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Social Network Dynamics of Arts Entrepreneurship

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Abstract

The purpose of the research is to explore the content of entrepreneurship with related to the social dynamics of the arts and cultural sector. Contrasting to the aggregated approach in macroeconomics, a basic tenant in this line of research concerns how entrepreneurial processes developed in the social network context of cultural industry systems rather than variables that drove the dynamics of industries. This study employed a combination of data analysis, expert interviews and empirical case studies to explore the intricate dynamics of arts and cultural entrepreneurship within the broader social context of the cultural industry system. The use of social networks can be a path to self-actualization for entrepreneurs, but institutional constraints exist. The research concludes with four key points on social networks and their impact on entrepreneurial ventures. While focused on small businesses, this study sheds light on the potentially crucial role of social networks for early-stage growth.

Keywords: arts and cultural entrepreneurship, effectuation, boundary spanning, bricolage, social networks

The study of arts and cultural entrepreneurship is still in its nascent stages, despite its growing importance in today's society. The vibrant and ever-evolving nature of arts and culture has given rise to a diverse range of entrepreneurial endeavors. Entrepreneurship models in conventional research offer valuable insights, but their applicability to the arts and culture sector, often marked by resource constraints and intricate institutional structures (e.g., nonprofit-profit, public-private), requires deeper examination.

Aligned with the concept of entrepreneurship as a social construct proposed by Kerr & Coviello (2020), this study probes into the interplay between entrepreneurs and their embedded social networks through the lens of effectuation. Entrepreneurs are not loners. They often identify themselves in some specialized field, social class, ideological communities, and as members of special interest groups or participants in specific social networks. Entrepreneurial actions not only depend on the individual intentions and efforts of entrepreneurs, but may also be a product of network interactions in the broader social milieu. A primary focus of the study is on the relationship properties of entrepreneurs, the social support that entrepreneurs rely on or build in the process of generating their entrepreneurial plans, and how that specific support and resources are secured through the process of bricolage.

Literature Review

Entrepreneurship is a multifaceted concept, and its exploration must begin with the entrepreneur, who is the main subject of entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs can be individuals, organizations, groups, or communities. The causes and consequences of entrepreneurship are not always limited to the pursuit of excess profits for individuals or a small number of people. Given the diversity of entrepreneurship, only relevant fields to arts and culture such as agenda-based and societal oriented are reviewed in this section. For example, institutional entrepreneurship, which aims to reform institutions, aims to change the rules of the game and unreasonable institutional arrangements (e.g. Hardy & Maguire, 2008). Institutional entrepreneurs are usually members of a particular industry, but they can also be groups rather than individuals. They are not necessarily motivated by the goal of creating a new business. To highlight the potential applicability of entrepreneurship in various fields and its different characteristics from traditional leadership and management, scholars have also explored entrepreneurship in areas other than business, such as elections and democratic politics in recent years. Political entrepreneurship aims to gain public support or expand and maintain political parties/political interests (e.g. Sheingate, 2003). Moreover, the notion of social entrepreneurship, which has aroused

considerable enthusiasm in both the practical and academic fields, is based on individuals or organizations as entrepreneurs. It aims to solve specific social problems through carefully designed operating models. Social entrepreneurship is different from entrepreneurship in business in that the goals or achievements pursued by social entrepreneurship are likely to have already started from the motivation to entrepreneurship to the process. (Austin, Stevenson, & Wei-Skillern, 2006).

Entrepreneurship and social networks

The importance of networking for entrepreneurs is beyond question. From a conceptual perspective, Aldrich and Zimmer (1986) argued that the two key elements of the function of new business formation are opportunity structures and motivated entrepreneurs with access to resources. From the demand side, the elements of opportunity structures include the resources in the environment that can be used by new businesses to create their own niches. From the supply side, motivated entrepreneurs need to establish ways to obtain capital and other resources in order to achieve their perceived advantages.

