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Is It a Bird? The Social Entrepreneurial Superhero: Fact or Fiction?

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12.1 Introduction

As the other chapters in this volume have shown, there is a significant gap between the academic discourse of entrepreneurial behaviour and the popular mythos of the entrepreneur. The concept of the 'hero' entrepreneur has become increasingly popular in recent years due in part to the championing of the entrepreneur as a 'business folk hero' (Toffler 1985) and, it has been argued, a growing disenchantment with traditional capitalist models (Morra 2014). This chapter will argue that if the 'for-profit' entrepreneur has been seen as a hero, then the social entrepreneur has become a superhero, imbued with behavioural and motivational traits which make them stand out from the crowd.

It has become a truism to state that social enterprise itself remains a relatively new area of research, but we are now at a point where a body of work is developing and the exploration of the motivations and the behavioural traits of social entrepreneurs has been the subject of significant

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academic attention (Doherty et al. 2014; Nga and Shamuganathan 2010; Thompson et al. 2000). This work has been supported by additional research into the management decisions of social enterprises as hybrid organisations (Pache and Santos 2013) rather than upon the individuals who make up such organisations. Additionally academics have explored the role of the individual within social enterprises including an examination of the nature of volunteering (Austin et al. 2012; Dees 1998) or the ability of managers to recruit and motivate within organisations subject to limited resources (Battilana and Dorado 2010; Haugh 2007; Membretti 2007).

This chapter will explore the common mythos of the social entrepreneur—both as an academic conceptualisation and as a political one. It will argue however that such a mythos is too simplistic a paradigm to fully explain the phenomenon of social entrepreneurial behaviour and the motivations that lie behind it and that a more holistic view of power dynamics, geography, gender, race, and ethnicity is needed as well as an awareness of the geographic and temporal specificity of the key actors.

12.2 Entrepreneur as Hero

The concept of the entrepreneur as 'hero' has been well developed. The story goes that while there are managers and employees who work in traditional companies there is also another class of people who are firm founders. These brave individuals take personal and professional risks to start new businesses, they face hardships and often derision, not all of their ideas work, and they fail often. But they never give up. When they fail they try again, when they are refused finance they source it another way, when they are ridiculed as outsiders they remain strong. Eventually their perseverance pays off and their businesses do well. They achieve their goals and are finally recognised as the visionaries that they truly are.

This story informs popular conceptions of the entrepreneur from television shows, such as The Apprentice, Dragons' Den, or Shark Tank, our understanding of famous entrepreneurs (Anderson and Warren 2011) to political statements (Shane 2008), but we should not shirk from an acceptance that it has a home within traditional management literature.

Such giants of the field as Drucker and Noel (1986) have argued that the entrepreneur is a different creature who 'always searches for change, responds to it and exploits it as an opportunity', while Kirzner (1973) saw the entrepreneur 'not as a source of innovative ideas ex nihilo, but as being alert to the opportunities that exist already and are waiting to be noticed' (p. 59). More obviously for Schumpeter (1942), entrepreneurs are feudal knights who 'drive the "creative-destructive" process of capitalism', (p. 81) while even as late as the end of the twentieth century, Wennekers and Thurik (1999) felt able to state that the entrepreneur is 'the principal actor in the entrepreneurial eco-system that drives the economy and society' (p. 30).

This understanding of the entrepreneur as a special individual reached its apex in the psychological theories of the latter half of the twentieth century which attempted to understand the specific traits that separated entrepreneurs from employees. McClelland (1951, 1961), for example, attempted to measure the need for achievement of entrepreneurs, while others such as Liles (1974) have maintained that entrepreneurs have a decided willingness to take risks. Schere (1982) argued that tolerance for ambiguity is an important trait for entrepreneurs because the challenges and potential for success associated with business start-ups are by nature unpredictable. Shane et al. (2003) provided a summary of much of this research to create a list of eight interconnected traits including need for achievement, risk taking, tolerance for ambiguity, locus of control, self-efficacy, independence, drive, and egoistic passion.

In more recent years this conception of the entrepreneur as a hero has been strongly challenged. Drakopoulou Dodd and Anderson (2007) have argued convincingly that while a 'common-sense understanding of entrepreneurship infers an individual. It may be that taking account of the dynamics of social conditioning, social interaction and the embedding process is simply too complex to be used as a heuristic; instead the convenient myth of the romantic, heroic individual holds sway' (p. 352). For those authors challenging this perspective, this 'heuristic' is the result of a series of 'taken-for-granted' assumptions (Lindgren and Packendorff 2002) which focus upon the individual rather than the social role of entrepreneurship simply because researchers and policy makers can understand and work with that concept much more easily (Johannisson

1998). Authors who expound on this discourse challenge 'the notion of the entrepreneur as a lone hero, battling against the storms of economic, government, social and other environmental forces' Cooney (2005, p. 226) and instead attempt to place the entrepreneur within a social context whereby their actions are the result of a series of interconnected social understandings and interactions (Nijkamp 2003). Instead they focus upon the need for trust and cooperation between entrepreneurs (Jones and Conway 2000).

