

Entrepreneurial intentions: a grounded theory of green-fielding

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Abstract

Purpose of the paper: *As a conclusive rationale behind continued global growth in entrepreneurial activity remains the subject of academic and economic debate, the purpose of this paper is to provide additional insight into the sources of entrepreneurial intentions.*

Methodology: *The methodology used is grounded theory, an inductive approach which generates theory rather than verification of existing findings. The coding procedures lead to sub-categories, data patterns and a core.*

Limitations: *The research is limited in two areas, first the range of sectors and second the geographical coverage which is restricted to entrepreneurs located in North East Wales.*

Implications: *As i-career is increasingly attractive to a range of demographic sectors, the implications further challenge traditional employment progress and patterns. That may require businesses to review structure and reward offers to provide additional flexibility for contractual placements.*

Originality: *Within the concluding discussion it is evident that the broad nature of entrepreneurial origins produces additional knowledge as contemporary working patterns evolve to encompass societal and economic changes and priorities, the i-career. The content has value to a wide spectrum of businesses for role planning and workforce arrangements, and also to the would-be entrepreneur.*

Key words: green-fielding; grounded theory; entrepreneurial intentions; careers

1. Introduction

An expansion in zero and micro-sized businesses was accurately predicted to continue increasing (Green, 2012a, Green, 2012b) and reflects the growth in project-based i-careers, characterised by an individual operating in the manner of a business entity. Various sources, including the UK Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (www.gemconsortium.org/Data) and the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills that published a paper entitled 'Early Stage Entrepreneurial Activity Rate', (www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/198828/early-stage-entrepreneurial-activity-rate, May 2013) report a steady increase in business start-ups following a relatively static period since the millennium. Burn-Callendar (2013) reported 90,000 new businesses being created in the first half of 2013, a rise of 3.4% during the same period in 2012. Almost half of these businesses were set up with less than £2,000 of working capital and required no external funding. Companies House figures for new start-ups

in the UK have increased from 484,224 in 2012 to 526,447 in 2013 and unaudited indications suggest the total figure for 2014 is 581,173.

The education sector in Wales is supporting would-be entrepreneurs with two new courses that both commenced in October 2013. In Swansea, a new BTEC qualification for 16-19 year olds was launched under the banner of the Entrepreneurship Academy Wales. Glyndŵr University validated a BSc Entrepreneurship, the first course of its type in Wales and welcomed the first cohort of students in autumn 2013.

Established entrepreneurial businesses are participating in a pledge to make Wales a centre of entrepreneurial activity. This initiative is supported by The Big Debate (business.wales.gov.uk/entwales2013). The debates ran from November 2013 to March 2014 and attracted wide audiences.

Expanding the context to encompass an international perspective, the European Commission has developed an Entrepreneurship 2020 Action plan to provide an answer to the greatest economic crisis in 50-years and revolutionize the culture of entrepreneurship (www.eu.europa.eu/growth). The European Commission refers to entrepreneurship as the backbone of Europe's economy, representing 99% of all businesses in Europe and being responsible for 85% of new jobs and two thirds of total private sector employment in the European Union.

There are three key points to the 2020 Action Plan:

1. entrepreneurial growth and training;
2. removing existing administrative barriers to entrepreneurial businesses;
3. reigniting a culture of entrepreneurship in Europe and nurturing the new.

In October 2014, the UK launched an initiative called 'Supporting Entrepreneurship in Europe' to back the 2020 Action Plan (www.publicpolicyexchange.co.uk).

Based on this growth momentum, the purpose of this paper is to explore and establish the range of personal intentions that lie behind this structural change in the make-up of businesses (www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/businessclub/10481135). Entrepreneurial expansion is cited as being the driver behind economic growth in the UK during the 2013/14 period and, one in five of the 90,000 new businesses started in the first half of 2013, is classified as high growth.

In terms of age profile, one in six new businesses started in the UK are run by individuals who are 50 and over (bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/7138965). This point emphasises the gap in previous studies, as a search of the literature revealed that most previous researches on entrepreneurial intentions had used student samples (Vinogradov *et al.*, 2013). This outcome reveals a new gap, which was subsequently increased to a second gap, when searching for previous studies related to aristocratic entrepreneurs which proved to be almost non-existent. These gaps provided a rationale and a justification to undertake the research, based on the practising entrepreneurial individual, as the unit of analysis.

As the profile of employment in the UK and throughout Europe is changing rapidly, the paper aims to generate a grounded theory, a methodology that creates new theory and knowledge, by providing

a contribution of relevance to two key factors; working patterns and entrepreneurial intentions. A property of grounded theory is transferability and this aspect will not only support the theory in the international field adding a contribution as the data is collected from practitioners, but will also contribute to entrepreneurial planning.

The research question that the study seeks to address is, “What concerns need to be resolved in the early stages of an entrepreneurial venture?”

2. Literature Review

This section presents a concise review of the literature that has relevance to the concepts which contribute to the theory of green-fielding.

