

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD at the University of Warwick

Permanent WRAP URL:

<http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/83168>

Copyright and reuse:

This thesis is made available online and is protected by original copyright.

Please scroll down to view the document itself.

Please refer to the repository record for this item for information to help you to cite it.

Our policy information is available from the repository home page.

For more information, please contact the WRAP Team at: wrap@warwick.ac.uk

**NAVIGATING MULTIPLE IDENTITIES:
IDENTITY WORK OF CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS
IN THE FOUNDING STAGE**

by

VISHALAKSHI ROY

A thesis submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Entrepreneurship

Warwick Business School
The University of Warwick

June 2016

CONTENTS

Contents	i
List of Tables	v
List of Figures	vi
Acknowledgements	vii
Declaration	viii
Abstract	ix
Introduction	1
Theoretical background.....	2
Identity and entrepreneurship	2
Identity work	4
Research gap and contributions	6
Methods.....	9
Research setting	9
Research approach	11
Ethical considerations	14
Structure of the thesis.....	15
Article 1: The Process of Balancing Multiple Identities - An Analysis of Entrepreneurs' Identity Work in the Creative Industries	17
Abstract	17
Introduction	17
Theoretical background.....	20
Entrepreneurship and identity	20
The process of identity work	24
Affect as a trigger for identity work	28
Methods.....	32
Research design	32
Research setting	33
Case selection	35
Data collection	36
Analytical strategy	37
Results.....	41
Process model of identity work for identity equilibrium	41
Illustration of identity routes	42

Discussion.....	54
Micro-processes of identity work	54
Role of affect in identity work	56
The need for coherence through identity equilibrium	57
Limitations and areas of further research	58
Conclusion.....	59
Article 2: Negotiating Dirty Work – The Use of Narrative Identity Work by Creative Entrepreneurs.....	60
Abstract	60
Introduction	60
Theoretical background.....	64
The concept of dirty work and its applicability to the creative industries	64
Narrative identity of entrepreneurs	67
Identity work in entrepreneurship – from conflict to coherence	68
Methods.....	71
Research setting	71
Data collection	72
Analytical approach	74
Results.....	78
Dirty work related identity conflicts in the founding stage	78
Narrative identity paths	81
Discussion.....	96
Limitations and further areas of research	100
Conclusion.....	101
Article 3: From Critical Incidents to Identity – An Examination of Identity Work of Nascent Creative Entrepreneurs Through Sensemaking.....	102
Abstract	102
Introduction	102
Theoretical background.....	105
Identity work – internal and external triggers	105
Identity work and sensemaking	107
Critical incidents	110
Methods.....	113
Research approach	113
Research setting	115
Case selection	116
Data collection	117
Data analysis	119

Results.....	121
Assigning criticality to an incident	121
Impact of critical incidents on identity work	123
Discussion.....	131
Implication and areas of further research	133
Conclusion.....	134
Appendix	135
Case summaries	135
Critical incidents and categories by case	138
General Discussion	142
Theoretical contributions.....	142
Identity work for coherence	142
Triggers for identity work	144
Empirical contributions.....	147
Practical contributions	150
Future research directions.....	151
Concluding thoughts	153
Bibliography.....	155

APPENDIX I: Case Study Participants & Case Summaries	169
Case study participants and involvement in each article	169
Adam	169
Beth.....	170
Clarke	170
Daniel	171
Jack	171
Francis	172
Gemma	172
Hilda	173
Isaac	173
Eleanor.....	174
Anna	174
Linda.....	175
Zoe	175
Helen	176
Kate.....	176
 APPENDIX II: Interview Protocols	 177
Participant Consent Form	177
Wave 1 interview guide	179
Wave 2 interview guide	181
Wave 2 flash cards	183
Wave 3 interview guide	184

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Summary of studies proposing theoretical frameworks for identity work.....	27
Table 2: Sample description for Article 1: name, background, sub-sector and age of venture....	36
Table 3: Identity routes established by case	42
Table 4: Sample description for article 2: name, background, sub-sector and age of venture....	72
Table 5: Altruistic narrative identity cases.....	83
Table 6: Commercially expedient identity cases.....	90
Table 7: Sample description for article 3: name, background, sub-sector and age of venture...	117
Table 8: Sample of critical incidents and resulting sensemaking outlined through narrative...	122
Table 9: Critical incidents, and resulting identity work.....	126
Table 10: Critical incident categories identified	130
Table 11: List of critical incidents and categories for each case	141

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Coding structure for theoretical dimensions	39
Figure 2: Process model for identity equilibrium in the founding stage	41
Figure 3: Sample coding structure for narrative identity paths.....	77
Figure 4: Properties of the two narrative identity paths identified	82

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my utmost gratitude to my supervisor Professor Deniz Ucbasaran for her unwavering support in developing this thesis. I am extremely thankful for her encouragement, scholarship, and guidance throughout my doctoral study.

