Chapter 14
Sharing Economy Model for the Base of the Pyramid: An Ecosystem Approach

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Abstract This chapter examines *how an ecosystem approach can be applied to develop and sustain sharing activities and to scale the social impact of sharing economy models (*SEMs*).* Using the literature and findings from a pilot study of Moving Feast, an emerging ecosystem among food-based social organizations in Victoria, Australia, we develop a relational ecosystem approach to sharing economy in which key actors (i.e., STREAT social enterprise) steer the process through informal arrangements to generate trust and reciprocity in the system. In this approach, bottom-up process of building an ecosystem relies on actors' sharing orientation and sharing behavior to offer localized and context-specific solutions. These sharing orientation and behaviors are sustained as they become institutionalized and embedded in the ecosystem through both organizational and system-level processes and the development of sharing institutional logic. This relational ecosystem approach also resulted in initial signs of impact on both specific stakeholder and system level that would have been difficult to achieve through scaling individual organizations. Our study highlights the role of place-based, bottom-up processes in cultivating and sustaining sharing behavior.

Keywords Sharing behavior · Sharing orientation · Social impact · Ecosystem · Sharing economy models · Moving Feast · STREAT

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14.1   Introduction

In this chapter, we propose an ecosystem approach to building sharing economy models (SEMs). While there are many definitions of sharing economy, the common characteristic across them is that SEMs enable access over ownership of the assets (Belk, 2014a, b). SEMs provide a means for sharing existing resources and promote innovative business models that allow for better resource utilization (Acquier et al., 2017; Laukkanen & Tura, 2020). Hence, it is seen as an effective approach for resource use and specifically instrumental in addressing societal challenges in a resource-constrained environment (Bhatt et al., 2019; Hota et al., 2019; Schneider et al., 2019).

COVID-19, bushfires, and other climate change effects have highlighted the size and urgency of multiple, complex social and environmental issues. Recent reports show how the pandemic has reversed the progress toward eradicating poverty, amplified various inequalities, and slowed progress toward environmental sustainability (UN, 2020). The devastating effect of these challenges is not only visible in developing countries. Developed countries also have seen an increase in poverty and vulnerability. In Australia, for example, the pandemic has left 3.24 million people (13.6% of the total population) living below the poverty line, defined as 50% of median income (Davidson et al., 2020). It means that more than one in eight adults and one in six children now live in poverty (Davidson, 2020). Concurrently, as noted during the pandemic, there has been an increase in local, place-based sharing initiatives to address inequality, resource wastage, and resource scarcity. Initiatives such as Adopt a Health Worker,[1] Adopt a Neighbor,[2] and Home-share Melbourne[3] have emerged to provide home, skills, companionship to fight the crisis, and other resources.

Furthermore, as noted above, research also suggests that in a resource-constrained environment (Bhatt et al., 2019; Hota et al., 2019), societies where sharing happens are more resilient in managing crisis with limited resources. While it is not uncommon to see some exceptional sharing initiatives during times of hardship and external crisis (Stack, 1975), sustaining these sharing behaviors in the communities and scaling their social impact have proven challenging (Belk, 2010).

The current research in SEMs provides a limited understanding of how to sustain and scale the social impact of sharing economy initiatives. A vast literature on sharing economy focuses on the efficiencies and effectiveness of commercial firms in the sharing economy (Acs et al., 2017). Such perspectives mainly focus on profit maximization and view social and environmental outcomes merely as favourable "byproducts" of sharing activities (Fehrer & Wieland, 2021; Qureshi et al., 2018a). This profit-oriented logic is limited in addressing the complex challenges of

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[1] https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-03-17/adopt-a-healthcare-worker-site-1/12064766

[2] https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-03-17/volunteer-army-responds-to-coronavirus-covid-19-crisis/12064018

[3] https://flatmates.com.au/info/home-share-melbourne

sustainability and social inequality (Bhatt, 2021; Dembek & Sivasubramaniam, 2018; Qureshi et al., 2018b; Riaz & Qureshi, 2017). To make progress on addressing sustainability and social challenges, social and environmental goals need to be at the core of SEMs (Bhatt, 2017; Chmielewski et al., 2020; Dembek & Sivasubramaniam, 2018; Shalini et al., 2021).