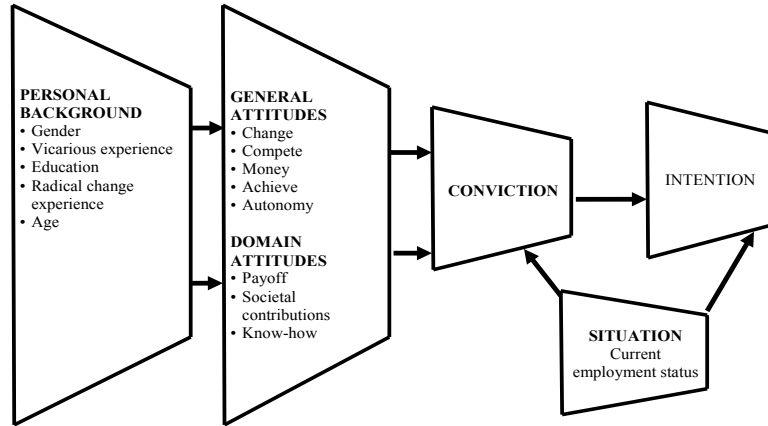
The provision of a precise definition of an entrepreneur is subject to extensive debate within the literature which Yeung (2002) referred to as being a jungle of terminology. The view that it is insufficient to define an entrepreneur as an innovator without some inclusion of commercialisation (Howorth *et al.*, 2005) is based on the difficulties associated with the separation of actions and characteristics of entrepreneurs and the dynamic nature of the concept.

Carter and Jones-Evans (2000) refer to the involvement of managerial skills and capabilities that enable small businesses to demonstrate entrepreneurship in responding to structural and economic change. Ahmed *et al.*, (2012) propose that most existing definitions of entrepreneurship and entrepreneur incorporate the outcomes of entrepreneurial activity. Also featuring, in attempts to create a precise definition, is the creation of new organizations and identifying and implementing goals using initiative to build an enterprise based on the individual traits of self-motivation and self-reliance.

There are a number of models referred to within the literature appertaining to entrepreneurial intentions. One is cited as being ‘The Classic Entrepreneurial Intentions Model’ by Elfving *et al.* (2009) that was originally developed by Krueger and Carsrud (1993) and makes reference to perceived social norms, that may be present during early upbringing, perceived desirability of the entrepreneurial state as one driver and perceived self-efficacy and perceived feasibility as a second driver, where personal beliefs are a driver and practicalities are not overwhelming. All four factors combine to support intentions.

The second model is the theory of planned behaviour. Ajzen (2012) reviews the elements of the model which prioritises the extent to which people believe they can perform a given behaviour if they are inclined to do so. Contributory factors include pre-determined action towards a specific target within a context and timeframe. Individuals behave in a manner that overcomes obstacles using information and skills. Performance and perseverance generally increase with self-efficacy that supports “go through” (Green, 2012a, p. 106), when expected consequences and anticipated difficulties require perseverance (Ajzen, 2012), frequently evident in the early stages of the entrepreneurial venture.

Fig. 1: An economic-psychological model of determinants of entrepreneurial intentions



Source: Davidsson, (1995, p. 5)

Drawing on a range of factors, previously identified by numerous authors related to entrepreneurial intentions, Davidsson (1995) designed an economic-psychological model of entrepreneurial intentions, illustrated in figure 1. The early indications emanate from the choice to improve the current economic situation, which develop into a conviction.

Secondary factors are the presence or influence of a role model and decisions occur more frequently in what is described as a free-choice period, which may equate to being unemployed. More recent support for many elements of this model stem from a study conducted by Prabhu *et al.*, (2012) based on a sample of university students aged 17-27 years from China, Finland, Russia and USA. They also identify proactive personality and entrepreneurial self-efficacy as being positive contributors of entrepreneurial intention. Contributors to self-efficacy include education, prior experience, role models and social networks.

The relationship between educational levels and wage when employed is analysed by Poschke (2013) when considering entrepreneurial options. A sample of 6,111 were included, however the insights are limited as the maximum age of respondents was 22 years. However, early career stage is when key decisions are often made and the findings indicate the extremes of wage, rather than middle band incomes, are a strong indicator of entrepreneurial intention. Those previously on low wages report entrepreneurial activity, producing twice that of similar wage earners. Low level wage earners also indicate a greater level of discrimination in identifying good projects. In addition, this paper notes that low earners tend also to have a lower level of schooling. In relation to education, Poschke (2013) reveals different outcomes to other research and may reflect the American culture of entrepreneurship, where the data was collected.