My deepest gratitude also goes out to every individual that let me be a part of their exciting entrepreneurial journey. This study would not be possible without these special people that took a deep interest in my work. No matter how busy they were, they always made time to speak to me and share their experience, insights, joys and sorrows of starting a new venture.

And finally to my family and friends - Thank you!

DECLARATION

This thesis is submitted to the University of Warwick in support of my application for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It has been composed by myself and has not been submitted in any previous application for any degree. All the work presented (including data generated and data analysis) was carried out by myself.

A former version of Article 2: “Negotiating Dirty Work – The Use of Narrative Identity Work by Creative Entrepreneurs” was presented at the Institute of Small Business and Entrepreneurship (ISBE) Conference in 2015, where it was nominated for best paper in the Creative Industries Entrepreneurship track.

ABSTRACT

The contemporary view of identity in entrepreneurship accepts its dynamic nature and its multi-dimensional structure. Some scholars have illustrated how identity tensions may stimulate identity work in different settings, but they do not offer a satisfactory understanding of how multiple identities of an entrepreneur interact to promote identity work. One setting where identity work is prolific is in the initial stages of the venture when individuals have recently transitioned into entrepreneurship. However, detailed accounts of the identity struggles of the entrepreneur in this stage has not found favour in the entrepreneurship literature. More specifically, studies investigating identity conflict and coherence of entrepreneurs do not provide a satisfactory understanding of identity work derived from the complexity of the existence of multiple identities. The question therefore arises - *How do entrepreneurs engage in identity work in response to identity demands caused by multiple identities?*

To address this research gap I study entrepreneurs that have recently started a venture in the creative industries. The founding stage is chosen to facilitate the observation of intense identity work, while the creative industries as an extreme setting facilitates our observation of multiple sub-identities of the entrepreneur. Though a two-year qualitative longitudinal study of 15 creative entrepreneurs, I provide new insight into identity work of entrepreneurs in light of multiple identities. Drawing on my analysis of the data, I present three articles. In the first, I examine the process of identity work through a staged model, and propose identity routes and tactics of entrepreneurs as they journey through identity disruption and equilibrium. Here, I recognise the impact of the entrepreneurs' affects in this process. In the second article, I analyse how conflicts between specific identities of the entrepreneur are normalised by investigating dirty work in the context of entrepreneurship. And finally in article three I offer a more rounded discussion to types of trigger for identity work by examining the impact of self-defined critical incidents on identity work of entrepreneurs. Here I discuss the role of sensemaking in internalising the impacts from these critical incidents and find that a single incident can have multiple impacts. The examination of identity work in light of multiple identities is concluded with a discussion of the contributions of the thesis towards the current gaps in identity work literature as identified by scholars.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Identity, Identity Work, Identity conflict, Dirty Work, Critical Incidents, Creative Industries, Creative Entrepreneurs

INTRODUCTION

The discipline of entrepreneurship has grown out of economics, and over the years the study of entrepreneurship has led to many ontological and epistemological debates (Davidsson 2008:58). For instance, to the present day, the definition of the domain of entrepreneurship continues to be debated by academics and practitioners alike. I believe that at the heart of the domain lies the individual entrepreneurs who should not be seen as “mechanistic, responding automatically to environmental stimuli (interest rates, subsidies, information networks, etc.), but as individuals capable of creating, learning and influencing the environment.” (Bruyat and Julien, 2000: 165). Owing to the fact that the domain is deeply concerned with individuals, it inevitably borrows from the disciplines of psychology and sociology.

My doctoral research concerns are firmly rooted in the psychological and sociological aspects of the individual entrepreneur. My curiosity in this subject is an amalgamation of two distinct areas of interest. The first is my interest in the multi-dimensional phenomenon called identity that facilitates how the entrepreneur define themselves. Secondly, I have a deep personal interest in the economics of creativity and a desire to get a better understanding of the creative and economic identity tensions faced by creative entrepreneurs.

Historically, entrepreneurship research has largely followed a positivist approach, which is in essence inherited from its firm grounding in the discipline of economics, and a large proportion of studies have involved a quantitative bias (Dana and Dana, 2005). However, scholars now accept that entrepreneurship is usually atypical, discontinuous, non-linear and often unique (Bygrave, 1989). Therefore, I believe that the study of entrepreneurship, and especially of entrepreneurs, necessarily requires an interpretivist approach. Using this approach, knowledge is derived from one’s interpretation rather than gathered from the outside world, and a multi-layered tactic is adopted to such knowledge development.