A more significant shift (of which more later) is to understand entrepreneurship not simply as firm foundation but as an act of social 'doing' (Drakopoulou Dodd et al. 2007). Within this framework, where the key element of entrepreneurship is to achieve a social change of some kind rather than to develop a commercial entity, the concept of social action becomes dependent upon the 'geographic, discursive and social sense' in which it takes place (Steyaert and Katz 2004; Zafirovski 1999; Jack and Anderson 2002; Uzzi 1997).

Nevertheless, regardless of this challenge the dominance of the common mythos persists. Nicholson and Anderson (2005) analysed a series of newspaper articles discussing entrepreneurship over a ten year period. They point out the propensity of metaphors which describe the entrepreneur as an individual. The point was highlighted by Drakopoulou Dodd et al. (2007) 'warrior, superman, captain, pioneer, sportsman…. all individualised. It seems then, that the popular image of the entrepreneur is the heroic individual. While such social constructions may, or may not, reflect reality they guide… our sense of reality'. And if this narrative of the entrepreneur as hero is true within the popular discourse, then it remains even more so in the conception of the social entrepreneur and the popular understanding of their behaviours and motivations.

12.3   Social Entrepreneur as Superhero

Social enterprises have often been seen as mechanisms whereby innovative solutions can be applied to 'nagging problems' (Cox and Healey 1998) and as a tool to apply market conditions to social welfare (Salamon 1999; Goerke 2003; Zahra et al. 2009). However perhaps the most

common way in which the language has been developed has been to laud social enterprises as the vehicle for a more enlightened type of capitalism (Adderley and Kirkbright 2015). In this respect social entrepreneur traits and behaviours are similar to those of any other kind of entrepreneur (Sastre-Castillo et al. 2015); and social entrepreneurs are simply entrepreneurs looking to make a social impact (Beugré 2016).

For authors such as Nga and Shamuganathan (2010), the economic upheaval of the late 2010s and onwards reflected a crisis in the nature of capitalism itself, demonstrating that 'unbridled commercial entrepreneurs who are allowed to pursue their short-term opportunities regardless of the consequences has led to a massive depreciation of the wealth of nations, social livelihood and environmental degradation' (p. 259).

Building upon the works of such authors as Hemingway (2005) and Mintzberg et al. (2002), they argued that 'the time has come' for a new type of entrepreneur. One who demonstrates the positive 'can-do' attitude of the 'for-profit' entrepreneur but who also matched this with a social conscience. For them the new age of capitalism required a blending of economic social and environmental values: 'Social entrepreneurs present such a proposition through their deep commitment towards the social vision, appreciation of sustainable practices, innovativeness, ability to build social networks and also generate viable financial returns' (p. 259). Other authors have expanded upon this conception of social entrepreneurs as being markedly 'different' from traditional entrepreneurs either in the way in which they perceive and assess opportunities (Austin et al. 2012) or how they manage accountability and identity (Tracey and Phillips 2007).

Through innate nurturing, education and socialisation processes such individuals could be fostered to not only develop economic growth but to do so in a socially progressive way. They identified five such traits which could be developed: openness, extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism (p. 261). Again such a concept drew heavily upon traditional management literature and emerged at a time when the popularity of the sustainable development discourse was becoming more mainstream (see Bebbington 2000; Elkington 1998; Porter and Kramer 2011; Stead and Garner Stead 1994; Gladwin et al. 1995, amongst others).

Key to this message was that social entrepreneurs were similar and yet fundamentally different to 'for-profit' entrepreneurs. Such differences were intrinsic to the nature of social enterprises as 'hybrid organisations', caught 'between the competing demands of the market logic and the social welfare logic that they combine' (Pache and Santos 2013, p. 972). This hybridity has been explored in two basic ways (Grohs et al. 2015). Firstly an exploration of the organisational and legal characteristics of social enterprises (Bode and Evers 2004; Defourny 2001; Garrow and Hasenfeld 2014; Kerlin 2006, 2012; Cornforth and Spear 2010), which stressed the legal entity of a social enterprise as an organisation with specific structures and limits to its profit making capacity. Secondly the key factor was the 'social innovation' itself (Dees and Anderson 2006; Defourny and Nyssens 2010; Nicholls 2006; Squazzoni 2009). This approach focused upon the activities and actions of individuals rather than the detailed structure or organisations (Dacin et al. 2011).