Hoang and Antoncic (2003) reviewed the three elements that they believe constitute a network, including the content of network relationships (what is exchanged between actors), governance (the governance mechanisms of relationships), and structure (the network structure constructed by the relationships between actors). They argue that research on the impact of network structure on new ventures has produced some important findings, but that process-oriented research is still lacking and has not been sufficiently supported by evidence. They suggested that the impact of strong and weak ties in networks on different aspects and different degrees of entrepreneurial behavior and decision-making should be considered when network is treated as an influence (a determining independent variable). And research on the entrepreneurial process should understand that cross-sectional studies have inherent limitations, and longitudinal (long-term) studies still have advantages for understanding dynamic processes when network is treated as and outcome (a dependent variable).

However social networks are not always stable and often requires cultivation and stewardship. Minniti and Bygrave (2001) proposed a dynamic theory-based conceptual framework for entrepreneurship. They aimed to use the explanation of individuals' choice of whether or not to start a business to inform macroeconomic applications. This study is not based on empirical evidence, but rather on model building common in economic research. It uses functions/equations to explain the parameters related to the social dynamics of entrepreneurship that they set and the

relationships between them. In the study, the decision to start an entrepreneurial project is determined by the entrepreneur's relative return (denoted by rj). Only when rj > 0 will the entrepreneur start an entrepreneurial project; otherwise, they may choose other economic activities. The determination of rj is influenced by several socio-economic parameters related to the entrepreneur, including the entrepreneur's subjective initial endowment, the institutional and economic conditions (specifically referring to the objective environment in which the entrepreneur and the entrepreneur belong), and the density and intensity of entrepreneurship in the aforementioned environment. When placed the above into the context of a specific community (network community), they argued that the increase in the number or proportion of people choosing to start a business in a specific community (meaning that many people's relative returns are greater than zero) will generate network externalities (or external effects), and at the same time will also increase the probability of new entrants to the community choosing to start a business.

Mezias and Kuperman (2001) also adopted a similar perspective to understand American film industry, observing the entrepreneurial process of the American film industry from its inception to its prosperity between 1895 and 1929. This study attempts to explore the relationship between the three functions of production, distribution, and exhibition in the simple value chain of the early film industry, and to delve into the relationships developed between practitioners and organizations within the industry. By examining the history of industry growth and competitive expansion, the study observes how organizations and individuals in the industry respond to environmental changes, new technologies, consumption patterns, tastes, and foreign competition. Through competition and cooperation, they have jointly accumulated the huge American film industry. To encompass the entrepreneurial process of the film industry as an industry, the entrepreneurial state of many organizations and individuals in the industry, and the social relations that maintain close interaction between industries, the researchers chose the term "community dynamics." In addition to highlighting the possibility of understanding entrepreneurship from a community perspective through the case of the film industry, this study also advocates the use of process models in entrepreneurship research. It argues that if entrepreneurship research remains focused on individuals and ignores the social context, it will face the potential dilemma of being greatly limited from reality.

Arts Entrepreneurship and social networks

From the perspective of institutional theory, it is not difficult to see that the cultural production system itself is a huge social network market. Even limited by the

"institutional theory" perspective, the "network" has never disappeared from the articles of scholars. Paul Hirsch (2000) reviewed his 1972 article on the cultural industry published in the American Sociological Journal more than 20 years later, and believed that the cultural industry is a "network" constructed by creators (art, music, actors, writers), intermediaries (agents), producers (publishers, recording studios), distributors (wholesalers, theaters), distribution media, etc. (Hirsch, 2000; p.356). In terms of the cultural and creative industries, Potts, J., Cunningham, S., Hartley, J., & Ormerod, P. (2008) also argue that the system projected by cultural and artistic production is co-constructed by numerous intermediaries and agents who adopt new ideas and concepts in the social networks of cultural production and consumption. The cultural and creative industries not only include the various economic activities that create and maintain this social network; value is also maintained by the tendencies of this social network, and repeatedly confirmed and accumulated through production and consumption. Sedita's (2008) observation of the live music industry provided a further insight. She found that in addition to the commercial music organizations seen on the surface, there are actually more project-based organizations in the industry. The biggest reason for the existence of these invisible organizations is the network characteristics of the live music industry. In order to successfully allow the production of music, concerts, and even music festivals to cross the boundaries of organizations and people, these invisible organizations usually play the role of matchmakers or even brokers in the network. In an early case of performing arts, Kushner and King(1994) used the example of a single non-profit performing arts organization, the Bethlehem Bach Choir, which is located in Pennsylvania and claims to be the oldest organization in the United States dedicated to performing the works of Bach. Unlike most analyses that focus on the production of symbols, the authors examined the choir's many support networks from the perspective of organizational operation. They argued that performing arts is a club good maintained by individuals, organizations, and networks with specific values within a particular social class. In a recent case study on digital media, Neff(2005) further argues that the entire creative industry is not only a network, but that the various physical and virtual social activities that exist in the industry are ultimately aimed at maintaining and building the dynamics of this social network.