Relating these arguments to my doctoral research concerns, I believe that adopting an interpretivist approach allows me to make original contributions to my area of research. This approach allows me to examine the cognitive processes and personal reflections of creative entrepreneurs with reference to the development of their self-concept. Further, I believe that an interpretivist approach is most suitable for areas of research that are novel and where there is a wide scope for theory generation (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007) such as the area of this study. The desire here is not to unearth facts with a view to generalise them across the population of entrepreneurs in any given economy. There is an inherent assumption that the outcomes are subjective to their personal experiences and definitions and provide a greater depth of understanding of the various aspects of this research. This further aligns the research ambitions to an interpretivist approach.

I now briefly explore the theoretical background to the research before I outline the research gap addressed in this thesis.

Theoretical background

In exploring the theoretical background of this study I review the relevant literature in two areas: identity and entrepreneurship, and identity work. Following the review, I outline key debates that relate to my study.

Identity and entrepreneurship

Identity theory is an umbrella term for a cluster of theories attempting to explain the human “self” and behaviour in terms of peoples’ identities (Powell and Baker, 2014). Identity theory has been applied to many academic domains, including in entrepreneurship, and scholars believe that it continues to have potential in exploring identity in the domain of entrepreneurship (Conger et al., 2012).

Using identity theory to study entrepreneurs, their intentions and actions is an emergent field of research (Conger et al., 2012). Formative research in this area (Fauchart and Gruber, 2011; Hoang and Gimeno, 2010; Murnieks and Mosakowski, 2007; Murnieks et al., 2012; Navis and Glynn, 2011; Shepherd and Haynie, 2009) has concluded that who the entrepreneur believes they are (i.e. their self-concept) has an impact on the entrepreneurial activity and the entrepreneurial process undertaken by them.

The study of identity theory has evolved into two main strands. The first, termed identity theory, examines the internal processes of self-verification (Stryker and Burke, 2000) and its impact on the self-concept. The second relates social structures, groups, affiliations and mechanisms with the self-concept, which has been termed social identity theory (Stryker and Burke, 2000; Tajfel and Turner, 1986). A review of the literature on entrepreneurial identity indicates that it borrows heavily from the intellectual heritage of both strands, however there appears to be a bias towards studies that refer to social identity theory (Downing, 2005; Smith and Warner, 2012; Miller et al., 2011; Falck et al., 2012; Wry et al., 2011; Kikooma, 2011) in relation to the entrepreneur. These studies take a social constructivist view to the formation of, and influences on, the identity of the entrepreneur. Studies that take the individual identity view to entrepreneurship investigate areas relating to the characteristics of the entrepreneurial identity, and explain the relationship between identity and personal motivation (Hoang and Gimeno, 2010; Fauchart and Gruber, 2011). The application of social or identity theory in the study in entrepreneurs has divided scholars, however there is a clear gap in the literature when looking at the potential of identity theory to study entrepreneurship at the individual level (Murnieks and Mosakowski, 2007).

Another feature of entrepreneurial identity that has led to debate among scholars relates to its *stability* (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999). Some see entrepreneurial identity as stable through the

venture stages (Ibarra, 1999), while others support the notion that identity is developmental and transitional (Markus and Nurius, 1986). Arguments presented against the stable identity concept (Neilsen and Lassen, 2011) state that the identity of an entrepreneur is developed and modified as the venture develops through identity processes. The idea of the changing identities of entrepreneurs has also been highlighted (Hoang and Gimeno, 2008; Fauchart and Gruber, 2011) in relation to the specific conditions and challenges associated with the founding stage of a venture.

In elaborating the features and components of the entrepreneurial identity, scholars recognised the existence of multiple sub-identities (Murnieks and Mosakowski, 2007). It has also been noted (Navis and Glynn, 2010) that the identity of an entrepreneur exhibits both conformity and deviance, and may contain identity elements that are contradictory or oppositional. Such hybrid (Albert and Whetten, 1985) or multiple identities could also be forced to deal with competing priorities and tensions (Pratt and Foreman, 2000). When discussing how identities are developed, Wenger (1998) proposed that identities are pluralistic accomplishments that develop through a process of negotiating the meanings of our experience of membership in social communities. The multiple nature of an entrepreneur's identity, and identities in general, is thus a well-recognised phenomenon and Sveningsson and Alvensson (2003) have observed a trend in research which moves away from the idea of identity being monolithic to one that is multiple and composite.