For these authors social enterprises are inherently different from 'for-profit' enterprises, and thus social entrepreneurs are inherently different from 'for-profit' entrepreneurs (Mair and Noboa 2006; Shaw and Carter 2007). Social enterprises are (or at least should be) dominated by their social mission: their aim to 'combine commercial and philanthropic elements in a productive balance' (Dees 1998, p. 60) and 'make significant and diverse contributions to their communities and societies, adopting business models to offer creative solutions to complex and persistent social problems' (Zahra et al. 2009, p. 519).

While traditional business paradigms are important to them and they must secure financial sustainability (Weerawardena and Mort 2006), the traditional metrics by which business is measured (e.g. shareholder value) is not appropriate. However, the replacement metrics of 'achieving social good' are so intangible as to be almost impossible to measure or to even define (Lehner and Kansikas 2012; Stevens et al. 2015; Fowler and Hope 2007). In such an ambiguous world, then personal drive, personal commitment and personal values become more, not less, important. In such a world the social entrepreneur must be not only a hero but a superhero, and much research therefore emphasises the motives of social entrepreneurs to achieve a 'social good' (Murphy and Coombes 2009; Zahra et al. 2009; Sharir and Lerner 2006).

Zahra et al. (2009) developed a typology of social entrepreneurs to support this thesis. Social bricoleurs meet local- and small-scale unmet need; social constructionists meet market failures; and social engineers challenge wider systemic problems in society. Echoing the language of Schumpeter, they argue that 'entrepreneurs often destroy dated systems, and replace them with newer and more suitable ones… In fact, one of the greatest skills of many social entrepreneurs is their ability to inspire, marshal and mobilise the efforts of commercial and non-commercial partners, donors, volunteers and employees in the pursuit of social wealth' (pp. 519–520).

Prabhu (1999) has focused upon this leadership role stating that social entrepreneurs have a deep feeling of uneasiness with the status quo, high levels of altruism, a need to be true to one's values and beliefs, need to match with one's self concept, and need to be socially responsible. While these traits are placed within a concept of embeddedness whereby the traits themselves are only useful in so far as they can rely on social capital to enact change, the reliance on 'types' reflects a concept which has been criticised for firstly focusing too much on the individual (Spear 2006) and secondly focusing too much on the 'social entrepreneur as hero' (Parkinson and Howorth 2008, p. 291). Effectively, social entrepreneurs are described as 'entrepreneurially virtuous' (Mort et al. 2003, p. 82), community-centric (Sharir and Lerner 2006), reformers while the impact of collective efforts is ignored (Corner and Ho 2010; Moizer and Tracey 2010).

Sharma and Singh (2018) have argued that these factors can be brought together in a specific Social Enterprise Mind-set (SEM). They posit a conception of an SEM predicated upon a psychological understanding of the social entrepreneur. This conception includes three main aspects: a prosocial orientation, an entrepreneurial mindset, and a systemic change orientation.

A prosocial orientation is understood as a regard not simply for the outcomes of action for the self but also for the outcomes of action for others (Van Lange 1999). Sharma and Singh (2018) see such an orientation as a merging of a series of motives within the individual. Firstly the altruistic drive to increase another person's welfare (Batson and Powell 1998) demonstrated by 'voluntary actions that are intended to help or

benefit another individual or group of individuals' (Eisenberg and Mussen 1989, p. 3). Secondly the egoistic motivation predicated upon increasing one's own perception of the self by the helping of others (Maner and Gailliot 2006). Thirdly a moral rule orientation drive predicated upon a sense of justice or moral principles Rest (1986).

In addition to this orientation, they argue that an SEM involves attitudes more traditionally associated with for-profit entrepreneurs. These include firstly a promotion focus, that is, an appreciation of opportunities and a willingness to engage in new tasks to exploit them (Higgins 1997; Kark and Dijk 2007; Liberman et al. 1999); secondly a growth-mind-set, whereby individuals believe that personal abilities can be developed over time through effort (McCrae 1987; Feist 1998); thirdly an optimistic attitude to risk (Kahneman 2011); and lastly an internal locus of control or the belief that outcomes are the consequence of actions (Shane et al. 2003).

The third key factor put forward by Sharma and Singh (2018) is a systemic change orientation. This posits that social entrepreneurs see themselves as 'change makers' who are capable of systems thinking orientation, understanding human action as a complex system, and thus a holistic understanding of social issues relying upon self-reflection, empathy, and open-mindedness (Burnell 2016). Moreover an SEM incorporates an ability to engage in paradoxical thinking whereby individuals reject simple linear solutions to complex problems (Westenholz 1993).