Crant (1996) proposes that a proactive orientation indicates that individuals create their own environment and can be considered as a factor in intentional and direct change of current circumstance. The presence of proactivity is a reasonable indication of being drawn to entrepreneurial careers. According to Volery and Mazzarol (2015) entrepreneurship involves linking two conditions: the presence of viable opportunities, and the presence of enterprising individuals, which strengthens the view put forward by Crant (1996). The weakness of Crant's study is that the sample was higher education students and therefore the comment that education is positively related to entrepreneurship may be questionable. There is a similarity with the role model element of the Davidsson (1995) model, as those with an entrepreneurial parent are more likely to express entrepreneurial intentions. According to Ferreira *et al.*, (2012) the incorporation of insights from both psychological and behavioural approaches is a research problematic. They summarise psychological characteristics that may be associated with entrepreneurship as:

- internal locus of control;
- propensity to take risk;
- self-confidence;
- need for achievement;
- tolerance of ambiguity;
- innovativeness.

Potential behavioural factors identified by Ferreira *et al.*, (2012) include control, attitude, creativity and engagement in academic entrepreneurship programs. This research was also based on a sample of secondary school students aged between 14 and 15 years; subsequently the results are subject to significant variation as the sample matures.

Perceptions and actual ability are identified as a gap by Bayon *et al.*, (2015). The importance of this study is two-fold, first to encourage those with entrepreneurial ability and, second, reduce the potential for failed initiatives where the actual ability is not present. This has the potential to promote the overall quality of entrepreneurial activity within the economy. A key factor, similar to other studies, is the presence of confidence and how individuals think. Links to human capital theory with investments in education and training, which may support mastery experiences related to success in accomplishing tasks, are identified together with the need to occupy the role of founder and associated entrepreneurial demands. The findings of this comprehensive study suggest that a positive personal perception encourages the initiation of entrepreneurial activities and supports thinking to action.

Bayon *et al.*, (2015) argue that positive and productive individuals are what economies require to choose entrepreneurship in order to make greater social and economic contributions. This point indicates potential links with the proactive orientation identified by Crant (1996).

A number of entrepreneurial intention syndromes have been sourced, they include: eureka, if-only, misfit and moonlighter, identified by Birley (1996) and the unfriendly push and no alternative (Beaver and Jennings, 2005). These syndromes have some similarities to the properties identified in the newly conceived theory of green-fielding.

Very little work is traceable on the topic of inheriting despite the position of sole proprietorship lacking a legal personality (Gaffney-Rhys and Jones, 2013). This study highlights the advantages of pre-emptive rights despite the findings which suggest many entrepreneurs stated they did not like to think about dying, respondents were not ready, or believed they were too young. In order to amend these views, the use of stories to clarify experiences and draw on prediction and understanding, consequently refer to inherited knowledge, aiming to generate a collective prediction. This enables knowledge to be transferred from being in the head to being in the system and encourage continuity (Garcia-Lorenzo *et al.*, 2008). A similar concept depicts entrepreneurship as an evolving unit: “as a member of society passing on key genes to successive generations” (Breslin and Jones, 2012, p. 295) with a view to interacting in order to differentiate rather than replicate. This process is enabled through selecting for or against habits of thought, which are derived from habits of life, both of which are subject to revision on the basis of what will best support progress. As a result, niche construction is established in which an individual uses time and space to make alterations (Breslin and Jones, 2012).

There are also elements of evolution referred to by Misra (2012) who comments on the belief in endowed entrepreneurial DNA which has a never-say-die spirit, opportunity recognition acumen and in-charge body language. The theory of optimal foraging also makes reference to evolutionary aspects. Pyke (1984) has written extensively on this theory that is based on a number of assumptions, including an individual's contribution to the next generation, measured in genes or ideas respectively. The extent to which the heritable component of behaviour is learned or innate is also considered, along with the currency of fitness. Pyke (1984) bases the theory on diet, patch choice, departure rules connected with patch exits and central place foraging. Optimal foraging is achieved when maximum return is obtained from the forage, handling times are efficient and the rate of encounter is effective, leading to fitness currency. From a conceptual perspective, it is relatively straightforward to apply this theory to entrepreneurial intentions and subsequent success.

From the view point of making selections with regard to foraging, whatever the format of the forage, choice theory or revealed preference and incentive compatibility drawn from game theory also have relevance. Game theory is a tool for analysing interactions among multiple entities and incorporates behaviour, feelings, decisions and an interdependency insight (Blumentritt *et al.*, 2012). The payoff of a dominant strategy within game theory exceeds all others. This takes into account the clearly stated problem or situation, those involved, the prevailing conditions, the payoffs from the various choices and predictions. The complexities have clear relevance when evaluating entrepreneurial intentions.

Where circumstances are radical, entrepreneurial activity is characterised by uncertainty and potentially boundary crossing, factors which provide the lifeblood of new ventures, (Burke and Myers, 2007) but may experience a shortfall in the supporting area of knowledge intensity. These points are similar to those raised by Breslin and Jones (2012) and

the difficulties encountered when attempting to achieve a balance between creativity and routinization as being a major difficulty. Frustration with current roles, difficulties in adopting to systems, a reluctance to recognise authority and a perceived lack of progression (Gomezelj and Kušce, 2013) are suggested as potential catalysts for choosing entrepreneurship later in life. Whilst these views may have a negative perception, work place experiences also support the ability to recognise an opportunity as a result of longer personal insights into the origins of opportunity.