Additionally, the complexity and size of the challenges facing humanity make it impossible for one organization to address them effectively (Fehrer & Wieland, 2021). Research from for-purpose organizations such as social enterprises and social businesses has started to recognize the importance of collective approaches in driving social and environmental impact (Bloom & Dees, 2008; Parthiban et al., 2020; Shalini, et al., 2021). These studies highlight that sustainable and social challenges are so vast that a real transition toward sustainable and inclusive development requires collective efforts from different organizations. Moreover, as noted during the current crisis, the recent efforts to address the social and environmental problems and their consequences are clearly insufficient, with many social sector organizations being overwhelmed by the rapidly growing demand for their services (Cortis & Blaxland, 2020).

These empirical concerns motivated this book chapter. Given the size and scope of the problems, we argue that instead of focusing on the sustainable efforts of individual organizations, there is a need to adopt an ecosystem approach to understand and develop SEMs. The ecosystem approach argues that several actors, armed with interdependent and complementary resources, knowledge, and information, can help each other achieve desired results (Acs et al., 2017). In this chapter, we explore *how an ecosystem approach can be applied to develop and sustain sharing activities and scale the social impact of SEMs.* We use Moving Feast, an emerging ecosystem among food-based social organizations in Victoria, to address this purpose.

In terms of developing sharing activities, the initial learnings from Moving Feast highlight the bottom-up process of building an ecosystem that relies on actors' sharing orientation and sharing behavior to offer localized and context-specific solution to address grand challenges.

Sustaining sharing activities happen as the sharing behaviors become institutionalized and embedded in the ecosystem through both organizational- and system-level processes. Our insights from Moving Feast help us develop a relational ecosystem approach to sharing economy in which some key actors (i.e., STREAT social enterprise) steer the process to generate norms of reciprocity and trust within the system. Adjusting the sharing-based ecosystem, organizations develop what we could call sharing institutional logic that drives sharing with the clients and among the organizations forming the ecosystem.

As for scaling impact, it is important to note that Moving Feast is a relatively new initiative, while impact takes a long time to emerge (Bhatt, 2017). Yet, we already could see that developing ecosystem resulted in reaching a far greater number of people in need than it would have been possible through scaling each of the organizations individually. Similarly, the organizations forming the ecosystem felt less overwhelmed than when they were working separately. Also, the system-level effects are already visible, such as sustained access to local food that did not exist

before the ecosystem was developed. The creation of this impact was supported by some of the characteristics of the ecosystem, such as shared locality and common agenda. We discuss the implication of this finding for theory and practice and provide future research directions.

14.2 Literature Review

14.2.1 Sharing Economy Model

Sharing is the most fundamental form of human sociocultural behavior and has been present since the earliest form of group activities and social interactions (Price, 1975; Belk, 2010), as evidenced by hunter-gatherer societies (Kaplan et al., 1984) and gift-giving practices (Sherry, 1983). Sharing has the potential to generate positive social, economic, and environmental benefits for the communities and create entire resilient and more sustainable and just economic and social systems. This potential is in part due to the fact that sharing encourages and promotes usage of idle resources resulting in a reduction in their wastage, improving economic efficiency, and lessen the negative environmental impacts (Cohen & Kietzman, 2014; Frenken & Schor, 2019; Sundararajan, 2016). In a resource-constrained environment (Bhatt et al., 2019; Hota et al., 2019), sharing resources can help in managing crisis with limited resources. Increasingly, sharing is also linked with economic activities, giving rise to a decentralized, locally embedded economy, where resources are shared free or for fees (Davies et al., 2017). According to a recent estimate, sharing economy now contribute to 15 billion dollars per year to the Australian economy and about two-thirds of Australians use sharing economy models.[4],[5]