It is worth stressing that at the time of writing despite its intriguing theoretical concepts, there is almost no empirical evidence to support the existence of an SEM let alone provide a detailed breakdown of its component parts. Moreover this view of an SEM retains the focus upon the individual as a heroic actor and ignores the structural factors inherent within social entrepreneurship.

12.4   Social Enterprise Structures

Indeed, the collective structures of social enterprises provide a systemic challenge to the notion of the superhero social entrepreneur. Social enterprises are often significantly more democratic organisations than their

'for-profit' counterparts (Cornforth 2004; Low 2006; Somerville and McElwee 2011; Wilson and Post 2013). Boards of trustees (often a legal requirement for many social enterprise structures) are significantly less likely than private sector directors to be paid (Cornforth 2004; Stone and Ostrower 2007) and thus are much more likely to have their own social motivations for their involvement. This creates a much more complex picture than exists within the private sector with a dynamic and ever changing conception of 'social good' being constantly re-defined within the organisation Lumpkin et al. (2013).

For social entrepreneurs who are engaged in activity within either existing non-profit organisations (social intrapreneurship) or in the form of new start-ups emerging from old non-profit organisations, this is a particularly pertinent issue. Both reflect the internal tensions of a hybrid organisation operating across, and shifting between, social and commercial activities (Cooney 2006; Di Domenico et al. 2010). Attempting to create financial and social value simultaneously poses significant challenges in terms of organisational culture and personnel recruitment and development (Battilana et al. 2012). As Newth and Woods (2014) state 'the "shape" of social innovation will explicitly and implicitly be formed by the expectations and demands of the stakeholders whose support is required for the successful implementation of the innovation'.

Thus, within established organisations, there will be an inherent cultural inertia of established norms and routines which will inhibit the endogenous development of innovations that are seen to endanger the status quo or seem to violate established understandings of how the organisation should achieve its mission. This reflects the findings of a more traditional literature on corporate cultures (Schein 1985, 1990; Deal and Kennedy 2000; Johnson 1990). Within third sector organisations, this places a particularly large stress upon innovators to convince colleagues of the benefits of moving towards a social enterprise model. Indeed the very notion of moving towards an 'enterprise' model may be an anathema to many within the third sector, embodying as it does notions of 'business' and 'profit' which may feel distinctly inappropriate (Tracey et al. 2011).

Of course, within each social enterprise these dynamics will manifest themselves differently. What is important to recognise is that any

conception of the social entrepreneur acting individually on a set of personally held traits and motivations regardless of organisational context is much too simplistic.

12.5 Social Enterprise Geographies

A large number of studies have highlighted the importance of institutional and cultural context in shaping and determining the level of entrepreneurship within different countries (Busenitz et al. 2000; Bowen and De Clercq 2008). A country's institutional context determines the 'rules of the game' and shapes the individuals' and organisations' behaviour (North 1990; Scott 1995).

This is certainly true of social enterprises. Indeed an increasing number of studies have demonstrated that in fact there is no single definition of social enterprise, but rather individual social enterprises reflect, and emerge from, specific socio-economic backgrounds (Kerlin 2009; Nicholls 2006; Nyssens 2006; Salamon et al. 2000; Salamon and Sokolowski 2010).

An exploration of social enterprise in three European countries, for example, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Cyprus, yields some interesting comparisons.

12.5.1 United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom, social enterprise is an extremely well-developed movement with clear legal and operational definitions and receiving the strong support of the current and the previous UK governments. Defourny and Nyssens (2010) have shown how within the United Kingdom's liberal welfare state, 'charities, relying on voluntary resources, are seen as key actors to solve market and state failures' (p. 4), while Hall and Soskice (2001) have pointed out the challenge of private competitors in the market for social services has created an environment which supports institutional complementarities between private and public sector bodies. Furthermore Leadbeater (1997) argued that in the United

Kingdom specifically the failure of the welfare state led directly to the creation of the social enterprise movement. For such authors policy makers often identified social enterprise as a panacea whereby social needs were met without increased public spending. In particular social enterprise was very much supported by the 2010 government's commitment to the notion of the big society (Thompson 2011) which was first introduced to the British public within the Conservative Party Manifesto for the 2010 election.

> If we are going to mend our broken society and make British poverty history, we need to address the causes of poverty and inequality, not just the symptoms. We need new answers to the social problems we face – and we believe that the truly effective answers will come from a big society, not big government; from social responsibility, not state control. (Conservative Party 2010)

This concept, one of citizens acting on their responsibilities as citizens to help, with state support, build a better society, has continued to be present in speeches and announcements from the UK government. Typical is the comments made by the then Prime Minister David Cameron, in September 2014, at the launch of 'Social Saturday', the United Kingdom's first 'national celebration of social enterprise'.

