Despite this, faith-based organizations remain underrepresented in information systems research, especially regarding how systems affect administrative and operational work across multiple service domains such as charity, education, and counseling (Evolvi, 2024). This creates a clear need for research that examines how information systems can be used and experienced in ways that align with the organizational realities of faith-based organizations. In this thesis, digital technologies refers to the broad set of digital tools an organization can use, while information systems refers to how such tools are organized to capture, store, and process organizational data. Adoption is understood not only as the decision to acquire a tool, but as the ongoing process of selecting, implementing, integrating, and sustaining its use in everyday work.

1.2 Problem

Faith-based organizations carry out the administrative and operational processes outlined above with limited resources and through manual or fragmented digital solutions, which may lead to inefficiencies and high administrative workloads (Nah & Saxton, 2013; Godefroid et al., 2024).

Digital technologies and information systems are widely used in many sectors to coordinate and streamline organizational activities, support decision-making, and increase efficiency. However, prior research indicates that digitalization initiatives in civil society organizations may lead to varying outcomes. While some studies document how digital technologies enhance stakeholder engagement, organizational capacity, and coordination (Nah & Saxton, 2013), others highlight how digitalization creates complexity, fragmentation, and administrative burden, particularly for resource-constrained organizations lacking technical capacity (Cipriano & Za, 2024; Godefroid et al., 2024). Despite the growing expectations placed on civil society organizations to digitalize their operations (OECD, 2020), there is limited empirical understanding of how digital technologies are actually adopted and integrated in such contexts, particularly in faith-based organizations (Evolvi, 2024). Several researchers therefore explicitly call for further empirical studies examining digitalization in civil society and faith-based organizations from an organizational perspective (Evolvi, 2024; Cipriano & Za, 2024).

The problem that this thesis addresses is a lack of understanding of how organizational, resource-related and broader contextual constraints influence the adoption of digital technologies in faith-based organisations. This matters in practical terms: weak or fragmented digital infrastructure raises the administrative workload carried by a small number of staff and volunteers, makes it harder to meet the documentation and reporting expectations of funders and authorities, and diverts capacity away from the services these organizations exist to provide.

1.3 Research Question and Aim

What are the factors influencing adoption of digital technologies in faith-based organizations in Sweden?

This study aims to identify the factors that enable and constrain digital technology adoption in faith-based organizations in Sweden, with particular attention to how institutional pressures and legitimacy concerns shape adoption across minority and majority organizations. By analyzing these factors across technological, organizational, and institutional dimensions, the study responds to calls for empirical research on digitalization in faith-based organizations (Evolvi, 2024; Cipriano & Za, 2024) and contributes empirically grounded insights into both majority and minority religious organizations in secular contexts (Evolvi, 2024).

1.4 Delimitations

This study focuses on faith-based organizations in Sweden that vary in organizational size but share a condition of resource sensitivity, meaning they operate with limited financial slack, lean administrative units, and substantial reliance on volunteer labor and donation-based funding regardless of overall organizational reach. This is the analytically relevant condition for studying the

interaction between digitalization demands and organizational capacity, rather than organizational size as such.

The empirical material comprises six cases organized into two groups: four Muslim minority FBOs and two organizations within Sweden's majority Christian tradition. The sample is deliberately asymmetric (4+2), reflecting the availability of analysis in the majority context and location of the research gap. The methodological rationale for this distribution is developed in Chapter 3.

The study examines how organizations adopt and use existing digital technologies in administrative and operational work, including fundraising, coordination, documentation, communication, education, and reporting. It does not assess the technical performance of specific systems or develop new digital tools.

The study is limited to Sweden. It pursues analytical generalization, meaning inferences from cases to theory rather than from samples to populations (Yin, 2018), and findings are expected to be transferable to faith-based and civil society organizations operating in comparable institutional environments.

Theology, online religious practice, and long-term impact measurement fall outside the scope unless they directly affect administrative or organizational uses of digital technology.

1.5 Thesis Structure

Chapter 1 introduces the background, problem, research question and aim, and delimitations. Chapter 2 provides an extended background covering the Swedish institutional context for faith-based organizations, the theoretical frameworks, existing research on digitalization in civil society, and the institutional pressures facing minority FBOs. Chapter 3 describes and justifies the methodology, including research strategy, data collection and analysis, research quality, and ethical considerations. Chapter 4 presents the empirical findings. Chapter 5 discusses the findings in relation to the frameworks, reflects on limitations, and suggests directions for future research.

2. Extended Background

2.1 Faith-Based Organizations in the Swedish Institutional Context

Faith-based organizations in Sweden operate in an institutional landscape shaped by secularization, a strong welfare state, and growing religious plurality. Sweden is among the most secular countries in the world, with low religious participation and a firm separation of religion from public governance (Ewert, 2019). After the Church of Sweden was disestablished in 2000, religious organizations became civil society actors under the same funding and regulatory rules as secular nonprofits. Immigration has since produced a more plural landscape, with Muslim, Catholic,

Orthodox, Jewish, Buddhist, and other communities working alongside Lutheran and free-church associations on charity, education, community support, and aid (Evolvi, 2024).

Swedish civil society runs largely on public grants, especially through the folkbildning system, which funds both majority and minority FBOs. Access depends on meeting norms set by public authorities. From 1 January 2025, unified democracy criteria apply to all state-grant applicants (MUCF, 2024; Regeringen, 2024). In practice this turns documentation into a compliance requirement: minutes, governance records, accounts, and attendance registers all become evidence. Poljarevic (2026) traces how this conditionality has defunded Muslim actors within folkbildning, and the Ibn Rushd review (2024) shows the audit process in action. The result is a direct institutional demand for information-management capacity, which makes it central to understanding technology adoption in FBOs.

2.2 Information Systems Adoption: Theoretical Frameworks

Three frameworks guide the analysis.

Institutional theory (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983) explains why organizations adopt structures and tools in response to external pressure rather than efficiency alone. It identifies three pressures: coercive (regulation and funding conditions), normative (professional expectations), and mimetic (imitation under uncertainty). All three apply to Swedish FBOs. Funding conditionality pushes toward documentation systems, transparency expectations push toward reporting tools, and watching peers adopt platforms creates pressure to follow. Oliver (1991) adds that organizations do not respond uniformly: they may comply, adapt, or resist depending on resources and capacity, so adoption is a strategic response, not a fixed outcome.

Suchman's (1995) legitimacy theory distinguishes pragmatic legitimacy (demonstrable usefulness), moral legitimacy (alignment with values), and cognitive legitimacy (being seen as normal and expected). For minority FBOs, moral and cognitive legitimacy are increasingly tied to visible compliance with democratic norms, which raises the stakes of documentation beyond convenience.

Tornatzky and Fleischer's (1990) Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) framework is the study's primary adoption lens. It locates adoption in three contexts: technological (relative advantage, compatibility, complexity), organizational (size, resources, management support, staff and volunteer skills), and environmental (regulation, funding conditions, institutional expectations). TOE is well suited here because it forces attention onto technology, organization, and environment at the same time.

The study treats adoption as an ongoing process: selecting, implementing, integrating, and sustaining a system. This matters in resource-constrained organizations, where adoption often stays partial or rests on individuals rather than becoming institutionalized. In this study the technological

context covers tools such as CRM (customer Relationship Management), ERP(enterprise Resource Planning), document management, AI (artificial Intelligence), and financial reporting; the organizational context covers volunteer dependency, resource limits, and administrative capacity; the environmental context covers funding requirements, regulation, and legitimacy pressure.

2.3 Digitalization in Civil Society and Resource-Constrained Organizations

Research on digital transformation in civil society organizations documents a consistent pattern of fragmentation and uneven capacity. Nonprofit and voluntary organizations frequently lack the financial resources, technical expertise, and dedicated personnel necessary for integrated digital infrastructures. Instead, they assemble disconnected tools such as spreadsheets, messaging applications, cloud storage, and specialized platforms that address immediate operational needs without providing organizational coherence (Cipriano & Za, 2024; Godefroid et al., 2024). From an information systems perspective, this is a lack of system integration: multiple tools operate in isolation without shared data structures or coordinated workflows, generating duplicated data entry, inconsistent records, limited organizational overview, and vulnerability to administrative error. The benefits of digitalization remain limited as long as information cannot be aggregated across systems for coherent overview and decision support.

Nonprofit research often blurs three stages that behave differently: adoption, use, and outcomes. The distinction matters in resource-constrained settings, where breakdowns usually happen after adoption, between adoption and use, or between use and outcome (Nah & Saxton, 2013; Cipriano & Za, 2024; Godefroid et al., 2024). The next three subsections take each in turn, then return to the organizational conditions that shape all three.

2.3.1 Technology adoption

Adoption is the decision to select and deploy a system: evaluating options, committing to a tool, and putting it into use. Nonprofit research often studies adoption as the outcome of interest, whether an organization has a CRM, a financial system, or a social media presence (Nah and Saxton, 2013). That captures whether the technology exists, not whether it is integrated into daily work. In resource-constrained organizations, adoption is driven by more than fit: tight budgets favor free tools, volunteer-led decisions follow whoever is available, and funders or umbrella bodies may dictate the choice (Godefroid et al., 2024). The result can look reasonable on paper and still not match how the organization works.

2.3.2 Technology use

Use is how an adopted system is actually operated. An organization may run a CRM or document system at a fraction of its function, work around it manually, or apply it unevenly across teams. Use

is therefore the gap between formal adoption and embedded practice. Cipriano and Za (2024) describe nonprofits adopting tools without the change-management capacity to integrate them, with adopted systems sometimes coexisting with parallel manual routines that duplicate data.

2.3.3 Technology outcomes

Outcomes are whether the system delivers what it was meant to: efficiency, coordination, data quality, reporting, reach. Adoption and use are preconditions, not guarantees. Much of the literature documents adoption and stops, leaving outcomes assumed rather than observed (Nah and Saxton, 2013; Cipriano and Za, 2024). In resource-constrained organizations that assumption is fragile: a tool can be adopted, used in some form, and still produce little or negative value if it adds administrative work or depends on capacity the organization cannot sustain. Separating outcomes from adoption and use makes it possible to see why digitalization delivers unevenly even when the technology is in place. The study reads the cases as three separable layers for this reason.