Identity work

Scholars note that identity work is a concept that is "often employed but rarely systematically explored" (Brown, 2015:20). The term builds on and brings together concepts that thus far appeared in academic literature under various phrases such as identity construction, identity management, identity achievement, identity manufacture and identity project, and in doing so

prove that the application of the concept of identity work stretches beyond the formalisation of the term (Watson, 2009).

The term 'identity work' was first coined by Snow and Anderson (1987) and defined as "the range of activities individuals engage in to create, present, and sustain personal identities that are congruent with and supportive of the self-concept". Bringing the concept into management literature, Sveningsson and Alvesson (2003) provide a broader and more comprehensive definition to the term highlighting specific processes used for identity work as "*forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising*". Additionally, Sveningsson & Alvesson (2003) highlighted the role of identity work in providing a sense of "*coherence and distinctiveness*".

As the definition suggests, the process of identity work is undertaken for identity coherence, and here scholars find that this may stem from a need to align multiple identities (Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003) or to bring together personal and organisational identities (Pratt et al., 2006). Scholars also propose that that identity formation can be incremental and spread over a period of time (Downing, 2005). Rather than old identities being replaced by new ones, an existing identity can be made up of more than one sub-identity, which may be patched or split through identity work (Pratt et al., 2006). Scholars have explored different levels in devising frameworks and models of identity work, however there is a call for "further fine-grained research" into identity processes (Brown, 2015) to appreciate and understand in more detail how individuals engage in identity work.

With regards to the nature of identity work, scholars propose that identity work has a temporal dimension, and is usually observed over a period of time and in the setting of significant change or stimulus. Although the temporality of the identity work phenomena is implied in the definition of the term identity work, scholars note that very few studies explicitly theorise on the temporal nature of identity work (Brown, 2015). Additionally, this stimulus for identity work

could be internal to the individual, such as aspirations (Thornborrow and Brown, 2009), morals (Luedicke, 2010) or sentiments and image (Davies and Thomas, 2008). The stimuli or triggers may also be external and some studies that explore such triggers include managerial intervention and control (Alvesson & Wilmot, 2002), work role transition (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010), and adversity (Powell and Baker, 2014). Although separate internal and external dimensions are discussed in the literature, the studies suggest that the triggers for identity work usually include both internal and external elements. As Kreiner et al. (2006) propose, identity work is composed of situational factors and individual factors.

In summary, the main gaps identified in the identity literature in entrepreneurship relate to three areas. The need for further exploration of identity at an individual level (Murnieks and Mosakowski, 2007); the argument for and against the concept of identity stability through the phases of the venture (Ibarra, 1999; Markus and Nurius, 1986); and the discussion around multiplicity of identity (Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003). Furthermore, the review of the identity work literature shows opportunities for further research into coherence, temporality and processes (Brown, 2015). I contribute to these arguments and gaps in research through the contributions outlined in this thesis.

Research gap and contributions

In view of the above, the research question underlying this thesis is as follows:

How do entrepreneurs engage in identity work in response to identity demands caused by their multiple identities?

In addressing this research question, this thesis pursues three important avenues into researching identity work. This is done with a view to taking a “more fine-tuned overview” Alvesson (2010:195) to include both perspectives of how individuals conduct their identity work and how

scholars have chosen to theorise them (Brown, 2015). In the first article, I take an overview of the identity work process and investigate how the process occurs in the founding stage. In the next two articles I take a 'deep dive' into the identity work process and investigate different triggers for identity work. In article two I examine identity conflict as a trigger to identity work, while in article three I explore the role of critical incidents as a trigger for the process. I now outline the research questions underpinned by the three articles and how they relate to the research gaps identified above.

This study addresses the need for a better understanding of the micro-processes involved in identity work. In doing so it responds to calls by scholars to undertake "further fine-grained research" in identity work in order to appreciate "nuances in how, why and with what implications" individuals engage in identity work (Brown, 2015:31; Ibarra 1999:765). In the first article I take a process approach to understand how identity work of entrepreneurs is undertaken in the founding stage to attain identity coherence or equilibrium. I investigate the micro-processes of identity work and acknowledge the importance of affect in this process. The research question addressed here is - *how do entrepreneurs negotiate multiple identities through identity work?* In addition to arguing the case for a deeper understanding of identity work micro-processes of an entrepreneur, through these investigations I aim to address the gap in research into affects and emotions in identity work. Here I address the question - *how does the affect of entrepreneurs' influence their identity work processes?* In addition, it also addresses the considerable scope identified by scholars to research "how identity work processes are affected by emotions" (Brown, 2015:31).