> This is a day to celebrate and buy from social enterprises – businesses that put people and planet first… In villages, towns and cities up and down the country there are increasing numbers of shops, cafes, cinemas and nurseries that are run for the benefit of local communities. (Burn Callander 2014)

Or his comments made at the Social Impact Investment Forum:

> Government needs to be more creative and innovative – saying to social entrepreneurs: 'if you can solve the problem we'll give you money.' As soon as government says that, social entrepreneurs can go out and raise capital….Some people have asked whether I still believe in building a bigger, stronger society? I say to them – look around this room. See how social investment can help to change lives. See how social investment is bringing communities together. See how social investment is making our societies

and therefore our countries stronger. Am I prepared to fight for that? You bet I am. (Cameron 2013)

Social enterprise in the United Kingdom is, of course, much more than simply a reaction to a 'call to arms' from a single ex-Prime Minister; there is a wide literature exploring the concept and indeed many social entrepreneurs would actively recoil at the notion, but the language that was used by David Cameron, the language of enterprising citizens tackling social problems and finding social solutions independent of the state, lies behind much of the current UK social enterprise practitioner discourse.

12.5.2 Germany

Germany was relatively slow to embrace the concept of social enterprise (Bode and Evers 2004; Kerlin 2006). For many writers in the closing years of the first decade of the twenty-first century, this was because the German socio-economic model is based on 'a social partnership agreement around the concept of 'social market economy', understood as a specific articulation between the market and the state to foster socio-economic development' (Defourny and Nyssens 2010, p. 207). Others perceived that there was a broad consensus that the government was responsible for supporting citizens in times of hardship, protecting them from dangers, and providing socially disadvantaged individuals assistance (Butterwegge 2005). In this way they specifically contrasted the German welfare system with that of the United Kingdom stating that social enterprise had not developed in Germany because there was no market opportunity for it to exploit.

Nevertheless over the last decade, social enterprise has grown in importance and interest (Bornstein 2007; Bornstein and Davis 2010; Elkington and Hartigan 2008). In 2005, Ashoka started to support the first German social entrepreneurs, and since 2006/7 incubation centres for social entrepreneurs have emerged in Berlin, Munich, and Hamburg. In 2009 Berlin hosted a conference of practitioners entitled: 'Social

entrepreneurship: Status Quo 2009' which defined 'social entrepreneurship' as a young and dynamic research field.

In January 2012 the KfW (the German government-owned development bank) developed specific products aimed at 'SMEs that want to solve social problems with an entrepreneurial approach and with an innovative business model'. Importantly however it remains the case that such social enterprises need to demonstrate a for-profit partner and overall funding possibilities for social enterprises start-ups are still rare.

Indeed despite what Grohs et al. have called the 'public hyping of social entrepreneurship' with its associated language of 'paradigm shifts' and 'change makers'. They have identified a number of systemic constraints to social enterprise within the welfare system itself.

> The principal characteristics of conservative welfare states (such as a high degree of corporatism and the predominance of social insurance) often hinder the activation of new actors. In addition, the relatively high degree of social security and the density of services do not allow many niches for innovation, as is the case in the British and American systems. (Grohs et al. 2015, p. 176)

Scheuerle et al. (2013) have shown that German social enterprise has a specific demography which reflects its emergence from large third sector organisations. For example, despite the fact that as shown above, social enterprise in Germany is seen as a relatively new phenomena, 30% of the organisations in their large sample report being over 20 years old, many relying on volunteers and placing a high emphasis upon the values of integrity, competence, transparency, and loyalty and a low emphasis upon risk taking, long-term profit orientation, and financial strength.

12.5.3   Cyprus

The emergence of social enterprise in Cyprus is a still a new phenomenon, and no broad consensus has been reached yet over a formal definition of the concept. Although Cyprus has a long history of social

cooperatives, the specific field of social entrepreneurship is largely unknown, and efforts to develop it depend on the individual goodwill, persistence, and patience of the people who hold the vision of bringing social or environmental positive change to their country. There is no specific course on social enterprise at the University of Cyprus, for example, there is no recognised legal structure of social enterprises in Cyprus; and although a small number of social enterprises do exist, there is a lack of awareness of the concept amongst the general public and the government and also amongst social entrepreneurs themselves regarding the future or potential of the sector.

Much that is discussed tends to borrow heavily from the United Kingdom both because of the historic links between the two countries and the current links via European Union-funded programmes and between higher education establishments.

However, within such a small community (Cyprus has a population of only 1.1 m), any activity has a higher 'impact' than it would do in more populous countries. An annual event on social entrepreneurship takes place every autumn, and a network of social entrepreneurship has been established. Nevertheless the lack of awareness of the field adds extra barriers to people who want to become social entrepreneurs. The secondary issue, after the lack of demand, is one of limited access to funding for social enterprises in Cyprus. Not only is there no government support but bank loans can be only secured if supported by adequate personal guarantees.