2.3.4 Resource constraints and organizational capacity

What shapes all three stages is organizational capacity. Cipriano and Za (2024) argue digital transformation needs leadership, staff development, and sustained investment, none of which can be assumed. Godefroid et al. (2024) name the main barriers as financial constraints, limited expertise, and mission-driven cultures that resist administrative spending. Nah and Saxton (2013) show adoption tracks budget, staff size, and technical sophistication alongside strategic goals. The direction is consistent: outcomes follow organizational conditions, not tool availability. Volunteer dependence adds fragility, since skills and availability sit with individuals who may not stay or be trained. Mission-driven cultures can treat administrative investment as a diversion from core work, and multiple service domains each generate their own tool requirements, which complicates integration (Godefroid et al., 2024; Cipriano & Za, 2024).

2.3.5 Technology categories relevant to FBOs

For FBOs the relevant tools span several domains: document management for records, compliance, and audit trails; CRM for donors and volunteers; accounting and reporting for budgets and grants; cloud collaboration for distributed teams; and communication tools for outreach and visibility. AI tools are starting to matter for drafting, translation, and data work. Each carries its own cost, complexity, and skill requirements. These tools also generate data on donors, volunteers, finances, and activities, and the ability to structure and use that data is itself a key factor in whether digitalization produces value. The tools run on a spectrum: cloud and social platforms are cheap and immediately useful (Godefroid et al., 2024; Evolvi, 2024), while ERP or CRM systems offer more but demand implementation capacity and data governance small organizations rarely have (Cipriano and Za, 2024; Nah and Saxton, 2013). Document and reporting tools sit between, and have grown more important under funding conditionality (MUCF, 2024; Cordella and Tempini, 2015). AI adds efficiency alongside privacy and literacy concerns (Dwivedi et al., 2023). Whether

any of these produces value depends on the interaction between technology, capacity, and institutional environment, the study's central concern.

2.4 Institutional Pressures on Minority Faith-Based Organizations in Sweden

Some minority FBOs in Sweden operate under conditions that add a dimension to digitalization (Figure 2.1). Where 2.2 set out the general mechanisms of institutional pressure and legitimacy, this section shows how they intensify under public scrutiny. It draws mainly on research about Muslim civil society, the country's largest religious minority and its most studied minority FBO case. The mechanisms identified there likely affect other minority FBOs as well.

Recent work describes a shift from civic inclusion toward what Poljarevic and Aziz (2026) call civic suspicion: organizations are increasingly treated as objects of scrutiny and pushed to demonstrate compliance to authorities and funders. El Far (2026a, 2026b) shows this moves organizations from community-building toward defensive legitimation.

This has direct consequences for digitalization. It raises the value of internal documentation and audit-ready records, since structural disadvantage is rarely recognized in law and organizations must produce their own evidence of compliance (Hassan and Poljarevic, 2026). It also encourages caution about public visibility, because external communication carries reputational risk through associative stigma. Ardin (2026) shows that labeling alone can trigger funding withdrawal and partner distancing without any legal process, and that the terminology itself is a site of exclusion (Aziz, 2026). Digital tools here are not only administrative; they manage institutional risk and structure the documentation on which legitimacy rests (Cordella and Tempini, 2015).

Recent cases show the pattern: Folkbildningsrådet's (2024) measures against study associations, the contested review of Ibn Rushd (2024), and Sida's (Styrelsen för internationellt utvecklingssamarbete) rejection of an Islamic Relief application, which Fremia took to the Parliamentary Ombudsman (Fremia, 2026). Discretionary decisions by authorities and intermediaries produced real consequences for legitimacy and funding without formal proceedings. Majority Christian organizations are more visible and hold relatively secured cognitive legitimacy, so this section concentrates on the minority dynamics where the gap sits, not on a hierarchy between groups. These conditions enter the thesis only where they shape which tools minority FBOs adopt, how they use them, and how they justify that use.

Figure 2.1. Collage of Swedish news reports and opinion pieces on Muslim civil society (2022–2026), assembled with an AI image tool. The arrangement is illustrative; the underlying articles are listed below and the events they report are discussed in Section 2.4.



Sources (left to right, top to bottom): Löwenmark (2025); Dagens Nyheter (2026); Löwenmark (2026); Kristersson (2022); Svensson (2024); Ekman, Zachrisson Winberg & Törnmalm (2024).

2.5 Research Gap

A gap remains between these literatures. Work on civil society digitalization shows adoption is shaped by resources, capacity, fragmentation, and reporting demands. Work on Muslim civil society in Sweden shows how scrutiny, stigma, and legitimacy pressures affect minority organizations. The two are rarely connected, and the comparative question, how the dynamics differ across minority and majority FBOs in the same environment, is largely unexamined. This thesis addresses it through the combined lens of TOE, institutional theory, and legitimacy theory.

2.6 Synthesis

Adoption in faith-based organizations turns on three things at once: what the technology demands, what the organization can sustain, and what the institutional environment requires. In Sweden, legitimacy demands and documentation requirements sharpen the third, and reputational risk sharpens it further for minority organizations. Capacity alone does not explain the result, nor does technology. The study reads all three together.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Strategy

The study uses a qualitative strategy. The research question concerns how adoption is shaped by sensemaking, capacity, and institutional context, not by measurable distributions, and qualitative inquiry captures that context dependency better than quantitative methods (Bryman, 2016).

A multiple-case design was chosen. Case study research suits a phenomenon that cannot be separated from its context (Yin, 2018), and multiple cases allow comparison that surfaces both recurring patterns and meaningful contrasts (Eisenhardt, 1989). The design separates patterns specific to minority FBOs from those general to Swedish FBOs. Generalization is analytical, drawing on TOE, institutional theory, and legitimacy theory to read adoption against the interaction of technology, capacity, and institutional environment.

3.2 Alternative Methods Considered

Other designs were considered. A quantitative survey would have produced broader descriptive patterns but not the focus on meaning and process the question requires (Bryman, 2016). A single-case study would have deepened one organization at the cost of comparison across institutional positions. Reflexive thematic analysis was considered for data analysis but set aside: the study already had a defined framework and needed systematic cross-case comparison, which Framework Analysis supports through its matrix structure (Braun and Clarke, 2006, 2019; Ritchie and Spencer, 1994; Gale et al., 2013). Participant observation was not feasible within the timeframe.

3.3 Research Methods

3.3.1 Case Selection

Cases were chosen purposively along the dimensions the extended background identifies as relevant: religious tradition, organizational size, institutional position, and exposure to scrutiny. The four primary cases are Muslim minority FBOs in Sweden, varying in mission but sharing a minority position, a civil society role, and exposure to the scrutiny dynamics described by Poljarevic and Aziz

(2026), El Far (2026a, 2026b), Ardin (2026), and Hassan and Poljarevic (2026). This shared position makes them literal replication cases (Yin, 2018), where similar conditions should produce comparable adoption patterns.

The second group is the two majority Christian organizations, one institutionally embedded, one independent within the same tradition. The 4+2 split is deliberate. First, the research gap sits on the minority side: minority FBO digitalization is sparsely documented, while majority organizations operate in a well-studied environment. Second, the groups differ in accessibility. Majority organizations produce extensive public material (websites, annual reports, accessible representatives), so two interviews can be triangulated against the footprint analysis and a background conversation. Minority FBOs are less publicly documented, so interview material carries more weight, and information-rich cases (Patton, 2015; Yin, 2018) compensate for fewer public signals.

Two expert field conversations widen the view: a technology lead in a multilingual Christian minority congregation with unusually high capacity for its size, and a representative of a large Muslim organization with unexpectedly low capacity. Both ran with informed consent as supplementary material, not full cases, and both support the observation that capacity does not track size.

Recruitment was by direct contact across traditions. Several organizations declined or lacked an informant with operational insight, which reflects both the sensitive environment and the access limits of a single-researcher thesis. The final sample is therefore purposive selection shaped by these constraints, a point the limitations section returns to.

3.3.2 Data Collection

Data come from three sources: semi-structured interviews, expert field conversations, and digital trace material from websites and public social media. The combination follows Yin's (2018) principle of multiple sources for construct validity. Interviews carry the organizational and institutional factors, the footprint material tests claims about external presence, and the expert conversations probe the boundaries of both.

Six interviews form the primary data: four with informants in the Muslim minority FBOs, one with a local unit of the majority religious institution, and one with an independent organization in the same broader Christian tradition. Informants were chosen for operational insight into how technology is selected, used, and managed, and held roles such as director, board chair, religious leader, or technology lead. Interviews ran 45 to 75 minutes, in person or by video. Five were audio-recorded with consent and transcribed in full. In one case the informant declined recording; the researcher took structured notes and read them back after each question for approval.

The guide followed the three TOE contexts and the institutional and legitimacy dimensions from the extended background, covering current tools, adoption decisions, internal capacity, financial and regulatory constraints, external expectations, and digital public presence. It was used flexibly to let informants develop themes in their own terms while keeping coverage comparable across cases.

The two expert field conversations ran in parallel with the interviews, with informed consent, documented through structured notes rather than full transcription given their shorter, less formal character. They contextualize the interviews rather than serve as independent cases.

Digital trace material was collected from websites and public social media; its treatment is described in Section 3.3.3. All material was stored on encrypted, access-controlled storage, identifying information was removed at transcription, and organizations and individuals are referred to by anonymized type-based descriptions. Consent, anonymization, and data handling are detailed in Section 3.6.

3.3.3 Comparative Digital Footprint Analysis

The study also draws on publicly observable digital footprints from a stratified set of comparison organizations, used as a triangulation source rather than primary data. The purpose is to situate the interview findings against how Swedish faith-based and faith-adjacent organizations present themselves digitally.

The approach draws on digital trace analysis (Caliandro and Gandini, 2017) and organizational website ethnography (Beneito-Montagut, 2011), restricted to publicly observable signals. No primary data were collected from these organizations. Each was observed across six dimensions: platform maturity, distribution of IT roles, data infrastructure and GDPR (general data protection regulation) practice, service digitization, institutional embedding, and content production.

Four organizations were selected across two size strata matching the interviewed cases. The medium stratum (multiple paid staff) includes a large national civil society organization with religious heritage and a denominational umbrella body. The small stratum (local congregations and small institutes) includes a free-church congregation and a faith-adjacent think tank. Matching by scale keeps the comparison from conflating size with tradition.