In the second article I take a 'deep dive' into specific conflicts derived from competing multiple identities of the entrepreneur. Here the attempt is to contextualise identity paths taken by entrepreneurs to normalise this conflict which I theorise as dirty work. The primary aim of this

study is to examine *how dirty work is experienced by entrepreneurs*. In the course of exploring this query within this study's empirical setting, I also explore *how creative entrepreneurs use identity work to make sense of and cope with dirty work*.

Brown (2015) highlights current debates in identity work based on the maintenance of positive identities and outlines the need to understand how identity work helps to negotiate stigmatised identities. This study contributes to that debate in identity work. In addition, it brings the discussion of dirty work into entrepreneurship literature to provide a new perspective to analyse identity conflict in entrepreneurship.

The third avenue of research I explore is the impact of critical incidents on the identity work of the nascent entrepreneur. This study contributes to the gap in understanding of the impact of mundane and 'run of the mill' events in stimulating identity work of entrepreneurs (Brown, 2015; Cope and Watts, 2000). This study also addresses the need for more "in-depth research into how sensemaking connects to identities and identity work processes" (Brown, 2015). I identify the differing impacts of the same incident on the multiple identities of the entrepreneur. In doing so, I present a more robust and well-rounded discussion on triggers for identity work which are external to the entrepreneur but are internalised through sensemaking. The research questions at the heart of this study are: *What types of critical incidents impact identity work of nascent entrepreneurs that exhibit multiple identities? What is the role of sense making in this process?*

The need for identity coherence stemming from the demands of multiple identity is at the heart of all three studies. Here I define identity coherence as "clarity in awareness of the connections between their multiple identities" (Brown, 2015: 27). While all articles deal with identity work in light of plurality of identity, three different features of identity work are addressed in the three articles. The first article examines identity stability or equilibrium, the second contributes to the understanding of identity conflict and its resolution while the third examines the

relationship between sensemaking and identity work stemming from critical incidents. All three articles contribute to providing a holistic response to the research question around how entrepreneurs that exhibit multiple identities engage in identity work in response to identity demands. I now briefly describe the research setting and the different methods used in this thesis.

Methods

Research setting

The *creative industries* is defined by the UK Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) as “those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property.” (Department of Culture Media and Sport, 2001:4). The definition of the creative industries includes the following 11 broad sub-sectors: advertising, architecture, arts and antique markets, crafts, design (including also communication design), designer fashion, film, video and photography, software, computer games and electronic publishing, music and the visual and performing arts, publishing, television and radio (Department of Culture Media and Sport, 2006). In the UK the creative industries was valued at £79.6 billion in 2013, accounting for 5% of the British economy (Department of Culture Media and Sport, 2015); as one of the fastest growing sectors in the country it now employs 1.7 million individuals which represents 5.6% of all UK jobs. This growth can largely be attributed to creative entrepreneurship, which involves “creating or identifying opportunities to provide a creative product, service or experience, and bringing together the resources which enable this to be exploited as an enterprise” (Rae, 2004:493).

Although the sector is growing in economic and social importance, the sector remains largely un-organised, with a large number of small businesses, self-employed workers and individuals with portfolio careers. It is acknowledged that “entrepreneurship within it and the related

development of entrepreneurial skills are not well understood” and that “mainstream approaches cannot be assumed to be effective” (Rae 2004:492). As such, there are some unique characteristics that are specific to this sector that impact on creative entrepreneurs and how they operate their ventures. For instance, due to the involvement of creative skill in production within the sector, the demand and supply of skilled workers are extremely uncertain (Howkins, 2011). Additionally, Caves (2000) argues that because a large majority of creative products are intangible, a creative product’s success can seldom be explained even after its consumption. The risk associated with creative product is therefore high, and the creative industries operates in a highly uncertain and risky environment. This inevitably impacts on entrepreneur founding decisions, venture persistence and incidence of venture failure (Caves, 2000)

Scholars remark that policy-makers know little about creative entrepreneurs, including how they work, where they come from, their distinctive needs or how to interact with them (Leadbeater and Oakley, 1999). There is a desperate need to address this gap in understanding of creative entrepreneurs so that their growth potential is met and new and existing ventures are supported.