Sharing economy provides a powerful means for improving resource effectiveness (Laukkanen & Tura, 2020; Schneider et al., 2019). It does so by allowing for resource sharing among different actors and by promoting innovative business models that lead to innovative resource usage (Hira & Reilly, 2017; Laukkanen & Tura, 2020). There are three foundational cores of sharing economy – access economy, platform economy, and community-based economy (Acquier et al., 2017). Access economy is based on the idea of sharing underutilized resources for their efficient use (Belk, 2014a, b), platform economy provides a means for the exchange of resources through decentralized platforms, and community-based economy promotes noncontractual, nonhierarchical, and nonmonetized form of interactions (Benkler, 2004; Escobedo et al., 2021; Qureshi et al., 2021a, b; Qureshi & Fang, 2011). The fundamental ideas behind each of the cores are to promote effective utilization of resources. Hence, sharing economy can be a useful approach to overcome resource constraints (Szabó, 2017).

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[4] https://australianfintech.com.au/peer-to-peer-economy-now-worth-over-15-billion-a-year/

[5] https://www.ratesetter.com.au/blog/australians-embrace-sharing-economy/

The SEMs work on the basis of a triple bottom-line value system, which incorporates environmental, societal, and economic dimensions, each corresponding to different values, framing, and debates (Acquier et al., 2017). However, the current evidence provides more support for the economic dimension as compared to the other two dimensions (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012). The environmental dimension is based on the promise that by promoting sharing over ownership, SEMs provide more sustainable use of resources (Botsman & Rogers, 2010; Martin, 2016). But evidence suggests that the environmental aspects often become a secondary consideration (Böcker & Meelen, 2017; Wilhelms et al., 2017). Similarly, the societal promise of sharing economy rests on the idea that it promotes cheaper access to products and services, enables nonreciprocal exchange such as donations or gift giving, and leads to new forms of collaboration, social bonding, and solidarity among community members (Belk, 2010; Benkler, 2017). While this may be attractive, the risk is that sharing economy model might recreate the inequalities of the capitalist markets in different ways (Richardson, 2015; Schor & Fitzmaurice, 2015). So, there is a need to understand *whether* and *how* activities of the organizations can deliver on environmental and societal goals. At the same time, the complexity of social and economic value creation requires social purpose organizations to work with a broad set of stakeholders to achieve triple bottom line and scale their impact. Thus, emerging research highlights the role of ecosystemic approaches in scaling the social impact to address grand challenges (Dentoni et al., 2018; Han & Shah, 2020; Thompson et al., 2018).

14.2.2   An Ecosystem Approach to Sharing Economy

We define the impact of sharing at two levels: stakeholder level and systemic level. At the stakeholder level, following and adapting the definition created by the Impact Management Project,[6] we define impact as the amalgam of changes in outcomes that organizational activities have on different stakeholder groups. For example, an increase in health and in the ability of children to concentrate and study as a result of access to affordable and nutritious food. At the systemic level, we define impact as changes in the effects and behavior of systems resulting from amendments to the structure of the system (e.g., system elements or the connections and feedback loops between them). An example of this is an increase in the production and availability of local and sustainably grown food due to the additional local growers and vendors entering the food system.

Applying these definitions, social impact is the impact experienced by the different groups in society or changes in societal systems. Environmental impact is the impact experienced by the different species and changes in the natural ecosystems.

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[6] https://impactmanagementproject.com/impact-management/impact-management-norms/

Scaling positive, social and environmental impact is necessary and urgent, given the magnitude of social and environmental issues aggravated by the Covid pandemic. However, scaling impact is one of the most challenging issues in both research and practice (Han & Shah, 2020), and new approaches are needed if we are to advance toward solutions (Qureshi et al, 2021c). The extant research has associated scaling social impact with organizational growth and has focused on organizational-level factors such as funding, staff, strategies, and stages of scaling (Barraket & Yousefpour, 2013). Scaling has been seen as an effort by an individual organization to increase its reach and scope or replicate a program (Bloom & Skloot, 2010). These scholars underscore the role of scaled organizational capacities and geographic expansion as important indicators in scaling social impact. Social intermediation scholarship also demonstrates how organizations mobilize resources, open more branches and offices, and set up the right organizational process for scaling their impact (Kistruck et al., 2013; André & Pache, 2016; Visser et al., 2017).