The footprint analysis is limited by design: public presence is a façade that may diverge from internal practice. A polished website proves neither strong nor weak internal capacity. Findings are therefore used to triangulate interview claims about embedding and capacity, not to stand alone. Both interviews and footprint material are read as organizational practice and as strategic self-representation shaped by the institutional environment.

3.3.4 Data Analysis

The study uses Framework Analysis (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994; Gale et al., 2013) with pattern matching (Yin, 2018) for cross-case synthesis. Framework Analysis suits a study that already has a defined framework and needs systematic comparison: its matrix records how each case relates to each category, which serves both the cross-case logic and the transparency expected of a master's thesis. Rows are cases, columns are analytical categories, and reading along rows shows within-case patterns while reading down columns shows cross-case ones.

The analysis followed the five steps in Gale et al. (2013). Transcripts were read in full, then an initial framework was built deductively from the study's anchors: the three TOE contexts, the three institutional pressures (coercive, normative, mimetic), and Suchman's three legitimacy types. An open category captured material outside the codes. Transcripts were indexed against the framework, summarized into the matrix, and interpreted within and across cases.

Cross-case synthesis uses pattern matching (Yin, 2018). Expected patterns were set from theory before coding (Section 3.7) and compared against observed patterns, which Yin describes as strengthening internal validity: theory predicts, observation tests, and the gap between them produces the findings. Each pattern is confirmed, partially confirmed, or divergent, and material in the open category is treated as theory-developing rather than noise.

The logic runs in two directions. Within each group, literal replication tests whether the four minority cases, and separately the two majority cases, are consistent across the frameworks. Between groups, theoretical replication tests whether differences are systematic and trace to institutional position. The contrast between the embedded and the independent majority case checks whether patterns tie to formal embedding or to the majority position itself. The two field conversations are not coded but qualify the findings, particularly that capacity does not track size.

3.4 Research Quality

Research quality follows the trustworthiness criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Credibility rests on multiple sources of evidence, interviews, expert field conversations, and digital trace material, which let the interview findings be checked against other material (Yin, 2018). Triangulation is used cautiously: not to treat all sources as equal, but to see whether interview patterns are supported, complicated, or challenged elsewhere. That matters here, where public presence may diverge from internal practice.

Transferability rests on thick description rather than statistical representativeness (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Organizations and informants are anonymized, but analytically relevant features,

type, institutional position, size, funding context, role, are retained so readers can judge relevance to other settings.

Dependability rests on a transparent process. Framework Analysis makes the coding framework, matrix, and cross-case comparisons explicit (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994; Gale et al., 2013), working from predefined categories while leaving room for material that does not fit them.

Confirmability rests on separating types of material and stating theoretical expectations before coding. Full interviews form the main basis; field conversations and trace material are supplementary. The separation reduces the risk of overstating what the material supports and keeps the reasoning traceable.

3.5 Use of AI Tools

Audio recordings were transcribed with TurboScribe, a cloud-based service. The transcripts contained recurring errors, particularly around names, religious terms, and Swedish-specific phrasing, which were corrected with Claude (Anthropic). Claude was also used to identify candidate literature and theoretical frameworks, summarize articles before closer reading, support reference verification, and help construct the research instruments — the analytical framework matrix and the interview guide — both built from the study's theoretical anchors and finalized by the researcher. During revision it was used to condense overlong passages.

The indexing of transcripts into the matrix, the interpretation of the interview material, and the analytical decisions were the researcher's own; AI was not used to assign codes or draw conclusions. All AI output was treated as provisional, and every correction, claim, reference, and translated quotation was checked against the original source before inclusion. This mattered most for the quotations reported in Chapter 4, which were translated from Swedish with AI assistance and verified against the Swedish source, since wording carries analytical weight in several of them.

Using external cloud tools raised a data-handling consideration addressed in the consent process. Participants were informed before and during the interviews that recordings would be processed through digital tools, including transcription and AI-assisted correction. Their main concern was public identification in the thesis text rather than digital processing, and consent was given on that basis. Names, roles, and organizational references were captured in a separate demographic section and removed or generalized at transcription, so the transcripts used for coding carried no direct identifiers.

The residual risk is that the uploaded audio still contained spoken identifying information. This was limited by deleting the recordings once transcription was complete and keeping the demographic mapping separate from the analytical material. The trade-off is acknowledged:

external processing was accepted in exchange for transcription accuracy that could not be produced manually within the timeframe.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

The study's ethical design follows the four research-ethics requirements articulated by the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet, 2002): the information requirement, the consent requirement, the confidentiality requirement, and the use requirement. Several ethical considerations are particularly relevant given the study's setting. Faith-based organizations, and particularly minority religious organizations in Sweden, operate in a politically and institutionally sensitive environment, as documented in the extended background. Participants may have concerns about how their organizations are represented, particularly given the documented risks of associative stigma and adversarial interpretation of organizational information. Informed consent was therefore obtained from all participants prior to data collection, with a clear explanation of the purpose of the study, how data would be used, and participants' right to withdraw at any time without consequence.

Anonymization is applied at both organizational and individual level. Organizations are referred to in the thesis through type-based descriptions that capture analytically relevant features, for example "a Muslim humanitarian organization with paid staff" or "a small mosque association run largely by volunteers", rather than by name. Individuals are referred to by role. Given the small size of the relevant organizational field in Sweden, particular attention is paid to combinations of contextual details that could enable indirect identification. Where a description would risk identification through the combination of religious tradition, organizational size, role, and geographic location, identifying details are generalized further or omitted. This also applies to the material from the two majority Christian organizations, where both the institutionally embedded unit and the independent organization, as well as their individual informants, are anonymized through the same type-based descriptions used for the minority cases. This approach was chosen because type-based descriptions retain the analytical context needed to interpret findings while still reducing the risk of identification.

Data is stored securely in accordance with applicable data protection regulations, including GDPR. All personal data are handled in accordance with principles of data minimization and purpose limitation. Data is not shared with third parties, and interview recordings are deleted following transcription.

A reflexive awareness of the researcher's own positionality is maintained throughout the study. Research on minority religious organizations in a politically charged context carries risks of both overly sympathetic framing and reductive othering. This reflexivity is sustained not only at the stage of writing but throughout data collection and analysis, recognizing that the researcher's presence, framing of questions, and interpretive choices all shape the knowledge produced.

The researcher's background as an IT student with prior personal engagement in Swedish Muslim civil society shaped both the access strategy and the analytical sensitivities brought to the data. The supplementary expert field conversations described in Section 3.3.1 were conducted with informed consent on the same terms as the formal interviews. In one instance, the researcher also provided practical technical assistance with email configuration and cloud storage management to a large Muslim organization. This dual role, as both student-researcher and ad hoc IT resource, is acknowledged as a reflexivity consideration. Material from these contexts is used cautiously to nuance the formal interview findings, not as an independent basis for generalization.

3.7 Expected Patterns Before Coding

Before the systematic coding stage, a set of theory-informed expected patterns was formulated. Since some of the interviews had already been conducted, these patterns are not presented as hypotheses developed independently of all empirical familiarity. Instead, they function as analytical expectations derived from the theoretical framework in Chapter 2 and are used to structure the subsequent pattern matching. The patterns are organized to capture both the within-group consistency expected of literal replication and the between-group contrasts expected of theoretical replication (Yin, 2018). Informational redundancy within the majority group was indicated already during data collection: the two interviews produced near-identical accounts when mapped onto the TOE, institutional, and legitimacy frameworks (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Yin, 2018), and this convergence is further supported by the comparative digital footprint analysis and a background conversation with an additional majority-tradition informant.

The expected patterns were:

1. **Coercive pressure** more prominent in the minority cases, driven by funding requirements, reporting obligations, democracy criteria, and scrutiny (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Poljarevic and Aziz, 2026; Hassan and Poljarevic, 2026; MUCF, 2024); in the majority cases weaker and tied to general regulation such as GDPR.
2. **Defensive adoption** in the minority cases, with tools used for compliance and legitimacy management rather than service development, and visibility concerns delaying proactive development (El Far, 2026a, 2026b; Ardin, 2026); proactive and coordination-driven in the majority cases.
3. **Cautious external presence** in the minority cases, shaped by reputational risk and adversarial reading (Ardin, 2026); outreach-driven in the majority cases.
4. **Legitimacy work** centered on moral and cognitive legitimacy in the minority cases (Suchman, 1995); more taken for granted and pragmatic in the majority cases.
5. **Organizational capacity** shaping adoption unevenly across all cases, with fragmentation and person-dependence varying by technical role and embeddedness rather than tradition (Nah and Saxton, 2013; Cipriano and Za, 2024; Godefroid et al., 2024).

6. **Mimetic pressure** institutionalized through shared structures in the majority cases and informal, network-dependent in the minority cases (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983).

After coding, these expected patterns are compared with the observed patterns in the analytical matrix. Each pattern is assessed as confirmed, partially confirmed, challenged, or expanded by unexpected findings.

4. Results

This chapter presents the cross-case analysis. The structure follows the six expected patterns from Section 3.7, ordered by empirical prominence rather than original numbering. Section 4.7 summarizes the outcomes in the original sequence, and Section 4.9 develops the top three findings that carry the main theoretical contribution.

The six cases are referred to as I1–I6. I1–I4 are Muslim minority organizations: a humanitarian aid organization (I1), a knowledge-producing think tank (I2), a foundation for education, missionary work and charity (I3), and a mosque in central Stockholm (I4). I5 and I6 are the two contrast cases within the majority Christian tradition: a locally bounded unit of the Church of Sweden (I5), and the youth organization of an evangelical revival movement affiliated with the majority church (I6). The 4+2 design is motivated in Chapter 3: the minority group is the locus of the research gap, the majority group provides theoretical contrast, and the internal contrast within the majority group (one institutionally embedded, one organizationally independent) allows assessment of whether observed differences trace to formal embedding or to the majority position itself. The full coding matrix is provided in Appendix D, and section references within brackets [A–F] refer to thematic blocks in the prepared transcripts (Appendix C). Each subsection reports the observed material and states the pattern matching outcome in Yin's (2018) four categories: confirmed, partially confirmed, challenged, or expanded. Predictions are listed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Pattern matching: predicted versus observed patterns. I5 and I6 jointly constitute the contrast group within the majority Christian tradition.