Some academics have focussed on creative entrepreneurs as individuals and made observations of their personality characteristics and the plurality of the roles (Leadbeater and Oakley, 1999; Hackley and Kover, 2007; Markusen, 2006). As this study aims to unearth identity work in light of multiple identities, the creative industries present an “extreme setting” for this study. An extreme setting likely assists theory-building efforts by providing particularly rich insights due to the “transparently observable” (Pettigrew, 1990 cited in Langley et al., 2013) phenomena of interest. As illustrated above, creative entrepreneurs also gather a complex set of roles due to the portfolio nature of employment in the sector. In addition, identity dilemmas brought about by conflict between their creative and commercial identities are easily perceptible in their narrative

and actions. Scholars here note that that much needs to be done to understand their unique multiple identities and how they are managed (Hackley and Kover, 2007). With this in mind I situate my study on the multiple identities of entrepreneurs in the creative industries.

Research approach

At the start of my doctoral studies I debated the question of epistemology, in order to provide a clear and relevant philosophical basis to my research. Having pondered issues dealing with what is knowledge and how it may be acquired in relation to my research interests, I find that an interpretive paradigm is best suited to operationalising this study and addressing the research questions. This paradigm gives me the scope to approach ontological commitments and concepts related to my area of study in a manner that is both exploratory and inclusive. Such a paradigm is recommended for exploratory studies investigating phenomenon that are subtle (Strauss and Corbin, 1998), as is the case with identity work.

Overall, this study follows an inductive reasoning approach, where the process of reasoning follows from particular examples to general principles. The iterative process ensures that the data informs theory building, while maintaining some notion of a back and forth movement between the data and the inducted theory in order to come to the final statement of that theory (Van Maanen, 1995). A choice of paradigm has implications not only on the results but also the methods adopted to investigate the subject area.

Multiple case study

The research design is based on a multiple case study approach. This method allows for triangulation of multiple investigators and cross case analysis. Thus evidence from multiple case studies is considered more compelling making the overall study more robust (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). Semi-structured depth interviews are used as the main source of data for each case. Additional information from observations, field notes and analysis of documents is used to

support the interview data and make the cases more comprehensive. For this study, case studies offer the opportunity not only to tell the story of identity demands in the founding stage of a venture, and identity work undertaken by the entrepreneur, but also highlight how these stories fit together.

The three articles in this thesis use three different methods of analysis to incorporate the most effective method to respond to the research question underpinned by that article. A brief description of the three analytical strategies adopted is provided below.

Process research

In responding to the research questions in article one, an inductive process research design has been followed, based on longitudinal data from multiple case studies. In this study I analyse how identity work occurs in response to multiple identities in the founding stage of the venture. The research questions afford themselves to process research as this method is useful to study temporally evolving phenomena and lends itself to understanding evolving identities (Howard-Grenville et al., 2013). It seeks to address *hows and whys* in unexplored contexts (Langley et al., 2013) and to explain change and development over time (Van de Ven, 2007).

Process research lends itself to qualitative data and mixed methods that combine interviews and observations, however an element of temporality is essential (Langley et. al, 2013). This makes it specifically suitable for analysing the data from entrepreneurs to unearth their identity journeys over the founding stage. My choice of this method was based on studies by scholars proposing process models of identity work in different scenarios such as workplace bullying (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2008), response to adversity (Powell and Baker, 2014) and identity resurrection (Howard-Grenville, 2013)

Narrative analysis

In article two, identity conflict between multiple identities that manifests as dirty work is studied as a trigger for identity work. In responding to the research question, a narrative analysis strategy is followed which makes use of longitudinal data from multiple cases. More specifically, the aim is to contextualise their *narrative identity*, defined as a method of construction of self-identity whereby an individual integrates life experiences into an “internalized, evolving story of the self” (McAdams, 2001). Narratives are affected by the continuously balancing complexity and coherence of the individuals’ identity (Steyaert, 2007). Through the narration of events and occurrences about their experiences of the founding stage, participants highlight the identity work carried out triggered by their identity conflict.

My choice of a narratological approach is guided by two assumptions which are grounded in the literature. First, pluralistic identities and their conflict are evident in individuals’ narratives (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010); and second, as active agents, entrepreneurs undertake identity work through narratives (Down and Warren, 2008; Phillips, 2013). The approach is also based on other scholarly work which has demonstrated the value of analysing narratives to better understand entrepreneurs’ identities, as well as the processes leading to the formation of a coherent entrepreneurial identity (Wry et al., 2011; Phillips, 2013; Fauchart and Gruber, 2011).

Critical incident technique

Article three includes a study of critical incidents as a trigger for identity work of creative entrepreneurs. Analysis of case studies was carried out using the principles of Critical Incident Technique. The technique was introduced by Flanagan (1954) and involves the collection, content analysis and classification of observations of human behaviour in line with the aim of the study being undertaken (Gemler, 2004). Once collected and collated, incidents are classified using either a general frame of reference to define the categories, or by developing categories

assigned by “inductive interpretation” of data (Stauss, 1993). Overall “the goal of the content analysis is to arrive at a classification system that provides insights regarding patterns of factors that affect the phenomenon of interest” (Gemler, 2004:68).