Moreover as Cooney and Williams Shanks (2010) have pointed out 'because there is no historical precedent for commercial non-profit organisations, social enterprise organisations must orient the public to this kind of organisation' (p. 43). In countries such as Cyprus with a history of dictatorial governments and a present context of a divided island, social enterprise also must overcome cultural barriers to paying fees for services and the expectation that certain categories of disabled individuals are free from work (Kapoor 2005; Lucas and Vardanyan 2005). Indeed Cyprus demonstrates many of the barriers to social enterprise highlighted by Borzaga et al. study of Eastern European countries (2008), that is,

- A dominant 'transition myth' which leads to the promotion of neo-liberal organisations over 'alternative' organisations
- A belief that cooperatives and social enterprises are somehow politically suspect
- An overreliance upon individual donors to support all 'alternative economy' activities
- A perception that economic activity should be focused upon personal gain
- A 'parochial' political culture which hampers collaboration and networking

Clearly then the geographical context of within which social enterprise takes place is likely to affect the nature of its development.

Clearly then these different environments and geographic eco-systems have significant implications for the motivations and behaviours of social entrepreneurs. Indeed an increasing number of studies are showing that in fact there is no single definition but rather individual social enterprises reflect, and emerge from, specific socio-economic backgrounds (Kerlin 2009; Nicholls 2006; Nyssens 2006; Salamon et al. 2000; Salamon and Sokolowski 2010). In many ways this mirrors similar findings regarding 'for-profit' enterprise (Baumol 1996; Bosma and Levie 2010).

Put simply, the more a country's institutional context encourages and fosters social entrepreneurship, the more likely that individuals will be motivated to become social entrepreneurs compared to countries with contrasting contexts (Casson et al. 2006). In other words, formal and informal institutions influence how individuals perceive social entrepreneurship and the likelihood of social entrepreneurship (Stephan et al. 2015).

Institutions constitute the broader framework within which individual social entrepreneurs operate and they influence their values and beliefs. Institutions are societal/national and individual level phenomena (Busenitz et al. 2000; Casson et al. 2006). In this respect Scott's (1995) conception of regulatory, normative, and cognitive-cultural dimensions to organisational development is particularly relevant.

The existence of a supportive regulatory pillar (regulations, laws, and governmental policies and programmes that offer support to social

entrepreneurs) is likely to mean the development of more social enterprises (Stephan et al. 2015). The lack or limited support from the government and weak regulatory framework creates institutional voids that hinder any form of entrepreneurship. Similarly a normative pillar whereby a society encourages and values social entrepreneurship and innovation means it is more likely social entrepreneurs will emerge (Busenitz et al. 2000). Lastly a cognitive-cultural pillar which focuses on social value creation is more likely to provide social entrepreneurship options to individuals who are highly motivated to become social entrepreneurs. These individuals tend to possess the skills and knowledge about how to establish and run a successful venture as part of their shared social knowledge (Busenitz and Barney 1997; Busenitz et al. 2000; Adderley et al. 2015).

However while these authors have demonstrated the broad connections between civil structures, local economies, and welfare structures to social enterprises, all have highlighted the need for further exploration of the specific ways in which social enterprises and the activities which form them are informed, developed, and constrained by their local circumstance.

Furthermore, the majority of such literature has tended to concentrate upon individual countries or case studies rather than developing a comparative analysis (Bagnoli and Megali 2011; Borzaga and Defourny 2001; Cooney 2011; Dacanay 2004; Les and Jeliazkova 2005; Liu and Ko 2012; Mulgan 2006; Nyssens 2006; Squazzoni 2009; Young 2003). While some work is developing in this field (Defourney et al. 2014), more is still needed, and this chapter is intended to feed into this emerging discourse.

While this is a fascinating area of research, the majority of literature has tended to concentrate upon individual countries or case studies rather than developing a comparative analysis (Bagnoli and Megali 2011; Borzaga and Defourny 2001; Cooney 2011; Dacanay 2004; Les and Jeliazkova 2005; Liu and Ko 2012; Mulgan 2006; Nyssens 2006; Squazzoni 2009; Young 2003). While some work is developing in this field (Defourney et al. 2014), more is still needed.