Yet, organizational growth does not directly result in scaling social impact (Han & Shah, 2020). Empirical evidence suggests that, despite an increase in the organization's size and activities, the social problems may not be solved proportionally or substantially (Bhatt, 2017; Boghani, 2012). Adding resources to an organization with weak social impact logic or prone to mission drift will not necessarily increase social impact (Seelos & Mair, 2017). In some cases, scaling organizations may actually result in a decrease in positive or even production of negative impact (Boghani, 2012; Dembek & Sivasubramaniam, 2018). Scaling social impact is not correlated with scaling organizations (André & Pache, 2016). Instead, as social intermediation research suggests, it is about addressing social issues more effectively, serving most marginalized communities, and changing the status quo (Bhatt, 2021; Han & Shah, 2020; Kistruck et al., 2013). Thus, scaling social impact is more about creating transformative social change or systemic change, which should be the focus of any social impact initiatives rather than whether or not an organization itself has scaled up (Bhatt, 2017, 2021). While extant research has focused on organizational factors, we argue that to create systemic change and address the complexity of issues we face, we have to approach these issues at the ecosystem level. Without understanding ecosystem-level issues, the efforts of scaling social impact may end up with scaling up an organization rather than addressing social issues or bringing about substantial social change (Bloom & Dees, 2008).

In the context of commercial ventures, the concept of ecosystem generally refers to *a set of attributes, for example, networks, mentors, capital, policy and governance, and culture among others, which collectively create a supportive environment for ventures to flourish* (Spigel, 2017; 38). A variety of organizations and individuals produce and shape different attributes underlying a supportive business ecosystem (Thompson et al., 2018; Zahra & Nambisan, 2012). For example, researchers have explored how clusters or networked incubators (Bøllingtoft & Ulhøi, 2005), institutional entrepreneurship (Battilana et al., 2009), and organizational sponsorship (Dutt et al., 2016) can play important roles in scaling a venture.

Although not studied in the social impact context, ecosystems research might arguably be relevant to SEMs as they create impact through both organizational- and system-level processes. Building on insights from this stream of research and integrating them with social intermediation research (Kistruck et al., 2013), we propose that an ecosystem can be developed to collectively create social impact (Bloom & Dees, 2008).

SEMs, by their nature, are based on networks of actors that are being connected. Hence, they create systems and scale by growing these systems. An ecosystem approach can enable SEMs to address the societal needs on a much larger scale compared to what could be attained through an individual organization's growth strategy (Grant & Crutchfield, 2007; Dentoni et al., 2018). Further, addressing social and environmental issues through an ecosystem and collaboration rather than a single organization is likely to increase the capacity to address the complexity of issues (Dentoni et.al, 2018). Indeed, because of the enormous potential of ecosystem to achieve greater social impact, it is increasingly being recognized as a scaling strategy for social impact (Bradach, 2010; Pfeilstette, 2020; Qureshi & Fang, 2011).

We integrate research in the domains of ecosystems theory (Jacobides et al., 2018) and resource orchestration (Sirmon et al., 2011) to arrive at our conceptual model. We sought to extend previous research on the ecosystem by focusing on types of activities involved in a bottom-up ecosystem and classified them into: (a) primary activities – production of ingredients (raw material), (b) value-added activities – production of processed goods, and (c) logistic activities – support activities. All these activities are supported by overarching knowledge networks that increase the effectiveness of each of these activities (Fig. 14.1). We then superimposed the resources orchestration over this basic framework to identify two sets of processes: ecosystem-level process and interorganizational-level processes. To have successful bottom-up initiatives, the processes of *structuring*, *bundling,* and *leveraging* of resources and capabilities should happen at the ecosystem level. However, not all the processes need to be organized at the ecosystem level. For example, an ecosystem built around food security may include some members engaged in growing fruits and vegetables and others in processing these into meals. Thus, there will be some interorganizational process that will not involve ecosystem-level response. We identified three interorganizational processes: (a) sharing of resources and capabilities among ecosystem members; (b) reorganizing activities among ecosystem members; and (c) optimizing inputs and outputs among the ecosystem members.