Overcoming difficulties when entrepreneurial activity may be involuntary is eased somewhat by the expansion of the service sector which characteristically possesses low initial capital requirements and low barriers to entry (Krasniqi, 2009). Further support originates from the presence of a prospector approach to strategy using the Miles and Snow model, which suggests a greater propensity to engage in opportunity seeking practices (O'Regan and Ghobadian, 2005). Personality influences that underpin prospecting include targeting, organizing and support (Kickul and Gundry, 2002) that enable, under exploited opportunities, to be identified in a unique way (Breslin and Jones, 2012). Imas *et al.*, (2012) focus on alternative thinking to create opportunities at the margins of society, using the concept of the barefoot entrepreneur where a better future is the aim. Much of the focus from this starting point is self-reliant, survival tactics where spirituality and defiance mechanisms are drawn upon.

Grey (2007) suggests the wisdom and experience of people approaching retirement is insufficiently utilised. Entrepreneurial activity provides an alternative to leisure and may become a practical necessity as inflation catches up during longer retirement periods. The routine of employment is no longer applicable and the income can be viewed as a shoring-up contribution. With increasing age, individuals have come to understand their own strengths and weaknesses (Baron *et al.*, 2013). An individual in this situation can cope with stressors associated with entrepreneurial set up issues that are eased as previous knowledge, skills and experience enable entrepreneurs to obtain business resources (Cruz *et al.*, 2012).

As a developing body of knowledge, the literature emphasises several contributing factors to entrepreneurial intentions which continue to be authenticated in newer studies.

3. Methodology

Details of the data sample are provided at the beginning of this section, followed by an overview of grounded theory, the methodology used to analyse the data.

The boundaries of the sampling framework, which complies with the technique of theoretical sampling are adhered to through delimiting to a manageable scale (Glaser, 1998). This study incorporates several strands in order to add to existing knowledge from which students or recent graduates were excluded, the sectors are listed in table 1 under the column headed 'Entrepreneurial Intention'. In terms of demographic profile the respondents were over 35 years of age.

Tab. 1: Sector and Sub-Category of Study Sample

| Respondent | Entrepreneurial Intention | Sub-Category |
|------------|---|------------------------|
| 1 | Clothing for the Elderly | Butter-flying/need to |
| 2 | Frontier Vacations / Events | Inheriting/expected to |
| 3 | Beef rearing | Inheriting/expected to |
| 4 | Storage and retrieval facilities | Swan-singing/want to |
| 5 | Entertainment /Catering | Inheriting/expected to |
| 6 | Technology Solutions/Software Development | Swan-singing/want to |
| 7 | Gardening services /app based | Butter-flying/need to |
| 8 | The European Student Abroad | Butter-flying/need to |
| 9 | Community Activity | Swan-singing/want to |

Source: Our elaboration

There are three emergent sub-categories. The first sub-category is choice and necessity, which is butter-flying/need to; second is those who were subject to enterprise inheritance, which is inheriting/expected to and finally, swan-singing/want to where an informed decision is made. Column three of table 1 lists the sub-categories of the respondents, making up the diverse theoretical sample of the study.

The respondents are all trading in the broad geographical area of North West England and North East Wales and this is acknowledged as a limitation of the study.

An overview of the procedures that are used in the generation of grounded theory form the remainder of this section of the paper.

Grounded theory is a general methodology with no theoretical perspective that can be used with any type of data and any theoretical concept. It is a concept indicator method that requires a search for latent patterns in the data being used (Glaser, 2013) which emerge when the analysis is pitched at an abstract, conceptual level. According to Griffiths (2013) the virtue of the method is the neutrality in terms of the approach to data to provide a bedrock and framework (Bryman and Bell, 2015) that generates the categories of the theory. Grounded theory is referred to by Denzin and Lincoln (2013) as a theory developed from successive conceptual analysis of empirical materials which is connected to the worlds of lived experience and can be used in everyday worlds.

Staying open to what can emerge during the grounded theory methodology presents various views, one being the suspension of knowledge and preconceptions (Glaser 2013). To illustrate the suspension of knowledge, the abstract concept of mental boxing is proposed. This requires the researcher to metaphorically close the lid on a body of knowledge for a period of time until the memo sorting and writing up stages are reached. Imas *et al.*, (2012) comment on respondents being knowledge-makers in their own right and the focus should be on the actual words, rather than on the super-imposition of the analyst's interpretation.

The seminal text for any grounded theory study is *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* written by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in 1967. Within this text there is clarity that a grounded theory should enable prediction and explanation of data; to be useful in theoretical advances; be usable in practical applications and give control of situations. This tall order provides a perspective on behaviour to guide research. Clear categories are verifiable in the present and understandable from any viewpoint. In achieving these criteria the theory fits, works and has relevance to the subject matter being researched.