Entrepreneurial process models

The study weaves three key frameworks (in appendix) informing research on entrepreneurial processes: causal, effectuation, and bricolage models together in a synthesized framework (exhibit-1). It highlights the limitations of causal models and emphasizes the strengths of effectuation and bricolage models in incorporating social

networks. The concept of "boundary spanning" is implied in the bricolage and effectuation processes, underscoring the importance of collaboration across systems, organizations, and communities for achieving novelty in project outcomes.

-Exhibit 1 insert here –

Research

A focus of the research is on the interplay between entrepreneurs and their embedded social networks, analyzed through the lens of effectuation – a decision-making model emphasizing existing means. During the two years of research, this study employs a combination of data analysis, expert interviews and empirical case studies to explore the intricate dynamics of arts and cultural entrepreneurship within the broader social context of the cultural industry system. in addition to the review of scholarly literature on entrepreneurship framework, in the first stage the researchers also gather information about a group of entrepreneurs who are included in the second stage of current research. This information is collected online from various sources, including the entrepreneurs themselves, media reports, and interviews. By analyzing this data, the researchers aim to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences and challenges faced by entrepreneurs during this crucial stage of business development. Furthermore, it solicits a panel of experts include two scholars, two incubator managers, four grant reviewers and two consultants of government program on cultural entrepreneurship and to fortify the rigor of the proposed concept and protocol. The study then proceeds to examine twelve case studies of entrepreneurship in the realm of fine arts, craft, and creative arts.

Panelists at the initial discussions identified several key areas for further exploration:

- 1. Clarifying the Entrepreneurial Nature of Ventures: This involved defining what constitutes an entrepreneurial venture within the broader context of entrepreneurship.
- 2. Entrepreneurship and Boundaries: Panelists sought to clarify how entrepreneurship is shaped by, and in turn shapes, the boundaries of organizations.
- 3. Ecosystem vs. Institutional Environment: A key question emerged regarding the possible distinction between an "ecosystem" and an "institutional environment" within the entrepreneurial landscape.
- 4. Bricolage as Process or Action: Debate arose concerning whether bricolage the act of improvising with available resources is an overarching entrepreneurial process or a specific action within that process.

- 5. The Social Context of Bricolage and Effectuation: This explored how social factors influence both bricolage and effectuation, a decision-making model focused on using existing means.
- 6. Bricolage and Effectuation in a Social Context: Panelists were particularly interested in how these concepts work together when considering the social environment surrounding entrepreneurs.
- 7. The Interplay of Bricolage and Effectuation: A final area of interest was how these two concepts, bricolage and effectuation, interact and influence the overall dynamics of entrepreneurship.

-Table 1 insert here-

At the second stage, this study interviewed 12 entrepreneurs in the arts and cultural fields (as shown in Table 1). According to the categories of fine arts, craft, and community/creative, four cases were selected for each category. This study explores the entrepreneurial process of entrepreneurs in a specific social context, namely, how entrepreneurship develops within the cultural industry system. In addition to the characteristics and background of the entrepreneurs themselves, the study also examines how external factors, especially social networks within the industry, affect the entrepreneurial process. Particularly how entrepreneurs piece together resources, adjust their entrepreneurial blueprint, and respond and adjust their personal cognition and actions in this dynamic process to achieve realization. Small and young businesses are a good example of this dynamic process. This is because the entrepreneur's personal vision has a greater influence on the company's development, and the organization is not yet big enough to have its own social capital. In other words, the social capital of the company is essentially the same as the entrepreneur's personal social capital.