Pattern	Prediction	Theoretical anchor	Outcome
1	Coercive pressure dominates adoption in minority cases	DiMaggio and Powell (1983); Poljarevic and Aziz (2026)	Confirmed and expanded
2	Defensive rather than proactive adoption in minority cases	El Far (2026a, 2026b); Ardin (2026); Oliver (1991)	Confirmed and expanded
3	Caution shapes external digital presence	Ardin (2026)	Confirmed
4	Moral/cognitive legitimacy in minority; pragmatic in majority	Suchman (1995)	Partially confirmed and expanded
5	Fragmented, person-dependent practice	Cipriano and Za (2024); Godefroid et al. (2024)	Confirmed

6	Mimetic pressure institutionalized in majority, informal in minority	DiMaggio and Powell (1983)	Confirmed
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4.1 Caution in external digital presence (Pattern 3 confirmed)

Caution is the most strongly confirmed pattern in the material. All four minority cases display defensive visibility, with mechanisms varying across the cases.

I1 has experienced direct platform sanctioning. Meta removed its Instagram account of roughly 20,000 followers without explanation, and shadow-ban effects during posts about Gaza are treated as established within the organization. Background checks of speakers were formalized even before the Sida rejection, where a single opinion piece sank a development-project application:

"It was enough with an opinion piece in an evening newspaper ... that a speaker could possibly have said something that supported female genital cutting." (I1, E)

The respondent reads this as a deliberate misreading of a lecture by a speaker whose life's work is educating **against** the practice. The point is that a state funder acted on media narrative, not on the administrative principles that normally govern such decisions.

I2 illustrates the personal cost of visibility. The respondent was targeted by media campaigns labelling him "Islamist" and lost employment at an established employer after refusing to distance himself from the organization. He also notes an engagement pattern where posts are shared far more than they are liked, which he reads as the audience adapting its own behavior under scrutiny.

I3's self-censorship around a post regarding SÄPO (Säkerhetspolisen) is preventive rather than reactive: the respondent removed it after a peer's warning, while stressing that nothing said broke any law. The caution responds to asymmetry in how state measures are applied, not to actual violations.

I4 shows differentiated self-censorship: silence on controversial topics, criticism of Islamophobia retained.

"I protect both myself and the mosque. Even if it's something relevant ... in order not to end up in controversial situations." (I4, E)

The mosque's central position in the Stockholm media field makes visibility a risk in itself, and it is hit by demonization campaigns aimed at Muslim congregations generally, even when it is not the direct target.

The key refinement against the prediction is the contrast with the majority cases. I5 is itself exposed to external campaigns, arising after public events or opinion pieces, which its communicators plan for and meet with counter-campaigns (I5, D). The difference is capacity: the local unit has three

communicators in the management team, prepared counter-campaigns, and data-protection coordination through an external firm. Caution is professionalized and distributed across formal roles.

I6 sharpens the contrast. The respondent calls the organization "generally rather bold, even though we are considered radical" and roots this in its heritage. Despite identifying as religiously countercultural, no defensive visibility surfaces: no platform sanctioning, no self-censorship, no refused association. The absence of caution in a non-minority organization that nonetheless sees itself as radical confirms that the defensive visibility in I1–I4 is tied to minority position, not to religious distinctiveness or strong identity in general.

Pattern matching outcome: Confirmed. The contrast between minority and majority lies in organizational capacity to handle reputational pressure, not in exposure to it. The two contrast cases (I5, I6) display campaigns and self-described countercultural activities respectively, yet show no defensive digital visibility. This connects Pattern 3 to Patterns 5 and 6 and shows that minority status and capacity limitation operate together rather than as separate conditions.

4.2 Coercive pressure in three concurrent forms (Pattern 1 confirmed and expanded)

Coercive pressure is the most theoretically productive finding in the material. The evidence confirms the predicted direction but shows pressure operating in three concurrent forms in the minority cases, only the first matching DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) classical model.

Direct regulatory pressure. I1 reports manual reporting to the Swedish Tax Agency's new gift-recipient system, since no technical support has been built, work that rests on a single accountant (I1, B). I1 has also lost its 90-account certification from Svensk Insamlingskontroll as a consequence of a bank account closure, a regulatory outcome mediated through a private actor. I5 shows the majority expectation at this level: GDPR with a dedicated data-protection coordinator and central church policy as a softly accepted frame (E1, IP1).

Privatized pressure. Market actors apply a regulatory logic without holding formal sanctioning authority, the most empirically central finding in I1. Banks close accounts on suspicion without substantiating wrongdoing, Sida rejects an application on the basis of an opinion piece, and Meta removes the organization's 20,000-follower Instagram account without explanation. The respondent renders the banks' position precisely:

"We do not suspect you of any wrongdoing, but this is because we can no longer guarantee that no wrongdoing exists." (I1, D)

The mechanism recurs across the sector: a study for the Muslim Charities Forum found that 40 percent of UK Muslim aid organizations lost at least one bank account in the period studied, and the Islamic Relief/Sida case (Section 2.4) shows the same logic in Sweden. For I1 the cost is measurable: staffing fell from eleven to six (O1) and turnover halved after the closures (O4). In I2 the same form runs through platform dynamics, where a post draws tens of thousands of interactions but only about a hundred likes (I2, E), an asymmetry the respondent reads as algorithmic dampening of Muslim-coded content. Platforms here act as privatized regulators of visibility without publicly stated guidelines.

Anticipated pressure. Organizations respond to precedent from other cases rather than to requirements aimed directly at them. I3 illustrates it through SÄPO-related self-censorship, removing a post after a peer's warning:

"They have destroyed people's lives. ... I don't want my life to be destroyed." (I3, E)

The respondent notes that Muslim educational institutions have been closed and individuals pursued on the basis of secret SÄPO evidence, opinion pieces, and subjective assessments by authorities (IP1), making the adaptation a rational response to documented state practice.

Anticipated pressure also explains the most unexpected finding in Pattern 1: three of the four minority organizations actively decide to avoid public funding to escape its conditionality, stated explicitly by I2 (E1) and recurring in I3 and I4. I4 mediates its relationship to the state through its religious community rather than directly (I4, D). This is funding-related avoidance (Oliver, 1991): organizations that expect public funding to carry conditions threatening their religious or political autonomy opt out entirely, so the digital compliance systems it would require are never built. The choice at the funding level precedes and shapes digital adoption, developed in 4.3 and 5.1.2.

Pattern matching outcome: Confirmed and expanded. Two of the three forms, privatized and anticipated fall outside DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) original formulation and constitute the study's first theory-developing contribution, discussed in Section 5.1.1.

4.3 Defensive strategy at three levels (Pattern 2 confirmed and expanded)

Defensive strategy in the minority material operates at three levels the original framework did not separate: funding, operations, and adoption.

Funding level. Defensive strategy appears as structural disconnection from public grants (Section 4.2). I2, I3, and I4 all opt out to avoid the constraints of state conditionality, so the compliance infrastructure that public funding requires never enters their technology landscape.

Operational level. Here it appears as capacity-preserving non-adoption. I4 is the clearest case: despite thousands of weekly visitors, the administrative core is two active people, and the respondent describes severe resource constraints and fatigue around operational development (I4, B). The principle of orality, previously read as theological, also works as a defense against exhaustion: new systems would demand training, operation, and maintenance the organization neither has nor intends to acquire.

Adoption level. Where the prediction was originally aimed, I1 shows the expected defensive profile. Manual Tax Agency reporting, accounting-centered financial management, a formalized risk matrix, and speaker background checks consume a disproportionate share of administrative capacity (T3, T4, L5). I1 also has proactive features, DocuSign chosen after structured evaluation, the digital switchboard after market analysis, but the defensive profile dominates in the sheer volume of manual work adoption generates.

I2 is hybrid. Adoption itself is proactive, Canva, StreamYard, Captions chosen with privacy in mind, while the visibility strategy stays defensive (I2, E). The personal cost is documented: media campaigns and the "Islamist" label cost the respondent his job and pressured the organization toward closure (L4), which makes the defensive stance rational rather than excessive.

I5 confirms the majority expectation. Proactive operational adoption (Microsoft 365, the Aveny modules from Eniac) is paired with proactive reputation work, three communicators and prepared counter-campaigns against the "leave the church" movement triggered by the tax declaration (L1, L5). Campaigns arise here too, but are handled within established processes.

Pattern matching outcome. Confirmed and expanded. The predicted direction holds, and the identification of three operational levels develops the pattern further. Strategic disconnection from funding is the most significant new finding because it shows that defensive strategy can operate at a level that precedes digital adoption entirely. Discussed in Section 5.1.2.

4.4 Legitimacy work and an affective dimension (Pattern 4 partially confirmed and expanded)

The predicted direction holds, with one refinement: the material points to an affective legitimacy dimension that Suchman's (1995) three types do not capture directly.

I1 displays moral legitimacy through collaborations with established secular and Christian actors, and cognitive legitimacy through deliberate work to read as a normal civil society actor. The respondent's own reflection exposes the affective mechanism behind it:

"We did this perhaps so that others would see us as a good force, and not as a dangerous destructive force ... the right decision for the wrong reasons from the beginning." (I1, F)

The commentary frames this as an inferiority complex and early overcompensation of Muslim identity in response to demonization (L2). The register is internalized uncertainty about belonging, closer to Goffman's (1963) stigma management or Du Bois's (1903) double consciousness than to Suchman's instrumental types.

I2 shows the same mechanism inverted. Popular education and criticism of majority society are the primary task, with the majority audience placed in the outermost circle (I2, E). This is partly a refusal to perform the legitimacy work that majority-audience expectations would demand, turning the affective mechanism against its source.

I3 shows it in a third configuration: an internalized anti-boasting norm inhibits legitimizing visibility and helps explain why the organization developed no strategic digital presence despite its scale (I3, B).

The mechanism is asymmetrical, producing overcompensation (I1), unapologetic distancing (I2), or inhibition (I3). The common feature is that legitimation is directed first at an internalized uncertainty produced by external campaigns, only secondarily at external audiences.

I5 shows all three Suchman types. Pragmatic legitimacy runs through the counter-campaign as a value argument, cognitive legitimacy as a position requiring no demonstration. Moral and strategic legitimacy are coupled: the respondent names an extra legitimacy pressure tied specifically to faith-organization status and treats managing it as one of the organization's most important goals (I5, E). Where the minority cases handle this through individually distributed and partly affective mechanisms, I5 handles it through three communicators and pre-planned counter-campaigns. The pressure exists; the response is professionalized.