We now turn to our case of Moving Feast, an emerging ecosystem among food-based social organizations in Victoria, to address the gaps identified in the literature and explore *how an ecosystem approach can be applied to develop and sustain sharing activities and to scale the social impact of SEMs.*
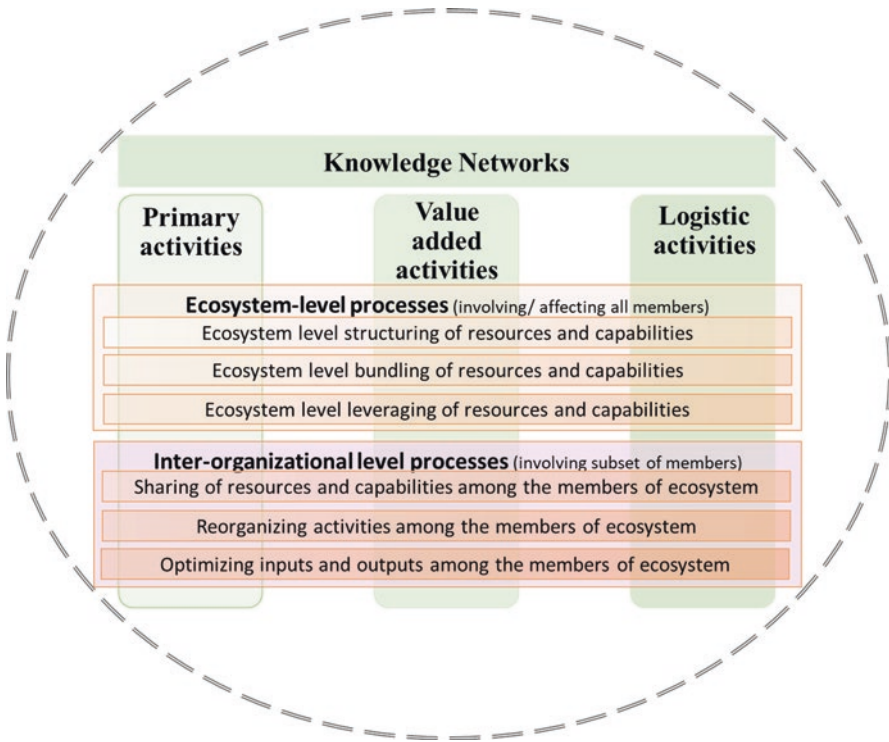
Fig. 14.1 Conceptual model-ecosystem for sharing economy

14.2.2.1 Initial Insights from Moving Feast[7]

This project originates from the pilot study on Moving Feast. Spearheaded by STREAT[8] (a Australian-based social enterprise), Moving Feast is a collaborative project of building a bottom-up ecosystem for social impact that involves Victorian food-based social enterprises (Moving Feast, 2020). The purpose of this ecosystem is to provide food for those in need and affected by the results of the pandemic and to create a better and more just food systems (Moving Feast, 2020). As such, Moving Feast addresses impact at both the stakeholder and systemic level (Barrelle, 2020). The member organizations are engaged in various parts of the food system value chain: growing food, storing produce, preparing meals, distributing meals, and educating all the stakeholders (Cody, 2020). These organizations came together in response to pandemic-related food shortages and distribution issues, combined with a recognition that the enterprises had latent assets – as an effect of lockdown – that could be mobilized to support food relief needs (Coggan, 2020). While its origins