In defining what is “critical” in critical incidents, there appears to be varying perspectives from scholars. Scholars have observed that the term critical may be problematic and terms such as ‘significant’ or ‘revelatory’ may offer a more assessable framework to include events which at first glance may not appear critical, but are important to the individual (Keating, 2002:34). Cope and Watts (2000:112) advocate for the self-definition of criticality by entrepreneurs so that an “entrepreneur’s personal representation of salient moments which was of prime importance” to them can be accounted for as a critical incident for them. This self-defined approach to critical incidents (Tripp, 1993; Cope and Watt, 2000) has been used in this study.

Ethical considerations

The key ethical considerations for this study related to informed consent, confidentiality and due care in the management of the research data received. The study is principally constructed using primary data received from participants, collected through interviews. As with any primary data collection exercise, the ethical considerations raised above have been carefully addressed. The Economic and Social Research Council’s Framework for Research Ethics (ESRC, 2012) was used as a guideline to ensure that the ethical considerations were adequately met at every stage of this study.

Participant consent

Consent to participate in this research was sought from individuals, through either an initial phone conversation or by email, at the recruitment stage. The information provided included details of the objectives of the study, the general themes to be explored, the length of involvement sought and the duration of the interviews. At the start of the interview, participants

were reminded of the general themes of discussion and any questions or clarifications were addressed. Permission was also sought for recording the interviews for transcription. Participants were also reminded of their right to withdraw consent and their participation in the study or not respond to specific questions, if they so desired. Due to the longitudinal nature of the study, enduring consent was sought from the entrepreneurs interviewed so that they could be re-contacted at different intervals over the period of the study. At the end of the interview my contact details were left with the participants to facilitate any follow up questions or to discuss any concerns from the participants. A copy of the participant consent form is included in APPENDIX II: Interview Protocols.

Confidentiality and anonymity

Confidentiality of the information provided through the interviews and documentation has been maintained throughout the period of this study. All recordings, transcripts and documentation have been handled solely by me. The case studies constructed are anonymised so that the individual participants, businesses and locations cannot be identified. Due care has been taken in the management of the data collected through this study to ensure that the data remains secure and confidential at all times. The transcripts of interview will be stored securely for a period of 10 years as per the recommendations of the University of Warwick's Research Code of Practice, and thereafter securely and irretrievably destroyed.

Structure of the thesis

This thesis adopts the structure prescribed by Paltridge (2002), to include three separate articles that present my findings in response to specific research questions that are derived from the overall research question for this thesis. All three articles contribute to the theoretical framework for identity work. In this introductory chapter I have provided an outline to the overall thesis, and have introduced the research questions and terminology I have used to frame this research.

Following this I present three articles as separate chapters, each complete and focussed on a separate research question. The articles are followed by a final chapter which summarises the general discussion and conclusion from this thesis.

ARTICLE 1: THE PROCESS OF BALANCING MULTIPLE IDENTITIES - AN ANALYSIS OF ENTREPRENEURS' IDENTITY WORK IN THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Abstract

The founding of a venture can be a disruptive event for individuals transitioning into entrepreneurship. Based on a two-year study of 15 founders of businesses in the creative industries in the UK, I explore how founders cope with these disruptive events by relying on identity work. I take a process approach to understand how identity work can help entrepreneurs deal with disruptions stemming from the negotiation between their multiple identities during the founding stage of their ventures.

My inductive analysis of the data also reveals an important role played by affect in the process of identity work. I contribute to the understanding of identity work by presenting a process model illustrating that when the identity equilibrium of entrepreneurs is disrupted during the founding stages of the venture, identity work tactics can be used to return to an equilibrium. I recognise affect as one of the key stimuli for such identity work.

Introduction

Demystifying the entrepreneur and their identity is an emergent area of interest among entrepreneurship scholars. Within this area, gathering a deeper understanding of the interplay between their multiple identities (Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003; Murnieks et al., 2014; Shepherd and Haynie, 2009; Powell and Baker, 2014) is a growing area of study. The process by which individuals attain coherence, or a sense of equilibrium in their identity, through the interplay of such multiple identities is called identity work (Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003).