Generating a grounded theory requires the construction of “conceptual categories or their properties from evidence; then the evidence from which the category emerged is used to illustrate the concept”. (Glaser and Strauss 1967, p. 23). The theory is made up of categories and properties within a “systematic relationship between these two elements”. (Glaser and Strauss 1967, p. 36). A property is an element of a category, which in turn is a stand-alone element of the theory illustrated in a conceptual manner, indicated by the data, and not the data itself.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) urge the grounded theorist to incorporate diversity and levels to synthesise connections within the data. This is achieved through theoretical sampling which requires the analyst to jointly collect, code and analyse the data and then decide what data to collect next and from what source in order to develop the emerging theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). This is the process of constant comparison to enable integration, consistency, plausibility and retaining a closeness to the data during the coding process.

To complete the constant comparison cycle (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) requires four stages which are undertaken after each sample of data is collected and coded on a line by line basis. These processes commence with the comparison of incidents applicable to each category through establishing similarities or differences with previous incidents. At this stage a memo to capture thoughts should be written. A memo taps “into initial freshness” (Glaser and Strauss 1967, p. 107) of reflection, reduce conflict and reach conclusions.

Following comparison, the integration of categories and their properties occurs and involves notice and realization of “some related theoretical sense” (Glaser and Strauss 1967, p. 109). Delimiting the theory prevent overwhelming issues by removing non-relevant properties to reduce the theory to a small number of higher level concepts and supports the generalization of theory into other areas. This practice underpins saturation, a stage where if a further incident is only adding bulk, it is not coded as it adds nothing further to the theory.

At the writing up stage, the analytic framework forms “a reasonably accurate statement of the matters studied” (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p. 113). Sorted memos are brought together under category headings with codes to reach theoretical completeness revolving around a core category, which has a preponderance of relationships with many other categories and properties (Glaser, 1998).

4. Findings

By engaging in the practice of theoretical sampling, as an integral process, when generating a grounded theory the empirical data patterned out into three sub-categories, each possessing their own distinct conceptual properties. In presenting the grounded theory of green-fielding, the linear sequence belies the concurrent sequence of data collection and coding. The theory is then drawn together under the core category, which conceptually depicts the central concern-resolving behaviour of would-be entrepreneurs.

To clearly demonstrate the grounding of the theory, in the data, in vivo data fragments or respondent quotes are used. Where this is the case, italics have been used to clarify the source.

A grossly over-looked segment of entrepreneurial research is the UK aristocracy who find themselves in a position of inheriting a business, often in either unexpected or earlier than anticipated circumstances. On the surface this may appear an easy option, however the data suggests otherwise with references to accumulated debt, antiquated premises, outdated and inadequate organizational processes, poor human resource management and, in some cases, the prospect of substantial death duties, evidenced by: *“I had lots of taxes to pay and I had to work, I had no other means of supporting myself”*. The level and scope of entrepreneurial intentions demonstrates acute innovation, born of necessity where a sense of destiny, continuity and responsibility is deeply ingrained. This scenario generated the property of entitling in many instances to fulfil the aspirations of others and to provide for future generations, the data states: *“I was 13 when my father died and MD at 30”*.

Within the somewhat rarefied surroundings of old-established business ventures there remains an aura of tradition and tightly interwoven bloodlines that is conceptualised within the theory as draw-bridging to severely limit any potential for diluting, contaminating or fragmenting; the core assets are clearly viewed as requiring protection through *“I had to lend the company my pension money”*. In this type of situation *“don’t be too arrogant to delve into every aspect”*.

A draw-bridge leads to a gateway and is capable of being raised or lowered to either accommodate or prevent entry, used as a means of defence (www.ancientfortresses.org). The metaphor of a draw-bridge was used by Ragsdell (2000) when employing rich pictures to illustrate dilemmas related to entry and exit.

In contrast, the behaviours within this sub-category that are clearly in evidence are a discerning awareness of the need to practice entrepreneurship through diversification when the draw-bridging techniques are attended to and there is a necessity to cross the defences and engage in a wider and more open context. Gerund examples from the data include *live stocking, corporate entertaining and shopping*. The intentions being two-fold; first to generate revenue that is profitable and second to exploit the doorstep unique selling points in a manageable manner which is conceptualised as regrouping in order to practise longer-term green-fielding. A final category is evident, as the absence of sound

planning being experienced leads to a decision, to practice the concept of reserving. This type of behaviour requires financial and legal acumen to ensure clarity for the next generation and originates from the data fragment: “I ploughed a lot back” and “I set-up share schemes” and “I’m never going to let this happen again”.

Inheriting as the sub-category is drawn together with references to: “it will be a different era” and “someone running a business who hasn’t planned for the future is leaving turmoil for others”. Culminating in the view that: “Complacency is a death warrant for the next generation”.

Within the second sub-category, *butterflying*, there is a saturation related to the search for the elusive elixir of wealth that has previously proved difficult to establish. Data fragments make reference to “having no choice”, the naming of the property. This is the view of the respondents and is a mental concept rather than physically factual, their view depicted as “I was unemployable”.