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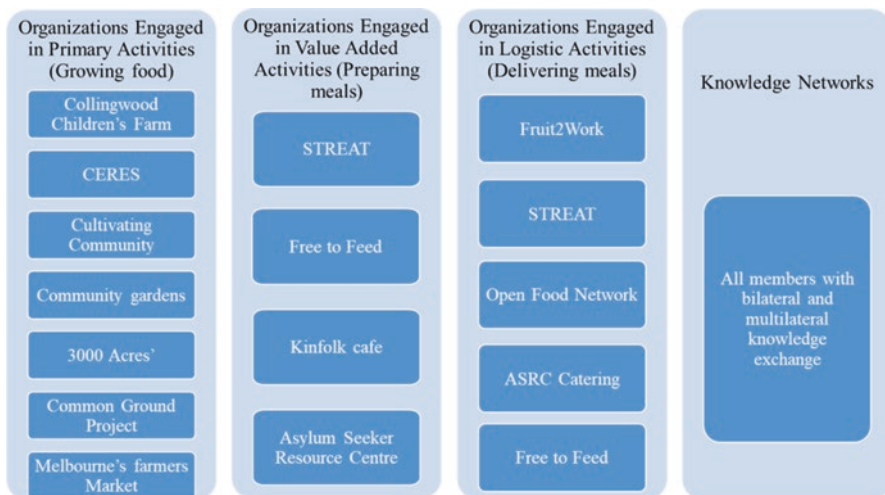
[7] https://movingfeast.net/

[8] https://www.streat.com.au/about

Fig. 14.2 Moving Feast ecosystem for sharing economy

are in emergency response, Moving Feast has a long-term vision of supporting planetary health through sustainable food and social systems.

According to Bec Scott, the CEO of STREAT (a social enterprise that has played an important role in steering the process of ecosystem building):

> What we want longer term is to have a just and sustainable food system, and for Melbourne's backyards [to be] full of thriving vegie patches so families have their own food security, not just for this pandemic, but for what we know is going to be a very hard time in the future with climate change. (Bec Scott, as cited by Coggan, 2020)

Key characteristics of Moving Feast are the following (Fig. 14.2):

a) *Shared locality*: A key characteristic of Moving Feast is its locality. The participants of the Moving Feast collective are all local enterprises operating in the Melbourne metropolitan region. Their shared community and geographic proximity have been a key instrument in allowing them to integrate their individual work into a collective food relief response for many groups in need of this essential aid across the region. Their efforts in joining together their staff and resources have enabled them to help alleviate the huge challenges involved in the mass production and distribution of food across the city's vastly separated suburbs.

b) *Shared community – common hub of networks*: Many of the enterprises are involved in the knowledge-sharing hubs operating on behalf of the social enterprise support sector, such as the social impact hub and related programs, including Social Traders, a Victorian organization helping nonprofits and social enterprises with advisory and consultancy services. *The Social Enterprise Network of Victoria* (SENVIC) is another common resource link shared between many of the founding partners. SENVIC hosts meetings and seminars, where some of the participants have met and collaborated prior to instigating Moving

Feast. Therefore, many social enterprises already operated in a community ecosystem where individuals could meet and share ideas.

c) *Shared ethos/common agenda*: Moving Feast collective is united by its founders' shared focus on helping disadvantaged members of their local communities. It is through the individual work of its founders providing relief to the different community members who require aid, such as refugees and migrants, seniors, and those with a disability, that the Moving Feast collective can reach its target recipients and has found new partnerships and further support. Most of the organizations have not-for-profit and social motives. They have the common goal of addressing the food problem.

As noted in the Moving Feast Impact Framework (2020), a core principle of Moving Feast is to,

> build a people system. Care and empathy for each other lie at its heart, celebrating solidarity, diversity, inclusivity and tolerance. We strive to create opportunities for people who are often on the margins. (p. 23)

The three characteristics of Moving Feast discussed above help in achieving these goals through "optimization of resources and skills to create high impact" (Barrelle, 2020).