I6 confirms the configuration from a second angle: strong cognitive legitimacy through tradition, moral legitimacy through historic mission work, pragmatic legitimacy in communication aimed at younger generations, none of it operating against an internalized uncertainty about belonging. Its absence in I6, despite cultural distinctiveness, reinforces that the affective dimension tracks minority stigmatization, not religious distinctiveness in general.

The contrast lies in how much work each legitimacy type requires and who does it. For the contrast cases cognitive legitimacy is cheap and the rest is managed through established processes; for I1–I4 all legitimacy is expensive and distributed, with the affective dimension as a fourth, internalized base.

Pattern matching outcome. Partially confirmed and expanded. Suchman's (1995) three legitimacy types do not capture the affective dimension visible in I1, I2, and I3. The absence of this dimension in both contrast cases (I5, I6) reinforces its minority-specific character. Discussed in Section 5.1.3.

4.5 Fragmented and person-dependent practice (Pattern 5 confirmed)

Fragmentation and person-dependence are universal across I1–I4 and inverted in I5.

I1 has the most developed infrastructure among the minority cases, inherited Microsoft 365 from the UK parent, DocuSign, Donorbox, formalized bank relationships, yet fragmentation is pronounced: the accountant manually links thousands of transfers to personal identity numbers and reports them to the Tax Agency by hand (I1, B). Person dependence is quantified by a website unchanged for roughly five years (O3), after the responsible person fell ill six or seven years ago and the function was never restored; staffing has also fallen from eleven to six (O1).

I2 is the extreme form: "It's just me" (I2, A), with backup limited to one peer for acute problems and no succession plan.

I3 shows it dynamically: up to ten parallel projects during the respondent's tenure, one after the relocation, a 90 percent collapse of the project portfolio. I4 shows it in a community-affiliated setting, two active people for a mosque with thousands of weekly visitors.

I5 inverts the pattern. The respondent is formally sole IT lead but describes structural redundancy, a backup person who can take over and documented routines locally and centrally (I5, C). Responsibility rests on a role, not an individual, and fragmentation is minimal because the Aveny modules share one supplier ecosystem (T3).

I6 sits between: person dependence on the central IT lead is acknowledged but mitigated by central documentation. The hybrid central/local structure produces less fragmentation than the minority cases but less redundancy than I5.

Pattern matching outcome. Confirmed with quantitative evidence reinforcing the qualitative observation. The variation is driven by the embeddedness of technical role rather than by size or religious tradition. This sets the stage for the synthesis in Section 4.7.

4.6 Mimetic pressure: institutionalized or informal (Pattern 6 confirmed)

The pattern is confirmed, with differentiation inside the minority group. I5 shows the institutionalized form most clearly: regular cross-unit tech meetings where staff in the same function compare solutions before larger changes (I5, D). The central Aveny infrastructure, built and adapted to the church's needs over more than a decade, is itself a mimetic platform: when one unit adopts a module, others are implicitly expected to follow, since the system is centrally owned and maintained.

I6 confirms this from a second angle. The central IT lead handles licenses and infrastructure for all affiliated units, and the gradual move from regional to central represents structural mimetic pressure rather than active imitation: units take what the centre provides because the centre provides it.

I1 shows a hybrid more institutionalized than predicted. Learning runs through Giva Sverige, the sector body for fundraising organizations, with thematic meetings on CRM and other systems, and through international collaboration within the Muslim aid sector (I1, D). Donorbox illustrates the channel: it was found through a peer that had handled its own bank closure the same way. The pressure is institutionalized through a sector body, but the channel is informal and personal, built on trust from shared experience of debanking.

I2 shows the predicted informal mimicry, inspiration from other organizations that the respondent describes as largely unconscious (I2, D). I3 shows no mimetic drift; its only reference to imitation is a management book, a different kind of exchange. I4 shows the same absence, with orality and community affiliation replacing peer imitation. Mimetic pressure is mediated through sector or umbrella structures where they exist and is absent where the organization stands outside them.

Pattern matching outcome. Confirmed. The institutional contrast holds, with the minority side differentiated. I1 lies closer to the institutionalized end via Giva Sverige and the international sector connection. I3 and I4 show absence rather than informal mimicry. Mimetic pressure is mediated through sector organizations or umbrella structures when these exist, and is absent when the organization stands outside such networks.

4.7 Synthesis of cross-case patterns

Five of six predicted patterns are confirmed in the predicted direction, three of them (Patterns 1, 2, 4) confirmed and expanded into theoretical contributions. None is falsified. The theoretical replication logic (Yin, 2018) holds.

The minority/majority contrast holds across every central dimension, and the differences are institutional, not religious. Adding I6 as a second contrast case strengthens this: defensive visibility (Pattern 3) and the affective dimension (Pattern 4) are absent in both contrast cases despite their different positions, and present in all four minority cases. Since I5 is institutionally embedded and I6 organizationally independent, the contrast is not an artefact of embedding in the state-aligned church.

Variation within the minority group is informative. I1 and I3 show that embedded technical roles raise capacity; I2 and I4 show that their absence constrains adoption regardless of scale. The four minority cases share institutional position but differ in capacity; the two contrast cases share

legitimacy conditions but differ in embedding. Institutional position and organizational capacity are therefore separable conditions that combine differently across cases.

The patterns are connected, not parallel. Coercive pressure (1) makes caution (3) rational. Defensive strategy (2) operationalizes that caution. Legitimacy work (4) carries its affective load. Capacity (5) sets what is possible, and mimetic pressure (6) shapes how organizations learn under these conditions. The contrast cases show the same patterns in absence: no minority position, no caution; no internalized stigma, no affective dimension; role formalization and shared infrastructure present, capacity available.

4.8 Supplementary analysis: digital footprint and expert conversations

Two supplementary sources test the boundaries of the cross-case findings rather than answer the research question.

Expert field conversations: A technology lead in a multilingual Christian minority congregation shows that minority position alone does not produce defensive visibility or low capacity when a technical role is embedded and the environment is less hostile; the congregation runs real-time AI and advanced infrastructure. A representative of a large Muslim organization shows the inverse: size and resources alone do not produce capacity. With more than 100,000 weekly visitors across its offices, it still could not configure its own mail clients in-house. The two sharpen the claim: the patterns in I1–I4 come from the configuration of minority position, scrutiny, and absent or person-dependent technical roles, not from minority position or scale alone.

Comparative digital footprint analysis: Four organizations were observed across the six dimensions from 3.3.3. Stockholms Stadsmission and Pingst Sverige (medium stratum) both show mature infrastructure, digitalized services, formal communication roles, and strong sector embedding. Filadelfiakyrkan Stockholm (small stratum) sustains weekly livestreams, a podcast, an online community, and donor subscriptions well beyond its size class. Claphaminstitutet (small stratum) maintains regular publications and a broadcast program from a small core, supported by an external network.

What it shows: None of the four display defensive visibility, platform sanctioning, self-censorship, or refused association, including Claphaminstitutet, which engages openly with contested subjects. This separates two layers: defensive visibility (Pattern 3) and the affective dimension (Pattern 4) track minority position, not religious distinctiveness or controversy; fragmentation (Pattern 5) and capacity track scale, role embeddedness, and sector access. In I1–I4 these combine with minority positions to produce the specific defensive, fragmented profile seen in the interviews.

4.9 Conclusion

The analysis identifies the factors shaping digital technology adoption in faith-based organizations in Sweden. They fall into three layers that work together.

Table 4.2 One coherent dynamic seen from three angles.

Findings	I1	I2	I3	I4	I5 & 6
Privatized pressure (banks, platforms, discretionary funders)	Bank closures; Meta account removed (20k); Sida rejection on opinion-piece basis	Engagement asymmetry on platforms; loss of employment after media campaign	Peer warning before SÄPO post removal	Demonization campaigns aimed at Muslim congregations generally	✗
Anticipated pressure / strategic disconnection from public funding	Compliance infrastructure built; remains exposed to private actors	Active decision to avoid public grants to escape conditionality	Same logic; SÄPO-related self-censorship as preventive adaptation	State relationship mediated through religious community organization	✗
Affective legitimacy (internalized uncertainty about belonging)	Overcompensation via high-profile partnerships ("right decision for the wrong reasons")	Unapologetic distancing: majority audience as outermost circle	Anti-boasting norm inhibits legitimizing visibility	Differentiated self-censorship: silence on controversial topics, criticism retained	✗

I5 and I6 (contrast cases) show none of these mechanisms.

In TOE terms, technology, capacity, and environment all affect adoption across the material. Fragmentation, person-dependence, and missing IT roles constrain capacity in I1–I4 and, less so, I6; I5's institutional embedding mitigates them. Mimetic pressure works through sector structures where they exist and is absent where they do not.

Institutionally, the groups differ systematically. Coercive pressure dominates minority adoption but runs in three forms the original framework does not distinguish: direct regulatory, privatized, and anticipated. Defensive strategy answers it at three levels, funding, operations, and adoption, and strategic disconnection from public funding precedes and configures adoption in three of the four minority cases.

In legitimacy terms, the minority cases carry all three Suchman types at higher cost than the contrast cases, plus an affective dimension the typology misses. That dimension tracks minority stigmatization, not religious distinctiveness, confirmed by its absence in both contrast cases.

One mechanism connects these: pressure exists in forms beyond the regulatory, organizations disconnect structurally before they respond technologically, and the decisions carry an affective load. The three frameworks remain useful but each needs extension, developed in Chapter 5.

5 Discussion

This chapter answers the research question, places the findings in relation to existing literature, and sets out limitations and implications.

The research question asked what factors influence digital technology adoption in faith-based organizations in Sweden. The study finds three layers that operate together. Technology, organizational capacity, and the institutional environment all shape adoption, and within capacity the decisive factor is whether technical responsibility is a defined role rather than organizational size. On top of this shared layer, institutional pressure and legitimacy separate the two groups. In the minority cases, coercive pressure dominates and runs in three forms, only one of which is regulatory in the classical sense; defensive strategy answers that pressure, reaching the funding level, where three of four organizations avoid public funding and so never build the compliance infrastructure it would require; and legitimacy work carries an affective load absent in both majority cases.