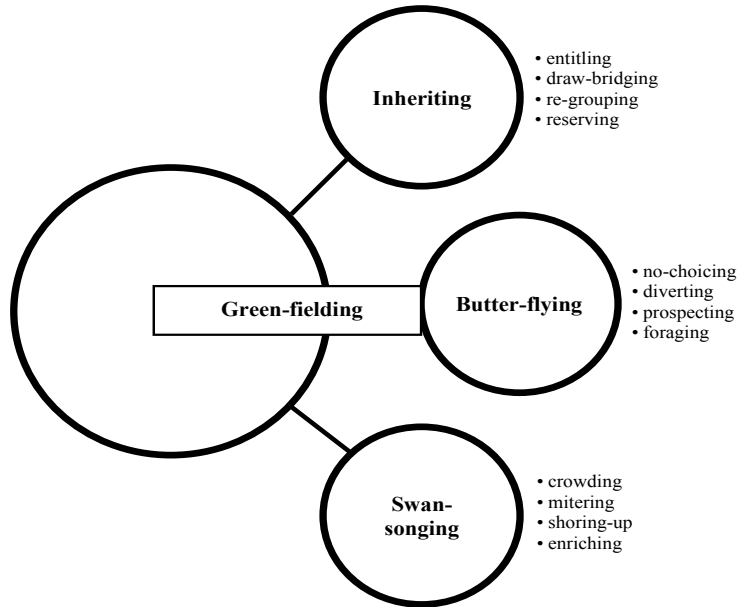
Respondents eligible for this sub-category relate to a fragmented series of economic activity, as several stints of routine work has proved unsatisfactory from a personal perspective and the data refers to quitting, frequently with little consideration for the consequences beyond the short-term abruptness. Attention is then diverted to other or new activities, which may be within a different sector and involve prospecting behaviour to ascertain possible future opportunities, which are relayed as being brief and suggest a quick-fix approach and evidence of limited tenacity, via “it never quite made the grade”.

This is required in order to provide sufficient revenue to sustain the basic foraging elements of living that require personal movement for survival and are viewed as being “racked with difficulties”. In addition, there is an increasing urgency as options reduce and “it was desperate” so that the view becomes “it has to work”. There is evidence of “weak foundations”.

There are occurrences of repeated behaviour by the respondents which is required due to the short-term nature of the efforts which disappoint and conceptually pattern out to depict the haphazard movements and intermittent hoverings of a butterfly. The activity requires “going round the corner” in search of yet more new pastures.

McCabe and Savery (2005) refer to the notion of *butterflying* that is similar to flitting from one flower to another, taking the nectar. This enables a personal build-up of expertise, competencies and knowledge. Butterflying may be diagonal, horizontal or vertical in direction.

Fig. 2: The grounded theory of green-fielding



Source: Our elaboration

Swan-singing is the third sub-category of the grounded theory where the data identifies several behaviours. A swan song is a metaphorical phrase for a final gesture, effort or performance of a person's career (www.oxforddictionaries.com). Unsurprisingly, the demographic profile of respondents in this area of the theory was older than in the other two. The sub-category is populated with two properties; one being respondents who had pursued a successful corporate career and may have experienced a redundancy situation, the other populated by an opportunity to engage in a contracting situation or a bootlegging situation came to fruition.

The data makes reference to "*there was a cage above my head, it was full of lifers in there*" to describe a situation at the higher structural levels where selection, frequently repeated, has already occurred. In the traditional triangular shaped hierarchy there is limited availability at the top level, leading to crowding. In flatter organizations "*the gentle slope away from the centre is an organizational leakage*" both incidents conceptualise a movement away from a crowded centre, illustrated by: "*I felt I had enough about me to set up on my own*" and the concern resolving behaviour is "*I wanted to be at the summit*".

Mitering evolved from the concept of abutting from a corner to provide "*a strong foundation*", the opposite of butterflying that emanated from "*don't spend money you haven't got*" and being asked "*fancy coming along, there might be some work?*" which is the evidence of bootlegging. *Mitering*, as a concept, indicates good fit with other relevant aspects and the ability to withstand pressures.

One property is labelled shoring-up and this concept refers to financial needs where pension provisions are deemed to be insufficient, which is

addressed through “*living frugally*” or family finances require topping up to pay for education “*that hasn’t finished yet*” or care for others and the outcome is a period of “*getting by*”. Shoring-up adds conceptual triangulation when occurring with mitering.

It is clear from the data that this entrepreneurial activity has “*passion*” and an opportunity to ensure that “*learning never stops*” to make active use of a “*mind that is always ticking over*”. Enriching occurs in response to the “*temptation to do something was burning*” and “*the drive is there*”.

Again in the category of swan-singing is the need to be “*uncluttered*” and have “*a clear mind*” because “*ideas have been sitting in compartments*” and “*when you can jump in and be away, that is fantastic!*” The entrepreneurial feel is one of release to a sparsely populated place where ideas flourish.