For each case in the study, a narrative is developed to profile the entrepreneur. Ex. Case A (visual art space)

A lady in her early 30s, unmarried

Received advanced degree in interdisciplinary arts

Family and friend supported

A managerial entrepreneur

Highly motivated in resource acquisition (seeking grants and funds to pay her own salary too)

Situated herself between founding artists and new generation of participating artists Fields and activities of professional engagement are largely related to performance art and

Stakeholders in networks

In addition to profiling the entrepreneurs, the case study also identifies key stakeholders in their networks who played significant roles in their entrepreneurial journeys. Nascent entrepreneurs, those just starting out, rely on a variety of stakeholders for support and resources. Here are some typical ones:

- Customers: understanding their needs and preferences.
- Investors: individuals or firms who provide financial backing.
- Mentors and advisors: Experienced individuals who offer guidance, support, and connections.
- Business incubators and accelerators: the organizations that provide resources, mentorship, and networking opportunities.
- Government agencies: grants, loans, tax breaks or incentives.
- Suppliers and vendors: Suppliers of materials, equipment, or services are essential for smooth operations.
- Partners and collaborators: Strategic partnerships can help access new markets, share resources, or develop complementary products or services.
- Friends and family: Friends and family offer emotional support, practical help, and even initial and rescue funding.

There are some other stakeholders specifically relevant for nascent entrepreneurs who started in college: for instance, the entrepreneurship centers provide workshops, mentorship, access to funding opportunities, and networking events for student entrepreneurs. Business plan competitions provide valuable feedback on a business idea and the opportunity to gain seed funding. Moreover, these are workspaces with tools and equipment that students can access to prototype and develop their products or services. Professors with expertise or social networks in relevant fields can provide valuable guidance and mentorship. Furthermore, alumnus in university network who have expertise and experience are also a great source of advice and connections. Likewise fellow students, especially those with complementary skills, student clubs that focus on entrepreneurship or special interests are valuable partners and collaborators.

These stakeholders can be further categorized into two groups based on their contributions to the project's needs: (1) Expertise Reliance: These stakeholders provide specialized knowledge and expertise that is crucial for developing the project's core content. (2) Resource Reliance: These stakeholders typically offer

tangible or intangible assets that are indispensable for effective project management. Cultural creation has always been a collaborative endeavor, with aspiring entrepreneurs often depending on a range of sources for support during the nascent stages of their ventures. However, these providers of tangible and intangible resources can also exert varying degrees of influence on the entrepreneurs themselves, as well as on the entrepreneurial process and the resulting creative output. The specific mix of stakeholders will vary depending on the nature of the business, the industry it operates in, and the entrepreneur's goals. However, building strong relationships with all these stakeholders is essential for the success of a nascent entrepreneur.

Collaborative and project-based nature

Traditional discussions of arts and cultural entrepreneurship have often overlooked the collaborative and project-based nature of arts and cultural entrepreneurship. An entrepreneurial organization usually engages multiple projects simultaneously. Organizations or individuals who have long collaborated will also have different degrees of control over specific project resources, and play different roles in each other's projects in a timely manner. Despite the similarities in project nature, collaborating individuals and organizations may still adopt different approaches or assign different tasks within each project due to collaborative arrangements and leadership dynamics. Novelty often drives the introduction of new collaborating members and external resources into the system on a case-by-case basis. To pursue high differentiation in output, not only does the task combination need to change, but the working system itself may operate differently. Even if there are several projects of the same type within a business entity, they will still be managed as distinct cases. As project dynamics hold the key to business performance, the ability to effectively develop and execute projects emerges as the core driving force of the business.