This answer is bounded by what the sample can support. The minority side consists of four Muslim organizations, and the patterns are specific to that position under scrutiny. Whether they hold for other minority faith traditions in Sweden, which face different histories and different degrees of public suspicion, is an open question the study cannot settle. The answer should therefore be read as an account of how these factors operate in the cases studied, developed below and qualified in the limitations.

The rest of the chapter places the three theory-developing observations in relation to existing literature, addresses ethical implications, limitations, and future research.

5.1 Theoretical contributions

Chapter 4 confirmed the predicted patterns and expanded three of them into observations that develop the study's frameworks: coercive pressure in three concurrent forms, strategic disconnection at the funding level, and an affective legitimacy dimension. This section places the three in relation to existing literature.

5.1.1 Coercive isomorphism beyond formal authority

The privatized form connects to the platform governance literature, where Gillespie (2018) and Suzor (2019) argue that large platforms perform regulatory functions without holding regulatory authority. Cordella and Tempini (2015) make a parallel argument for information systems: the design of the system constitutes what counts as compliance. The minority cases extend both arguments empirically: banks, platforms, and discretionary funders together produce a regulatory effect without a regulatory actor. The anticipated form extends Oliver (1991) by showing that institutional adaptation can operate on sectoral memory rather than direct pressure. Together, the two forms suggest that the formal regulatory framework underestimates the pressure environment that shapes IS adoption in minority civil society.

5.1.2 Strategic disconnection

Cipriano and Za (2024) and Godefroid et al. (2024) explain low digital capacity in nonprofits through resource scarcity, weak technical roles, and mission-driven cultures. The minority cases add a mechanism not present in this literature: organizations deliberately disconnect from the funding sources that would trigger compliance infrastructure, in response to perceived risks of dependence on funders whose future conditions or discretionary actions are perceived as threats to organizational autonomy. Oliver's (1991) avoidance strategy is the relevant frame, but the contribution is to show that avoidance can operate at the funding level as a configuring condition for technological choices. Avgerou (2008) argues that IS adoption in resource-constrained contexts cannot be separated from the historical relationship between organization and institutional field. The strategic disconnection observed here is a specific instance of that principle.

5.1.3 Affective legitimacy

Suchman (1995) treats legitimacy as an external relation. The minority cases display a fourth dimension that operates before that external relation: internalized uncertainty about belonging. Goffman (1963) and Du Bois (1903) describe this register in different vocabularies (stigma management, double consciousness), but neither has been integrated with legitimacy theory in an IS or FBO digitalization context. The contribution is to identify where the affective dimension shows up in concrete digital adoption choices: partnerships that exceed operational need, content production that does not develop despite scale, refusal to perform majority-audience legitimization work.

The three observations describe one mechanism. Coercive pressure operates in more forms than the classical framework captures. Organizations respond strategically at the funding level before responding technologically. The decisions carry an affective load. Each framework remains useful; each requires extension.

The observations also connect to the literature on Swedish minority faith-based civil society, which describes civic suspicion (Poljarevic and Aziz, 2026), defensive legitimization work (El Far, 2026a,

2026b), the material effects of discursive labeling (Ardin, 2026), and the legal system's blindness to structural disadvantage (Hassan and Poljarevic, 2026) at the institutional level. This study locates where those dynamics register in the technology landscape: in the intermediaries that channel pressure, in disconnection at the funding layer, and in sectoral memory used as a compliance signal.

5.1.4 Demographic and generational factors not captured by the frameworks

Beyond the three observations developed above, the material indicates a factor that none of the three frameworks captures: the generational composition of leadership and governance bodies. In several cases, board members and senior leaders are older and operate with limited personal experience of integrated digital workflows. This shapes which tools are evaluated, which are dismissed, and which are never proposed in the first place. I4's principle of orality is theologically framed but rests on a leadership cohort for whom digital coordination is not a default reference point. I6's Asana adoption failed not on technical grounds but because change management did not land across generations. I3's collapse from ten parallel projects to one after the respondent relocated reflects a structure in which one younger driver carried the digital capacity for an older governance body that did not absorb it.

The factor operates underneath the frameworks the study draws on and warrants its own treatment in future research, particularly in the FBO sector where governance bodies are often slow to rotate and where the volunteer base may span four generations simultaneously.

5.1.5 Where the findings sit uneasily with existing work

Beyond extending the frameworks, three observations sit uneasily with assumptions in the existing literature. Given the small sample, these are read as tensions the material raises rather than settled corrections.

First, DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) coercive isomorphism assumes a superordinate institution with formal sanctioning authority. The privatized pressure observed here does not fit that assumption: banks, platforms, and discretionary funders produce a comparable organizational effect without holding regulatory authority. If actors without formal authority can exert pressure with similar consequences, formal authority may need to be treated as one source of coercive pressure rather than its defining feature.

Second, the literature on nonprofit digital capacity (Cipriano and Za, 2024; Godefroid et al., 2024) explains low capacity mainly through resource scarcity, weak technical roles, and under-investment. The strategic disconnection finding suggests an additional reading: in three of the four minority cases, low capacity looks less like the absence of development than like development steered away from compliance infrastructure by a funding-level choice. The standard account is not wrong, but it may be incomplete where the underlying driver is risk avoidance rather than scarcity.

This reading should be held cautiously, because the same evidence supports alternative explanations. The organizations that avoid public funding are also the smallest and least staffed, so scarcity and avoidance are hard to separate with six cases. Disconnection may also be partly post-hoc rationalization of what limited resources already made necessary, rather than a prior strategic choice. Generational and cultural factors may pull in the same direction: an older governance body that does not see the value of digital infrastructure (5.1.4) would underinvest regardless of any funding strategy, and the two are hard to separate here. The interview design cannot fully distinguish a deliberate funding strategy from a constraint reframed as one, which is why the longitudinal study proposed in 5.4 would be needed to test the mechanism.

Third, Suchman (1995) treats legitimacy as a relation between an organization and its audiences. The affective dimension observed in I1, I2, and I3 appears to operate before that relation, directed first at an internalized uncertainty about belonging. This does not displace the relational account, but it suggests that in stigmatized contexts the relational layer may rest on an internal one. An alternative reading is that what looks effective is simply strategic legitimacy work expressed in emotional terms; the material cannot rule this out, though the consistency across three different configurations makes a purely strategic reading less economical.

5.2 Practical implications

The findings carry implications for three audiences: faith-based organizations themselves, sector and umbrella actors, and information systems practitioners working with civil society.

For faith-based organizations: The most actionable finding is that digital capacity tracks role embeddedness, not size. Small organizations with a formalized technical role outperform much larger organizations without one. For minority FBOs operating under resource constraints, this points to a concrete intervention: formalizing technical responsibility as a defined role, even at part-time scale, produces more lasting capacity than ad hoc volunteer arrangements. The corollary is that person-dependent infrastructure carries a quantifiable cost like I1's five-year-stale website and I3's 90 percent project collapse are not anomalies but predictable outcomes of unformalized responsibility.

A second implication concerns the strategic disconnection finding. Three of the four minority organizations have explicitly opted out of public funding to avoid conditionality, with measurable consequences for digital infrastructure. This is a defensible choice, but it should be made consciously rather than by default. Organizations that disconnect from public funding without recognizing the downstream effect on compliance infrastructure may find themselves under-equipped if funding conditions change or if private donors begin to demand similar reporting. Naming this trade-off explicitly in governance discussions is a practical step.

For sector and umbrella actors: Giva Sverige, MUCF, denominational umbrellas, and similar bodies emerged in the material as the most consistent source of institutionalized mimetic learning. For minority FBOs without access to such structures, the absence is felt as fragmentation and isolation. Sector actors that wish to strengthen digital capacity in the FBO sector should treat infrastructure provision and structured peer exchange as primary instruments. Shared platforms, thematic working groups, and cross-organization technical exchange produce more capacity per resource unit invested than direct grants to individual organizations.

A related implication concerns the privatized pressure finding. Banks, platforms, and discretionary funders act as de facto regulators in ways that fall unevenly across the FBO sector. Sector bodies are positioned to negotiate at this level, collectively raising bank closure cases, documenting platform sanctioning patterns, and intervening in cases of discretionary funder bias. The Fremia/Sida case described in the extended background is an example of what this can look like at scale.

For information systems practitioners: The findings indicate that IS adoption in resource-constrained minority civil society cannot be analyzed through the standard TOE lens alone. Three additional layers shape adoption: privatized and anticipated pressure, strategic disconnection at the funding level, and an affective dimension that runs beneath strategic legitimacy management. Practitioners working with these organizations, whether as consultants, system designers, or researchers should expect that low capacity is partly a function of these layers rather than only of resource scarcity or technical literacy. Interventions that assume the standard nonprofit barriers (training, tool access, change management) without addressing the underlying institutional position might produce limited effect.

The material also points to four design directions for systems built for this sector:

- An integration layer for fragmented FBO operations, connecting common civil society tools (Donorbox, Swish, accounting, CRM, document management) through a shared data model, cost-accessible and deployable without dedicated IT staff.
- Outreach and engagement systems calibrated for defensive visibility, supporting granular visibility control and audience segmentation (cf. I2's concentric model) rather than assuming more visibility is always the goal.
- Education and knowledge-distribution systems for geographically distributed communities that lack local infrastructure, supporting asynchronous, multilingual delivery without dedicated communication staff.
- Emerging-technology support for religious consultation at distance (AI-assisted translation, retrieval-augmented answering grounded in vetted sources, structured remote workflows), whose ethical risks are taken up in 5.3.

5.3 Ethical implications of the findings

The ethical questions in Chapter 3 concerned the conduct of the study. The findings raise a second set, about the conditions the study documents. These are not the researcher's to resolve, but a thesis on this material should name them.

Unequal treatment is the through-line. The minority organizations are held to a standard of documentation, traceability, and audit-readiness that the majority cases largely take for granted, and they are held to it by actors who face no obligation to justify the demand. The same act of digitalization that signals accountability for a majority organization functions, for a minority one, as a defense against suspicion it did not invite. Reading low capacity only as an organizational shortcoming misses this asymmetry.

Opaque platform governance is one channel for it. Account removals and engagement suppression hit the minority cases without explanation or appeal (I1's removed Instagram account, I2's engagement asymmetry). When visibility itself carries risk, the platform becomes an unaccountable gatekeeper of which organizations can be seen, and the burden of that opacity falls unevenly.