According to Dr. Kate Barrelle, STREAT Co-Founder and Chief Impact Officer (2020), during COVID-19, one of the first activities of Moving Feast was to provide access to culturally diverse, healthy, delicious community meal for Victorians in need, *"ensuring that maximum social impact and connection occurred every step of the way" (p. 7).*

Additionally, the food share model and community food centers in the Moving Feast ecosystem have been useful in establishing upward-downward linkages. The food share model includes "specialist food rescue and distribution warehouse which can incorporate skills training or pathways to employment opportunities" (p. 17). The community food center provides "emergency access to food, where people can come together to grow, cook, share, and advocate for nutritious food" (p. 17). In the food sharing model and community food centers the collective dimension of sharing emerges and shows sharing as a relational process where "activities are performed in conjunction, or are experienced with others" (Davies et al., 2017).

In the next section, we discuss these characteristics of the Moving Feast ecosystem and their implications for developing and sustaining sharing activities and scaling the social impact of SEMs.

14.3   Discussion

Moving Feast is an interesting example with the potential to advance knowledge of the ecosystem approach of SEMs. Ecosystem literature discusses different roles and motivations of stakeholders in the commercial ecosystem (Lingens et al., 2020); we

understand very little about stakeholders in an ecosystem structured for scaling social impact. Social intermediation theory indicates that mainstream economics theories, such as transaction cost economics and intermediation theory, are only partly applicable, if at all, in social organizations' context (Kistruck et al., 2013; Parthiban et al. 2021; Pillai et al., 2021a). As social organizations are predominantly driven by a social mission, this study opens an opportunity to explore an ecosystem approach in developing and sustaining sharing activities and in understanding the processes of scaling the social impact of SEMs. In the following paragraphs, we discuss the implications of the Moving Feast ecosystem for developing and maintaining sharing activities and for scaling the social impact of SEMs.

14.3.1 Developing and Maintaining Sharing Activities

Based on the Moving Feast, we propose that sharing manifest itself in an ecosystem in terms of *sharing orientation* and *sharing behavior*. We define sharing orientation as predisposition of someone toward giving and receiving resources. Sharing orientation, therefore, is a latent belief, feeling, and tendency toward sharing rather than actual instances of that act. We define sharing behavior as actual instances of giving and receiving resource. The example of Moving Feast shows that in an ecosystem, a key player has an essential role in converting sharing orientation into sharing behavior. In Moving Feast this key role was played by STREAT, a Victoria-based social enterprise. STREAT utilized their reputation, goodwill, and networks in the policy and community space to bring different stakeholders within an ecosystem. Furthermore, we also found the significance of *bottom-up processes* in cultivating and sustaining sharing behavior. The case study demonstrates that place-based, bottom-up initiatives have potential to sustain sharing activities as they are built on the unique needs and capabilities of each community (Bhatt, 2021). This finding is in contrast with the dominant top-down model of the ecosystem, which relies on explicit patterns of authority (Tracey et al., 2014).

While acknowledging that cultivating sharing behaviors takes time and Moving Feast is a relatively new initiative, our study of the bottom-up processes of Moving Feast provides some insights on the topic. For example, we observed that in addition to the place-based approach, Moving Feast had used organizational-level processes and system-level processes to institutionalized sharing behavior. At the organizational level, we discussed in the previous section how STREAT had used their social networks and goodwill to steer the process to generate norms of reciprocity and trust within the system. At the system level, we observe the emergence of sharing institutional logic through upward-downward linkages that drive sharing activities among the stakeholders forming the ecosystem (Hota et al., 2021; Qiu et al., 2021; Qureshi et al., 2018a; Qureshi & Fang, 2011).