12.6   Social Enterprise and Gender

We have remarked earlier that traditional entrepreneurship theories were predicated on a set of assumptions about the role of this individual and that those assumptions became a priori accepted in much of the academic discourse. Key to those assumptions is that the entrepreneur was male (Carter et al. 2012). Before the 1970s entrepreneurship studies concentrated exclusively on men, and indeed for Collins and Moore (1970), engaging in entrepreneurial activity was a way to prove 'maleness'. Not until 1975 did a paper appear exploring entrepreneurial motivation in women in the United States (Schreier 1975), and it was almost a decade later until one appeared in the United Kingdom (Goffee and Scase 1983). This absence of female perspectives on entrepreneurship is key to understanding the nature of perceived wisdom as to the motivations of entrepreneurs. As a whole the academic community simply did not question enough the inherent gender biases which underpinned conceptions of entrepreneurship. Nor did it recognise that the methodological techniques used to develop research served to set and embed a series of 'norms' which defined what entrepreneurship was (Schreier 1975). As Carter and Cannon (1992) pointed out, 'Although women business owners were afforded separate recognition, their activities and experiences were compared to those of their male counterparts, embedding masculinity as the normative standard'.

Hamilton (2006) has shown, for example, how within family-owned firms the traditional narrative of the 'heroic male' owner-manager and the 'invisible women' holds sway. She argues that businesses often create these constructions as presentations to the outside world, and yet the academic discourse accepts this narrative. 'The entrepreneurship and family business literature commonly reflects and reinforces the relative silence and invisibility of women in entrepreneurial discourse. Embedded in that discourse is the assumption that the leadership involved in founding and running a business is most naturally male' (p. 256).

In more recent years, the academic attention to female entrepreneurship has increased focusing on self-employment (Berner et al. 2012; Peredo and McLean 2006; Seelos and Mair 2005) and access to finance

(Cervelló-Royo et al. 2015; Garikipati 2008; Kabeer 2001; Ngo and Wahhaj 2012; Weber and Ahmad 2014). Nevertheless there remains a significant gap in our ability to explore entrepreneurship, whether 'for-profit' or not from a gendered perspective (Ribes-Giner et al. 2017).

A significant factor in this gap, particularly for social enterprise, is that female businesses, especially in the developing world, tend to be less formally recognised. As a result they are more likely to be left out of large-scale quantitative studies which are therefore likely to overstate the male role in entrepreneurial activities (Datta and Gailey 2012).

Nevertheless such businesses make up a significant part of the global economy and are much more likely to re-invest any profits into a social purpose (VanderBrug 2013). If we are to truly understand the context of which social entrepreneurial motivations behaviours manifest, we must widen our definitions to include business ventures which do not fit preconceived legalistic structures. Only be so doing can we recognise the role of such businesses in social and economic value creation (De Bruin et al. 2006; Kassam et al. 2002). Datta and Gailey (2012) have, for example, pointed out Indian examples whereby social enterprises through collective effort and not via the actions of 'a heroic individual social entrepreneur'.

In doing so they build upon the seminal feminist perspective of entrepreneurship provided by Calas et al. (2009). For these authors the language of entrepreneurship, embedding and embedded, as it is within concepts of 'male as norm', understands entrepreneurial activities as unanimously positive and predicated upon the discovery and exploitation of opportunity. They argue that by locating thus within an economic paradigm whereby the primary metric of success is financial growth the concept becomes limited. Rather they propose the redefinition of entrepreneurship to be 'a process of social change which can be understood without attention to economic or managerial logic' (Calas et al. 2009, p. 553). In doing so they have opened up a new and exciting perspective on entrepreneurship which allows for female social entrepreneurship to be explored in a completely new way.

Gone is the need to define social enterprise by its hybridity—its relationship to for- or not-for-profit organisations. Now there is no such thing as an entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship—divided by

their conceptions of financial gain. Rather all entrepreneurship is inherently social. This perspective allows researchers to re-evaluate their understanding of entrepreneurial motivations regardless of the legalistic structures imposed upon their organisations. This new perspective has been taken up by a series of authors exploring female social entrepreneurship—if the term is still relevant under this conception—whereby the primary focus is not upon the act of revenue generation but upon the role of entrepreneurship as a mechanism for female empowerment (Kimbu and Ngoasong 2016; Kwaramba et al. 2012).

Nevertheless significant gaps in the research still exist. We are unsure, for example, of the relationship between female social entrepreneurship and community norms (Amine and Staub 2009; Huysentruyt 2014). However, as we start to address these issues, it appears that we will once more be brought face to face with the fact that the motivations of social entrepreneurs are not singular nor are they easy to define. Rather they are socially specific and rely on the context within which they are developed.

12.7   The Mythos of the Social Entrepreneur

We have seen how the behaviour and motivation of the social entrepreneur is dependent upon their geographical context, the support or lack of it for social entrepreneurship at an institutional level and our own understanding of the gendered conception of entrepreneurial activity.