Financial infrastructure works the same way. Banks close accounts on unsubstantiated suspicion and certification follows, with measurable consequences for staffing and turnover (I1). Exclusion through payment and banking infrastructure can constrain an organization more tightly than any formal sanction, and it operates with even less transparency.

Privacy cuts both ways in this context. The documentation that compliance demands is also a record that, in the wrong hands, exposes donors, volunteers, and beneficiaries who may already be vulnerable to scrutiny. For organizations under suspicion, building the data infrastructure that legitimacy requires also concentrates a risk that a leak or a demand for access could realize.

The AI consultation direction in 5.2 carries its own risks and should not be read as an unqualified recommendation. Systems that mediate religious guidance can misrepresent a tradition, displace the human relationship that gives the guidance authority, and collect highly sensitive data about belief and practice. These risks are the reason the design work would have to start from authenticity, privacy, and human oversight rather than treat them as later additions.

5.4 Limitations

The study is bounded by four limitations that should be considered when reading the findings.

Credibility: The primary data consists of six semi-structured interviews, four minority and two majority. Within the minority group this is sufficient for the literal replication logic and the cases are information-rich (Yin, 2018; Patton, 2015); two majority interviews were judged enough because they converged across all three frameworks, a redundancy noted in Section 3.7. Sufficiency is

therefore a within-group claim about replication and convergence, not saturation across Swedish faith-based civil society.

Two limits on representativeness should be read with the findings. The sample is self-selected: several organizations declined or had no informant with operational insight (Section 3.3.1). In a field shaped by scrutiny, those that agreed may differ systematically from those that did not, and the defensive patterns reported could be over- or under-represented relative to the wider field; the direction cannot be established from the material. The minority group is also entirely Muslim and the majority group only two contrast cases, so neither side is represented in its full breadth, and whether the privatized pressure and affective dimension generalize to other minority traditions is left open in Sections 5.1 and 5.5. The supplementary sources broaden the view but do not substitute for further interviews.

Transferability: The study is limited to Sweden and pursues analytical generalization rather than statistical generalization. The institutional environment described in Chapter 2, civic suspicion, democratic conditionality, debanking, and platform sanctioning of minority-coded actors, is documented across multiple Western contexts but the specific configuration observed here is Swedish. The findings are expected to transfer to comparable institutional environments where minority faith-based civil society operates under similar conditions, but the strength of transfer depends on the degree of contextual similarity. Researchers applying these findings in other jurisdictions should test rather than assume the configuration.

Dependability: Framework Analysis combined with pattern matching produces a transparent analytical record, and the coding matrix is provided in Appendix D for inspection. The five-step analytical process from Gale et al. (2013) was followed throughout. The main dependability concern is single-researcher coding without inter-coder reliability checks, which is a recognized constraint of single-researcher master's thesis work. The matrix-based structure mitigates this by making each coding decision traceable, but a second coder would have strengthened the dependability claim.

Confirmability: The researcher's background as an IT student with prior personal engagement in Swedish Muslim civil society is reflected in Chapter 3. This background shaped both the access strategy and the analytical sensitivities brought to the material. The reflexive stance taken throughout the study, combined with the use of multiple sources of evidence and the separation between primary and supplementary material, helps reduce the risk of unrecognized bias. The presentation of the findings keeps interpretation traceable by reporting the matrix evidence first and the theoretical extension second, so that readers can assess whether the extensions follow from the material or exceed it.

5.5 Future research

The study opens several directions for further work.

- **Demographic and generational factors:** The factor identified in Section 5.1.4 deserves its own study. The interaction between governance composition, generational digital experience, and adoption decisions in FBO contexts is undertheorized in both IS and nonprofit research. A study designed specifically around this factor, with mixed-method data on governance demographics combined with adoption decisions across a larger sample, would test whether the observation holds beyond this study's six cases.
- **Internal practice versus external presentation:** The footprint analysis confirmed that small-stratum majority organizations maintain mature public-facing digital presences, but cannot establish whether internal practice matches the public surface. A follow-up study with interview access to small-stratum majority FBOs would test whether the fragmentation observed in minority cases is also present in comparable majority cases when the public-facing layer is set aside.
- **Cross-tradition extension:** The study focuses on Muslim minority and Christian majority cases. Other minority faith traditions in Sweden may display variations of the same dynamics or different configurations entirely. A multi-tradition study would test whether the affective legitimacy dimension and the privatized pressure mechanism are specifically tied to Muslim minority position, or whether they generalize across minority faith-based actors more broadly.
- **Longitudinal study of strategic disconnection:** The observation that three of four minority organizations actively avoid public funding raises questions about long-term consequences. A longitudinal study would track digital capacity, organizational sustainability, and sector position over a five- or ten-year horizon when an organization opts out of state funding entirely, and test whether strategic disconnection is sustainable or whether it eventually pushes organizations toward other dependencies.
- **Sector intervention studies:** The practical implications outlined in Section 5.2 point to interventions that could be tested empirically. Does formalization of technical roles measurably improve digital capacity in resource-constrained FBOs? Does shared infrastructure provided through sector or umbrella bodies reduce fragmentation? Intervention studies of this kind would move IS research on minority civil society from descriptive to prescriptive grounding.
- **Design Science Research follow-ups:** The four design directions outlined in Section 5.2 are each candidates for full Design Science Research studies (Hevner et al., 2004). Each would begin with user requirements from minority FBOs at the design stage rather than only at evaluation, and could be carried out at DSV or comparable IS institutions. The

methods used in this study, Framework Analysis combined with pattern matching, supplemented by expert field conversations and digital footprint analysis, are reproducible and could be applied to formulate user requirements for each direction.

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Appendix A — Informed Consent (Swedish)

Digital teknik i trosbaserade organisationer

Mastersuppsats · DSV, Stockholms universitet

Samtyckesformulär

Syfte med studien

Du bjuds in att delta i en studie som undersöker hur trosbaserade organisationer i Sverige tar till sig och använder digital teknik i sitt administrativa och operativa arbete. Studien genomförs vid Institutionen för data- och systemvetenskap (DSV), Stockholms universitet.

Vad deltagandet innebär

Deltagandet består av en semistrukturerad intervju på cirka 45–75 minuter. Intervjun berör ämnen som digitala verktyg, administrativa processer och din organisations erfarenheter av teknikadoption. Med ditt tillstånd spelas intervjun in för att möjliggöra korrekt transkription.

Frivilligt deltagande och rätt att avbryta

Deltagandet är helt frivilligt. Du kan när som helst dra tillbaka ditt samtycke utan att ange skäl och utan några negativa konsekvenser. Om du drar dig ur raderas all insamlad data.

Sekretess och anonymisering

Om du inte uttryckligen samtycker till annat kommer ditt namn och din organisations namn inte att framgå i uppsatsen. Identifierande uppgifter ändras eller utelämnas för att förhindra identifiering. Den slutliga uppsatsen kan publiceras offentligt, men ingen individ eller organisation kan identifieras utan uttryckligt samtycke.

Datahantering

Ljudinspelningar används enbart för transkription och raderas därefter. Transkript och övrig data lagras säkert och hanteras i enlighet med GDPR. Data delas inte med tredje part.

Kontakt

Vid frågor om studien, kontakta:

Kisslo Shek · kisslo.shek@gmail.com · 0700237415

Handledare: Dragoljub Nesic · DSV, Stockholms universitet

Medgivande för samtycke

Jag bekräftar att jag har läst och förstått informationen ovan. Jag samtycker till att delta i studien under de villkor som beskrivs.

Ange dina preferenser:

Jag samtycker till att intervjun ljudinspelas:

- ☐ Ja
- ☐ Nej

Jag samtycker till att identifieras med namn i uppsatsen:

- ☐ Ja
- ☐ Nej — anonymisera mig

Jag samtycker till att min organisation namnges i uppsatsen:

- ☐ Ja
- ☐ Nej — anonymisera min organisation

Deltagarens underskrift

· Datum

Namnförtydligande

Forskarens underskrift ·

Namn (textat) · Datum

Namnförtydligande

Appendix B — Intro and Demography (Swedish)

Digital teknik i trosbaserade organisationer

Mastersuppsats · DSV, Stockholms universitet

Intervjuintroduktion

Läs högt eller parafrasera i början av varje intervju.

Välkommen och tack

Tack för att du tog dig tid att träffa mig idag. Mitt namn är [namn] och jag är masterstudent vid Institutionen för data- och systemvetenskap vid Stockholms universitet. Jag skriver min uppsats om hur trosbaserade organisationer i Sverige arbetar med digital teknik — sådant som administrativa verktyg, koordinationssystem och dokumentation.

Vad samtalet handlar om

Det finns inga rätta eller felaktiga svar. Jag är intresserad av hur saker faktiskt fungerar i din organisation — inte hur de är tänkta att fungera i teorin. Frågorna är mestadels praktiska, men vi kan också komma in på känsligare områden som finansieringsvillkor, extern granskning eller hur organisationen hanterar krav från myndigheter och bidragsgivare.

Det är helt okej att inte svara på något. Du kan också avbryta när som helst utan att behöva förklara varför. Ingenting du säger kopplas till dig eller din organisation utan ditt uttryckliga samtycke.

Hur data används

Allt behandlas konfidentiellt. Intervjun används enbart för denna uppsats. Jag skriver om teman och mönster från flera organisationer — inte om enskilda individer eller organisationer på ett sätt som kan identifiera dem.

Inspelning

Med ditt tillstånd spelar jag in samtalet för att kunna transkribera korrekt. Inspelningen raderas när transkriptionen är klar. Är det okej?

Samtyckesformulär

Har du haft möjlighet att läsa igenom samtyckesformuläret? Några frågor om det?

[Samla in undertecknat formulär, eller bekräfta muntligt om intervjun sker på distans.]

Praktiska noteringar

Vi har ungefär [45–75] minuter. Jag antecknar vid sidan av inspelningen om det blir aktuellt. Om något är oklart, be mig gärna omformulera. Det finns ingen strikt ordning — om du kommer på något relevant längre fram, ta det gärna upp.

Övergång till intervjun

Några frågor innan vi börjar? [Paus.] Bra — då kör vi. Jag börjar med ett par bakgrundsfrågor om din roll och din organisation.

Demografisk information

Fyll i innan inspelning startas, eller på separat papper.