14.3.2 Scaling Impact

In terms of scaling impact, our study indicates that the ecosystem approach has the potential to scale positive social and environmental impact (Qureshi et al., 2021c; Thompson et al., 2018). Even though Moving Feast is a relatively new initiative, the collective efforts by multiple organizations during the pandemic show its potential in scaling impact (Barrelle, 2020). Particularly, we observed how organizations were able to cater to the diverse needs of the individuals and were able to provide support to greater number of people in need than they would have without being part of the ecosystem. These findings have important implications for the management and governance of an ecosystem for scaling social impact. Studies so far have investigated the management and governance of commercial ecosystems (Gibbons & Henderson, 2012; Tracey et al., 2014; Zahra & Nambisan, 2012). Scaling social impact, however, is a very different objective, potentially requiring very different management and governance practices (Bhatt, 2017; Pandey et al., 2021; Pillai et al., 2021b; Qureshi et al., 2021c). Business ecosystems are organized around financial efficiency and profit maximization, which can be understood relatively unambiguously. In contrast, the example of Moving Feast shows that stakeholders participate in sharing activities not only for a utilitarian purpose but also because of the relational values they gain from belonging to the ecosystem (Qureshi et al., 2016; Qureshi & Fang, 2011).

This relational value has its root in the literature of communal sharing, which suggests that belonging to a community guide sharing behavior (Stofberg et al., 2019). In anthropology, communal sharing is seen as "a relation of unity, community, undifferentiated collective identity, and kindness" (Fiske, 1991, p. ix). It involves expanding the sphere of *aggregate extended self* beyond the family (Belk, 2010), that is, "individuals see themselves and other members of the community as equivalent, undifferentiated, and sharing the same goal to promote the community's interests" (Stofberg et al., 2019, p 6). Extending this argument to Moving Feast, we conceptualize that participation in an ecosystem calls for generalized reciprocity, a notion where no one keeps track of the balance between giving and receiving (Sahlins, 1972). Members of an ecosystem, while joining the ecosystem for various reasons, may contribute altruistically to the common objective, regardless of personal rewards and costs (Benkler, 2004). It exemplifies Belk's notion of "sharing in", a process through which others become a part of "pseudo family" (2014a, b, p. 16). "Sharing in" in an ecosystem fosters a great sense of community and extends the scope and scale of organizations by facilitating access to shared resources (cf Hota & Mitra, 2021; Pillai et al., 2021b). Furthermore, the key characteristics of Moving Feast ecosystem (i.e., sharing locality, shared community, and shared ethos) also show how to design SEMs to maximize social impact without expanding the size and scope of organizations (Uvin et al., 2000).

14.4   Conclusion and Future Research Directions

In this chapter, we propose an ecosystem approach to SEMs. We argue that an ecosystem approach is effective in utilizing the potential of SEMs and in addressing grand challenges. Although literature recognized the importance of scaling social impact, it has so far approached this topic from an organizational level looking at scaling organizations. Such an approach is limiting as scaling organizations is not necessarily positively correlated with scaling impact. The ecosystem approach used by Moving Feast provides an opportunity to study new mechanisms for scaling impact that may increase the opportunities to successfully address the root causes of complex social and environmental issues. However, an ecosystem involves actors with multiple institutional logics (cf. Riaz & Qureshi, 2017), and as such there is a risk of mission drift (Logue & Grimes, 2019). We encourage future research to explore: *How an ecosystem approach to scaling social impact helps overcome mission drift? Furthermore, it would also be worthwhile to explore what mechanisms do ecosystem for scaling social impact implement to overcome mission drift?*

Additionally, despite an increase in interest, the social impact remains vaguely defined (Bhatt, 2017; Dembek & Sivasubramaniam, 2018). As such, each member of an ecosystem structured for scaling social impact might have a different notion of social impact they would like to see. This diversity in the vision about social impact might lead to interesting governance models that can account for such heterogeneity and provide useful means and measures for designing governance systems focused on scaling impact. We encourage future research to explore how governance structure emerges and evolves in an ecosystem for scaling social impact and how (or how not) individual social organizations align their internal governance structure with that of ecosystem governance structure.

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