Green-fielding is defined as an area of business that is completely new (www.dictionary.cambridge.org) and depicts a conceptual freshness where contemplation, ambition, aspiration and conviction have space in which to converge into a unique offering that is the foundation of entrepreneurial intention.

5. Discussion

Green-fielding contributes an additional segment of knowledge to previous work carried out in the area of entrepreneurial intentions. The theory conceptualises behaviours that reflect the changing expectations of the current workforce. Working patterns develop a complex intertwining of change and continuity in response to callings at various stages in life. An extensive search of the literature failed to reveal previous works linked to the concept of green-fielding, the references refer to sites or plots of land that have not been used previously for development. The notion of green-fielding depicts the desired outcome of entrepreneurial intentions, the development of an enterprise that has not previously emerged as a business; thus providing the potential for innovation.

There are several strands warranting emphasis at this stage. First is the desire to create an entity based on original, individual ideas and expectations with a view to generating new and different personal circumstances for the future, in the manner of an i-career. One source of this approach stems from individual quitting as a means of release from previous economic dependency, a link with previous literature where the presence of decision-making is evident. The i-career (Green, 2012a) is characterised by the individual taking charge of economic activity within the workplace in the manner of a micro-business, in contrast to a traditional employee or worker. Decisive mannerisms or proactivity (Crant, 1996) as opposed to a passive acceptance are evident within the i-career.

Other aspects which have been an international challenge in the last decade are economic (Davidsson, 1995) and future wage expectation (Poschke, 2013). Where these factors are critical, green-fielding contributes evidence through the sub-category of butter-flying which is derived from the properties of no-choicing and foraging. During periods of economic crises and job losses, the quantity of job vacancies has a tendency to reduce

and therefore limits future options. Given a widespread context of no-choicing in terms of jobs, an alternative direction is an entrepreneurial venture in order to provide the means of basic necessities, illustrated by the property of foraging.

Reflecting on these initial points, it is clear that green-fielding answers concern-resolving behaviour in addition to possessing relevance that adds to the body of knowledge.

Structured organizations are a relatively recent concept, originating in the Industrial Revolution as machines enabled mass production to take over from individual craft production. Whilst there were valid economic reasons for this industrialisation of life, with improved education, health and life expectancy comes personal questioning about the purpose of work and the ability of a traditional model to meet post-industrial expectations. It is clear from the data that this is not occurring and green-fielding could be given a harsher name of back-lashing against large corporations, globalization and structured team-working as a panacea for economic activity.

The grounded theory depicts a personal search, in various forms, for an individual approach, whether that is through inheritance, which is expected to, or butter-flying, which is needed to. Inheriting has a tendency to arrive in an earlier than expected manner and brings with it scenarios that Gaffney-Rhys and Jones (2013) have revealed. Inheriting also urges earlier actions to limit asset damage and the need to exercise draw-bridging during the entrepreneurial set-up stages. Where circumstances are such that generational succession is anticipated, highlighted in the property of entitling, issues may be complex and individual expectations diverse. The legal issues linked to inheriting will differ according to geographical location; however a viable economic unit is crucial for the purposes of continuity. To achieve this, entrepreneurial intentions may be based on the expectation of a contribution to society (Davidsson, 1995) and a requirement to pass on (Breslin and Jones, 2012).

Whilst the aristocrat may benefit from a higher-level education, this does not necessarily provide confidence related to the risk of failure (Bayon *et al.*, 2015) where alternative ways of thinking (Imas *et al.*, 2012) are required to evaluate potential opportunities. Green-fielding depicts these activities as re-grouping within the prevailing context, which may give rise to conflict if the presence of role models (Prabhu *et al.*, 2012) is of limited value and may also require the practice of reserving, also emerging from the theory. There is evidence of re-grouping in the green-fielding theory where aristocratic estates are being managed with an increasingly commercial and diverse focus. This activity responds to the weight of inheriting but substantiates the core-category as inheriting is a result of birth, the no-choice element of the theory is different. Regrouping may require diverting from previous practice to embrace the prospects of entrepreneurial opportunities and shore-up potentially weak foundations as a means of enriching future generations.

As grounded theory is not restrained by the literature, the concept of optimal foraging (Pyke, 1984), game theory (Blumentritt *et al.*, 2012) and prospecting strategies (O'Regan and Ghobadian, 2005) all underpin

the entrepreneurial quest for, as yet, untapped opportunities. The blend of green-fielding properties with these theories is supportive of survival and could conceptually relate to the popular operational management technique of lean manufacturing. In addition, it has the potential to generate new knowledge through the synthesis which would be derived by the merging and application of the two approaches.

Proposed as the first reference to butterflying, in the literature (McCabe and Savery, 2005), to indicate intermittent behaviour that is difficult to predict and short-term in nature, green-fielding also identifies these traits. Whilst butterflying behaviour differs from inheriting, the aim has similarities. Butterflying has two main strands, the first resulting from an imposed situation which may be a lack of suitable job opportunities or conversely a redundancy situation from an existing job.