No longer should the mythos of the social entrepreneur superhero hold sway. Rather we can now accept that the social entrepreneur is a socially constructed agent. While a significant number of papers have supported this perspective of the entrepreneur (Chell 1985; Delmar and Davidsson 2000; Gartner 1988; Steyaert 2007; Drakopoulou Dodd and Anderson 2007) and others have done so for social entrepreneurs specifically (Spear 2006; Parkinson and Howorth 2008; Mort et al. 2003; Sharir and Lerner 2006; Corner and Ho 2010; Moizer and Tracey 2010), it is worth exploring why the mythos still exists.

Firstly, the individual entrepreneur (whether social or not) is easier to comprehend and understand. In television programmes, in films, in

many undergraduate enterprise courses, the individual entrepreneur holds sway. Stood on a pedestal, looking down at his (and it's normally 'his') doubters and critics, he shows us that success is within our grasp. We just have to want it enough and work hard enough.

Secondly, the vision of the social entrepreneur superhero is marketable. Discussing 'for profit enterprise', Aarons-Mele has argued that 'Fed by media and online coverage of an idealised lifestyle, this "entrepreneurship porn" presents an airbrushed reality in which all work is always meaningful and running your own business is a way to achieve better work/life harmony'. For social entrepreneurs, this is particularly true. Not only can someone start up their new company but they can change the world too. From the *Forbes* article '5 clever hacks to becoming a social entrepreneur' to the London School of Economics blog 'Could you have what it takes to become a social entrepreneur?', all one has to do is attend the course, read the book, fill in the form and a life of independence while achieving social good can be yours.

Thirdly, for policy makers, the concept of social enterprise, bringing together the competitive elements of the private sector within a framework of social service, is often too tempting an idea to overlook. When David Cameron, for example, (perhaps the senior politician who did more to promote the concept of social enterprise than any other) explained his conception of the big society upon becoming Prime Minister, he stated that he wanted to 'support the creation and expansion of mutuals, co-operatives, charities and social enterprises, and support these groups to have much greater involvement in the running of public services' (Cabinet Office 2010) By doing so he hoped to achieve 'A deep and serious reform agenda to take power away from politicians and to give it to people. That's because we know instinctively that the state is often too inhuman, monolithic and clumsy to tackle our deepest social problems. We know that the best ideas come from the ground up, not the top down. We know that when you give people and communities more power over their lives, more power to come together and work together to make life better – great things happen' (Cameron 2010).

Here then are the three key factors which maintain the mythos of the social entrepreneur. An individual with the right skills and determination to succeed, but with a social conscience who cares for others and for the

planet. And who is able to develop innovative solutions to problems which cannot be tackled in traditional ways. No wonder the concept is so appealing to so many.

12.8   But What of the Reality?

We have shown that social enterprise is a socially constructed concept. Based for some upon the mythos of the entrepreneur, it is the opportunity to use personal traits to solve social problems. However, notions of social enterprise and conceptions of enterprise are geographically specific and predicated upon levels of institutional support from state, society, and individuals. Furthermore the very concept of a 'social' enterprise is predicated upon the notion of a 'non-social' or 'for-profit' enterprise, and this concept excludes significant amounts of female entrepreneurial activity. If we redefine enterprise, as Calas et al. (2009) would have us do, as the implementation of social change, then the conception of motivation and behaviour becomes very different.

However, while there may be no singular set of social entrepreneurial behaviours and motivations, does this mean that the concept of the social entrepreneur as superhero may have to remain a comic book fiction? I would argue that it does not need to be completely thrown away. Social enterprise is clearly an existent phenomenon. It may have different properties in different geographies or for different communities, but it also has a shared core, a focus upon achieving a social aim through a set of non-philanthropic activities. It follows therefore that such a core has a set of motivations and behaviours linked to the actors involved.

The search for such behaviours offers an exciting opportunity for scholars to develop research within this field. Whether that be the development of psychological theories exploring the nature of a social entrepreneurial mind-set, traditional economic theories (perhaps an intriguing revisiting of Smith's (1759) notion of moral sentiment), or the development of sociological explorations of social enterprise, there is clearly an opportunity for the development of an exciting new era of multi-disciplinary research and discovery.

Such research could develop in a number of ways. Firstly there is a need to further advance the study of the importance of context and social norms in the creation of social entrepreneurs. The review here of different geographies and the importance of gender is a starting point, but much more can be done around specific factors connected to different industries and sectors, the importance of national culture and national institutional support. Secondly researchers should develop and explore the key predictors for such behaviour, for example, the previous experience of social entrepreneurs, their training and backgrounds, the role played by gender and ethnicity, and how they utilise any cultural capital they may have. Thirdly the dependency upon case studies which underpins much social enterprise research is useful, but the discourse needs a greater theoretical underpinning if it is developed more fully. This requires the development of a wider quantitative approach embracing larger samples and creating theoretic generalisations.

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