Fält

Värde

Roll / titel i organisationen

År i denna organisation

Ungefärligt antal anställda

Ungefärligt antal aktiva volontärer

Religiös tradition / samfund

Organisationstyp:

- ☐ Majoritetssamfund (t.ex. Svenska kyrkan, etablerade frikyrkor etc.)
- ☐ Minoritetssamfund (t.ex. nyanlända samfund, icke-västerländska traditioner)
- ☐ Annat / vill ej ange

Finns det en dedikerad IT-ansvarig i organisationen?

- ☐ Ja, heltid
- ☐ Ja, deltid / delad roll
- ☐ Nej — IT hanteras av volontärer eller allmänna resurser
- ☐ Nej — ingen formell IT-funktion

Huvudsakliga finansieringskällor (markera alla som stämmer):

- ☐ Offentliga bidrag (t.ex. MUCF, SST, folkbildning)
- ☐ Bidrag via paraplyorganisation eller nationellt förbund
- ☐ Privata donationer
- ☐ Medlemsavgifter
- ☐ Annat

Appendix C - Interview Questions

Digital teknik i trosbaserade organisationer

Masteruppsats · DSV, Stockholms universitet · Intervjuguide

Intervjuguide

Semistrukturerad · ca 45–75 min · anpassa ordning och djup efter varje deltagare

Anvisningar: Frågorna är organiserade tematiskt, inte i strikt ordning. Följdfrågor (markerade med ♣) är valfria och används dem när ett svar är kort eller när ett ämne verkar särskilt relevant för den här deltagaren.

Sparar avsnitt E (legitimitet och extern närvaro) till senare i intervjun när förtroende etablerats.

A — Bakgrund och organisationskontext

F1. Kan du berätta lite om din roll i organisationen och vilka administrativa uppgifter du brukar vara involverad i?

- ♣ *Hur länge har du haft den här rollen?*
- ♣ *Vad tar mest tid i din vardag?*

F2. Hur skulle du beskriva organisationens storlek och struktur — i termer av anställda, volontärer och verksamhetsområden?

- ♣ *Hur fördelar sig ansvaret för administrativa uppgifter?*

F3. Vilka digitala verktyg använder organisationen idag i det löpande arbetet?

- ♣ *Finns det verktyg för specifika områden, som ekonomi, kommunikation eller dokumentation?*
- ♣ *Hur länge har ni använt dessa verktyg?*

B — Teknologisk kontext (TOE)

F4. Hur kom ni fram till de verktyg ni använder idag — var det ett medvetet val eller något som vuxit fram gradvis?

- ↳ *Vem eller vad påverkade valet?*
- ↳ *Prövade ni något annat först?*

F5. Finns det verktyg ni har testat men sedan slutat använda? Vad hände?

- ↳ *Vad var det som inte fungerade?*

F6. Hur väl hänger era nuvarande verktyg ihop — eller behöver ni ofta flytta information manuellt mellan olika system?

- ↳ *Kan du ge ett konkret exempel på när det skapar merarbete?*

F7. Finns det uppgifter där ni saknar bra digitala verktyg, eller där ni fortfarande använder manuella lösningar?

- ↳ *Har ni diskuterat att åtgärda det? Vad hindrar?*

C — Organisatorisk kontext (TOE)

F8. Vem i organisationen har huvudansvaret för att hantera och underhålla digitala verktyg?

- ↳ *Är det en formell roll eller något som fallit på någon naturligt?*

F9. Vad händer om den personen är frånvarande eller lämnar organisationen?

- ↳ *Har det hänt tidigare? Hur hanterade ni det?*

F10. Har ekonomi eller budget någonsin varit ett hinder när ni velat införa ett nytt verktyg?

- ↳ *Hur resonerar ni kring kostnader för digitala lösningar?*

F11. Hur förhåller sig volontärerna till digitala verktyg — finns det skillnader i vilja eller förmåga?

- ↳ *Hur hanterar ni det om någon inte är bekämd med ett verktyg?*
- ↳ *Har ni gett någon form av utbildning eller stöd?*

D — Omgivningskontext och institutionella tryck (TOE + institutionell teori)

Intervjuaranmärkning: Frågorna i detta avsnitt berör finansiering och externa krav.
Var uppmärksam på både vad deltagaren säger och hur de formulerar sig.

F12. Har krav från bidragsgivare eller myndigheter påverkat vilka verktyg ni använder eller hur ni dokumenterar er verksamhet?

- ↳ *Kan du ge ett konkret exempel?*
- ↳ *Har kraven förändrats över tid?*

F13. Känner ni av något tryck — från finansiärer, samarbetsorganisationer eller andra — att arbeta på ett visst sätt digitalt?

↳ *Hur påverkar det era val i praktiken?*

F14. Tittar ni på vad liknande organisationer gör digitalt när ni tar beslut om egna verktyg?

↳ *Har någon organisation fungerat som förebild eller inspirationskälla?*

E — Legitimitet och extern digital närvaro

Låt deltagaren själv introducera ämnen som granskning och finansieringstryck

F15. Hur tänker ni kring organisationens digitala närvaro utifrån — webbplats, sociala medier och liknande?

↳ *Vem ansvarar för det? Hur ofta uppdateras det?*

↳ *Har ni någon strategi för vad ni publicerar?*

F16. Har ni någonsin känt er försiktiga eller medvetna om vad organisationen publicerar eller delar online? Kan du berätta mer om det?

↳ *Vad vägrade ni när ni fattade det beslutet?*

F17. Känner ni att organisationen behöver visa upp något för omvärlden genom hur ni dokumenterar eller presenterar er digitalt?

↳ *Handlar det om att visa trovärdighet, följsamhet mot regler, eller något annat?*

↳ *Har den känslan förändrats under de senaste åren?*

F — Resultat och reflektion

F18. Om du ser på er digitala situation som helhet — vad fungerar bra och vad skapar friktion eller merarbete?

↳ *Finns det något som tar mer tid än det borde?*

F19. Om du fick ändra en sak i hur organisationen använder digitala verktyg — vad skulle det vara?

↳ *Vad hindrar er från att göra den förändringen idag?*

F20. Finns det något med er organisations situation som gör digitalisering särskilt lätt eller svårt jämfört med andra organisationer?

↳ *Tänker du på något särskilt — er storlek, er verksamhet, er relation till myndigheter?*

F21. Finns det något du vill lägga till eller något vi inte har pratat om som du tycker är viktigt?

Appendix D — Matris

[Framework matris](#)

Appendix E - Codebook

Codebook — Framework Analysis

This codebook structures the analysis of six semi-structured interviews under a 4+2 design: I1–I4 are Muslim minority cases (literal replication), I5–I6 are contrast cases within the majority Christian tradition (theoretical replication; Yin, 2018). Codes derive from three frameworks: TOE (Tornatzky and Fleischer, 1990), institutional isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983), and legitimacy theory (Suchman, 1995). Codes IP1–IP3 capture how organizations respond to pressure, while E1–E4 capture where the pressure originates. An inductive code (X1) holds material outside the framework.

TOE — Technological context

T1 — Technology landscape. Concrete tools and platforms in active use. *TOE*.

T2 — Adoption decision logic. Whether choices are deliberate, gradual, or inherited. *TOE*; *Godefroid et al., 2024*.

T3 — System integration vs fragmentation. Whether data flows automatically between tools or is moved manually. *Cipriano and Za, 2024*.

T4 — Manual workarounds and capacity gaps. Persistent manual processes or self-developed substitutes. *Nah and Saxton, 2013*.

T5 — AI and emerging tools. Adoption of and stance toward generative AI. *Dwivedi et al., 2023*.

TOE — Organizational context

O1 — Size and structure. Staffing, volunteers, governance, umbrella affiliation. *TOE*.

O2 — IT function and technical role. Presence and formalization of IT responsibility. *Godefroid et al., 2024*.

O3 — Person dependence. Vulnerability to absence or departure of key technical personnel. *Cipriano and Za, 2024*.

O4 — Financial and resource constraints. Budget ceilings, free vs paid options, normative ceilings on administrative spending. *Nah and Saxton, 2013*.

O5 — Volunteer digital capacity. Variation in volunteer willingness, skill, and access. *Godefroid et al., 2024; Cipriano & Za, 2024.*

O6 — Internal learning and training. How knowledge about tools is acquired and shared. *Cipriano and Za, 2024.*

TOE — Environmental context

E1 — Formal regulatory requirements. GDPR, Tax Agency, democracy criteria; also active decisions to avoid such requirements through funding disconnection. *MUCF, 2024.*

E2 — Funder requirements. Conditions from public, private, umbrella, or sector funders. *Poljarevic and Aziz, 2026.*

E3 — Market and infrastructure conditions. Banks, platforms, suppliers. *OECD, 2020; Ardin, 2026.*

E4 — Sector and umbrella organizations. Intermediary structures between the organization and the wider environment. *DiMaggio and Powell, 1983.*

Institutional pressure

IP1 — Coercive isomorphism. Adaptation driven by formal requirements or sanction threat. Extended in 4.9.1 to three concurrent forms: direct regulatory, privatized, and anticipated. *DiMaggio and Powell, 1983.*

IP2 — Normative isomorphism. Adaptation to professional or religious norms. *DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Suchman, 1995.*

IP3 — Mimetic isomorphism. Imitation of peers, especially under uncertainty. *DiMaggio and Powell, 1983.*

Legitimacy

L1 — Pragmatic legitimacy. Demonstrable usefulness to stakeholders. *Suchman, 1995.*

L2 — Moral legitimacy. Alignment with societal values and norms. *Suchman, 1995.*

L3 — Cognitive legitimacy. Taken-for-granted institutional position. *Suchman, 1995.*

L4 — Defensive digital visibility. Restraint or self-censorship driven by reputational risk. *Ardin, 2026; El Far, 2026a, 2026b.*

L5 — Strategic legitimacy management. Planned external positioning, risk handling, counter-campaigns. *Suchman, 1995.*

Inductive code

X1 — Religious motivation for or against digital visibility. Religious grounds for adoption or non-adoption beyond instrumental or institutional reasons. *Inductive.*

Theory-developing extensions

Three extensions are developed in Findings 4.9: (1) coercive pressure in three concurrent forms (extends IP1); (2) strategic disconnection from public funding as an avoidance mechanism preceding digital adoption (extends E1+E2 via Oliver, 1991); (3) an affective legitimacy dimension beyond Suchman's typology (extends L2+L3 via Goffman, 1963 and Du Bois, 1903).