As previous studies focus on the student population, the second point has not received extensive attention within the literature. Where an individual is in a challenging economic situation, the concept of foraging (Pyke, 1984) has relevance as there is a need to achieve a pay-off (Blumentritt *et al.*, 2012) for all choices. The rules of departure from a previous situation encourage the green-fielding concepts of prospecting and diverting from previous situations. Whilst the entrepreneurial intention literature includes economic issues (Davidsson, 1995; Poschke, 2013) and expectations of increased earning capacity, butterflying suggests an element of short-termism adapted by the ageing global population that is, in itself, presenting new, challenging situations to governments in terms of pension provision and the potential for social care provision. Legislation to remove a compulsory retirement age and perceived pension shortfalls has introduced social and economic rationales to continue workplace activity. Behaviours that are supportive of entrepreneurial activity, whilst potential changes of direction and future prospects are established, should prove beneficial. During this search phase the psychological traits of proactivity and self-efficacy will be tapped into.

Focusing purely on this area of entrepreneurial intentions could assist in reducing the number of start-up failures and financial hardship as a result of entrepreneurial ventures. In turn, this has the potential to provide a greater focus for government funding initiatives to be used more successfully and effectively. Furthermore, this could lead to additional opportunities for individuals who also want to, with a range of experiences and self-knowledge (Grey, 2007; Baron *et al.*, 2013), venture into new pastures when the prospect of immediate retirement is not welcoming.

Drawing on the sub-category of swan-singing, there are several issues of contemporary relevance. The theory identifies the opposite of no-choicing; in swan-singing there is a realisation of limited future promotion prospects and an ultra-competitive environment for any openings that may arise. With a strong skill base and current expertise, the swan-singer is able to practice transferability and take the skill base into a green-field situation which, when in place, also provides a financial shoring-up mechanism to enable pension pots to continue growing undisturbed for a longer period of time with the potential for greater returns. Whilst outside the scope of this study, there is also research to indicate that remaining economically active for longer has health benefits due to socialisation and retention of a structure to the day.

Governments and practitioners are recommended to ensure education and employment legislation that are both able to match the projectification of working patterns in line with i-career characteristics. This approach would support an alignment with the global expansion of the incidences of entrepreneurial activity being a major contributor to economic growth.

The concept of passing on entrepreneurial DNA is revealed as being far wider than inheriting. It stems from the far more fundamental desire to leave a legacy - and procreation within the field of business provides a tangible form of asset to bequeath. The over-riding concerns are to locate a metaphorical green-field space from which an entrepreneur is able to forage in an optimal manner to ensure the enterprise is fit to trade. The challenge for educators, governments and practitioners is to provide this type of environment, a legacy for the current cohort of incubating entrepreneurs where inventions, however born, whether necessity or otherwise, have an environment in which they are able to flourish and contribute to economic prosperity.

6. Conclusion and areas for further research

Green-fielding theory has sufficient diversity that could be readily broken down further into three theories to provide additional depth and progression towards generalisation, as the data would originate from different and more focused or specific theoretical sampling. This research would probably generate new properties and categories and therefore provide additional insight. As indicated previously, drawing on lean techniques in conjunction with green-fielding is a novel approach to supporting entrepreneurial intention.

The conclusions drawn from the theory are that, whatever the starting point of the would-be entrepreneur, difficulties and challenges of varying degrees are usually encountered. As the embryonic entrepreneur is largely depicted in the literature as being proactive, confident and willing to take a risk, the realities of the entrepreneurial practice are somewhat different. Entrepreneurial ventures are clearly not a panacea of autonomy, increased income and freedom. Greater attention to the properties of green-fielding to provide support mechanisms is recommended. The support is evident in all three sub-categories, inheriting draws on re-grouping and reserving to evaluate business trends and maintain a foundation. Butter-flying uses the properties of prospecting, to check out potential and foraging for potential returns. Finally swan-singing builds on previous experience and expertise through mitring and shoring-up, which is also an approach to robust business foundations.

The focus of this paper is the entrepreneurial intentions and the early venture concerns and it is evident from the data provided in the introduction that this is a growth area. A logical area for further research would be to undertake further studies with a new sample drawn from individuals with entrepreneurial experience to establish the ratio of success to failure. The results would be of value to governments and

educators to re-evaluate the type of training provided to butterflying individuals who are in a no-choice situation.

Jan Green
Ben Binsardi
Entrepreneurial
intentions: a grounded
theory of green-fielding

Such is the contrast between butterflying and swan-singing that research to establish where and if cross-over between the two sub-categories occurs would generate further new knowledge and insight to support further entrepreneurial expansion and success.

Expanding the analysed sample and making a comparison between individuals from different countries belonging to the sub-categories of inheriting, butterflying and swan singing to establish geographical similarities and differences that originate from educational, economic and social/cultural aspects may also generate further insight and support the transferability of grounded theory as a useful methodology within this area.

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