Social Dynamics in Entrepreneurial Processes

The study launched its investigation into three key conceptual frameworks that have informed entrepreneurship research: causal, effectuation, and bricolage models. The causal model sees entrepreneurship as a process of identifying an opportunity, developing a plan to exploit that opportunity, and then implementing that plan. This model does not explicitly consider the role of social networks, but it is implicitly assumed that entrepreneurs will need to interact with others to gather information, obtain resources, and build relationships. The effectuation model sees entrepreneurship as a process of building on what is already available. Entrepreneurs starts with their own resources and capabilities, and then they use these resources to create new opportunities (Sarasvathy and Dew, 2005). This model emphasizes the importance of entrepreneurs' creativity and flexibility, as well as their ability to build

relationships with others. On the other hand, the bricolage model sees entrepreneurship as a process of improvising and making do with what is available (Baker and Nelson, 2005). Entrepreneurs may not have all the resources they need to starts a business, so they must be resourceful and creative in finding ways to overcome these challenges. This model emphasizes the importance of entrepreneurs' ability to think outside the box and find innovative solutions to problems. The effectuation and bricolage models are based on the foundation of causality and both emphasize the autonomy of entrepreneurs. However, both of them clearly incorporate the thinking of social networks. Whether it is the loop of the former or the institutional environmental factors considered by the latter, they are all related to the social context.

Boundary Spanning

In management research, boundary spanning is often translated as "individual's boundary crossing" or "organizational boundary crossing." It is either people in organizations or organizations become the subject and to explore the learning and strategic behavior of organizations and people in organizations. That also categorizes the difference between intrapreneurship and entrepreneurship. "The actor depiction" is commonly used to characterize organizations or individuals who transcend community and group boundaries to facilitate knowledge exchange, translation, and cross-group value sharing. Even so, it is indeed necessary to clarify what is meant by boundaries. Existing research typically refers to different industries, systems, organizations, even knowledge domains, and social groups with different cultures. For example, under the assumption that institutional constraints are effective, entrepreneurs will usually consider their own circumstances and seek recognition within the institutional system. However, entrepreneurs who are not tolerated by the logic of one system may cross the boundaries to seek support in another institutional system. If the organization is taken as the boundary, inter-organizational cooperation is more common. In this case the expansion of the boundary may involve different organizational cultures (for example, different art forms). There are even divisions within the organization or across departments. In more complex projects, it may be necessary to collaborate across systems, organizations, knowledge systems, and different communities and cultural levels at the same time. In the case of declaring project ownership, entrepreneurs not only need to play the role of coordinators, but also need to serve as intermediaries between boundaries. In the context of projectbased cultural production, under the premise of constantly pursuing newness, it often requires a variety of inputs to achieve novelty. The so-called diversity generally requires high-heterogeneity cross-domain collaboration and integration in essence and

combination. Therefore, whether it is the boundary spanning of entrepreneurs or the boundary spanning of starts-up organizations, it may be the daily routine for arts and cultural businesses, and even the necessary competitive capability. Whether it is internal bricolage (plan-based and structural) or external bricolage (purposeful and improvising), boundary spanning is the main driving force for mobilizing the network.

The cases studied in this research found that arts and cultural entrepreneurship can be a path to self-actualization. However, it is also subject to a significant degree of institutional constraints. The launch of an entrepreneurial project is highly dependent on the social capital involved in the project initiator and the project itself. From the case study the paper conclude a tentative statement in the followings:

- (1) The expansion of an entrepreneur's network depends on the founder's needs to implement their ideas (and vice versa).
- (2) The effectual path of a project often depends on the speed and extent to which the entrepreneur can capitalize on their social network.
- (3) In addition to seeking resources, the expansion of a network can also be a risk-averse behavior for entrepreneurs.
- (4) Bricolage may occur in the entrepreneurial process, and it may also be the essence of entrepreneurial action by itself.

The study identified two distinct path-dependent themes from the cases studied that characterize bricolage in social dynamics. In the exhibit. "Effectuation through bricolage in social context" refers to the process of utilizing existing resources and relationships to achieve social goals in an improvisational and opportunistic manner. This approach emphasizes adapting to and building upon available means rather than pursuing predetermined objectives. It is particularly well-suited for addressing complex social issues that require innovation and flexibility. In contrast, "self-effectuation through bricolage in individual context" centers on personal development and achieving individual goals by employing bricolage techniques. It emphasizes individual agency and resourcefulness in navigating challenges and creating opportunities. This approach empowers individuals to shape their own growth and pursue personal fulfillment.

Conclusion

The study at this stage is still in exploratory nature. The cases examined are small and micro enterprises that are a step beyond self employment but far away from

enterprising. For these ventures, the entrepreneur's social circle plays a critical role – essentially functioning as a substitute for traditional organizational capital (resources like finances or skilled staff) given the research focus on "effectuation," a decision-making approach emphasizing existing means. The dynamics of social networks are entrepreneur dependent and largely equates with organizational capital given the research question. The findings might not apply to all businesses. However, it sheds light on the potentially crucial role of social networks for small business owners, particularly in the crucial early stages of growth.

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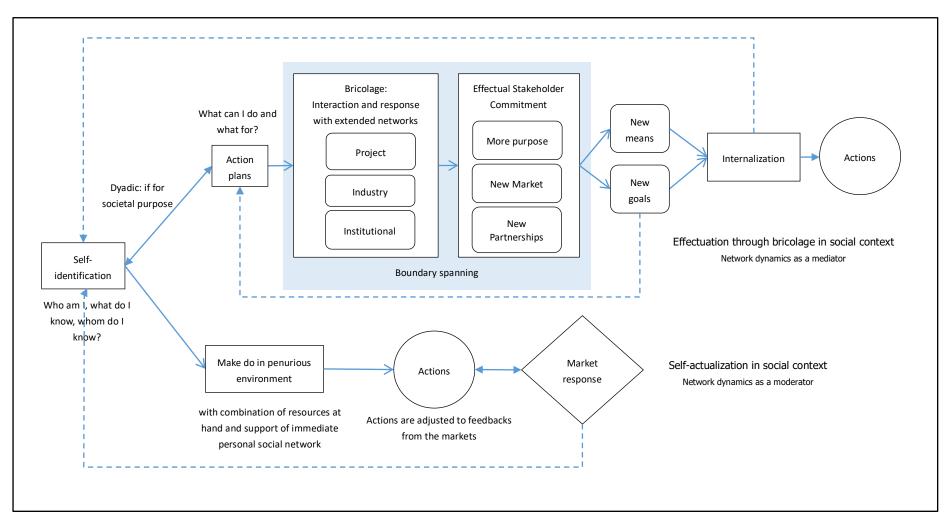


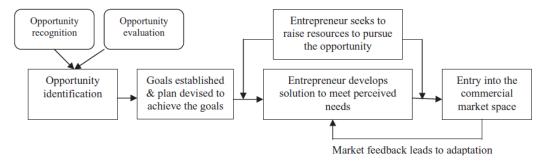
Exhibit 1-A Synthesized Model of Social Network Dynamics in Arts Entrepreneurship

Table 1 Cases studied

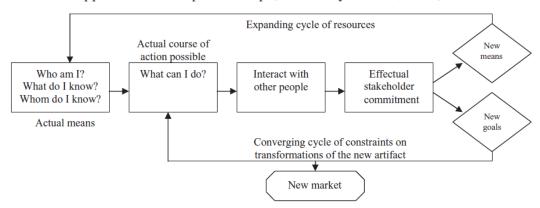
Grouping	Business	Category	Informants
Fine arts	SPP Art Space	Visual art	Operation director
Fine arts	letsbetogetherartfestival	Arts festival	Founding partner
Fine arts	Fengshanartfestival	Arts festival	Founder
Fine Arts	Lukang Arts Festival	Arts festival	Founder
Craft	Whale Dawn Wood Studio	Woodcarving	Founder
Craft	Taiwan Craft School	Craft education	Founder
Craft	GS Wood Studio	Woodcarving	Founder
Craft	Gutetsu Pottery Studio	Ceramic art	Founder
Creative	World Softest Production	Film	Founder
Creative	Outsider in Chiayi	Placemaking	Founder
Creative	Voice Lab	Placemaking	Founder
Creative	FengTian Idea Lab	Placemaking	Founder

Appendix: three process models

Causation Approach to Entrepreneurship (Adapted From Classic Approach to Entrepreneurship in Shah & Tripsas, 2007)



Effectual Approach to Entrepreneurship (Sarasvathy & Dew, 2005)



Bricolage Approach to Entrepreneurship (Baker & Nelson, 2005)