Various ways in which identity work is triggered have been investigated with a view to understanding the nature of the process. Here scholars have proposed different models of

identity work and within them identified the stimulus for this process (Alvesson and Wilmott, 2002; Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010; Kreiner et al., 2006). Additionally, identity work tactics have been acknowledged as a key process by which entrepreneurs negotiate the existence of multiple identities (Creed et al., 2010; Hoang and Gimeno, 2010; Kreiner et al., 2006). In doing so, scholars have to some extent acknowledged the existence of and change in affects of the individual when such work occurs (Ibarra, 1999; Kreiner et al., 2006). However, few scholars have attempted to examine identity work in light of the individuals' affects and how these in turn impact on these processes.

Through the analysis of my empirical data the role of affect as a stimulus for identity work has emerged inductively. I found that the positive and negative affects of the entrepreneur enhanced their identity work. Entrepreneurship has been described as an emotional journey (Baron, 2008) and given the importance of the changing affects of the entrepreneurs on this journey, it is surprising that an attempt to introduce the role of affect in the identity work of entrepreneurs is yet to take place. Therefore, it was seen necessary to acknowledge the importance of affect on identity formation and identity equilibrium of the founder as one of the key contributions of this paper.

Although the founding stage of a venture is seen as an important site for identity work (Fauchart and Gruber, 2011), there is an implicit assumption that once established, the founder identity is stable and does not go through further changes as the venture develops (Schein, 1978). As such, little is known about how the identity of the entrepreneurs change over the different stages of their ventures, including in the founding stage (Hoang and Gimeno, 2010). Scholars also do not recognise the micro-processes and stimuli within the founding stages that impact on identity changes of the entrepreneur. In order to support and understand the complexities of this crucial stage of a venture further, there is a need for more detailed understanding of identity changes

through the founding stage, an appreciation of the identity tactics used and the stimuli for these changes to occur. I situate my study on identity work in this important stage of the venture. I aim to build on research into theoretical frameworks of identity work in light of multiple identities, and explain the role of entrepreneurs' changing affect within these processes in the founding stages.

The purpose of this paper is to understand *how entrepreneurs negotiate multiple identities through identity work* in addition to arguing the case for a deeper understanding of identity work micro-processes of an entrepreneur. Through these investigations I illustrate the importance of affect in the identity work of entrepreneurs and address how affect of entrepreneurs' influence their identity work processes. The empirical setting for this research is the creative industries, which offers us the opportunity to specifically study identity work of entrepreneurs that exhibit multiple sub-identities in the founding stage. For instance, the creative and commercial sub-identities of creative entrepreneurs are both salient and in some cases appear in conflict with each other (Markusen, 2006; Hackley and Kover, 2007) at the initial stage of the venture.

I start with a discussion of the theoretical background of the study including a review of the literature on identity theory in entrepreneurship, key features of identity and a review of theoretical models of identity work presented by scholars. I then review the literature on affect in entrepreneurship before presenting my process model of identity work. In the results I detail the types of identity tactics and affects highlighted in the model. This is followed by a discussion of my findings and an identification of the implications of this research and areas for future exploration.

Theoretical background

This paper relates to three strands of literature in entrepreneurship: that concerning entrepreneurship and identity, identity work, and affects of entrepreneurs. In this section I review existing research in these areas while highlighting how I seek to contribute to them. I discuss identity theory as it relates to entrepreneurship and specifically focus on two key features of entrepreneurs' identities, namely multiplicity and stability, and identify gaps in these areas of research. I argue that more in-depth research is required into these two features of an entrepreneurs' identity to unearth how they coexist and are managed through identity work. I believe that a discussion of entrepreneurs' identities is incomplete without an appreciation of the impact their changing affects have on their identity work and this is discussed in the final part of the theoretical background.

Entrepreneurship and identity

The term *entrepreneurial identity* is typically used to refer to a composite identity made up of components which may exhibit certain features, such as innovation, control, risk propensity and wealth creation (Thomas and Mueller, 2000). The *identity of an entrepreneur* refers to an individual's identity, which may or may not be entrepreneurial. Thus an entrepreneurial identity refers to a type of identity whereas the identity of an entrepreneur relates to an individual (the entrepreneur). It is also important to acknowledge the difference between identity and role as both terms appear interchangeably in related literature and can cause confusion (Murnieks and Mosakowski, 2007). As opposed to an identity, a role involves *expectations of behaviour connected with certain societal statuses or positions* (Cast, 2004). The societal status may include any socially recognised position including professional positions (e.g. lawyer, doctor, and carer) or family positions (e.g. parents, sibling) among others (Stryker and Statham, 1985). An identity on the other hand is defined as a *cognitive schema* (Stryker and Burke, 2000) that results from

the internalisation of a role by a person. Said otherwise, identities help an individual answer the question – Who am I? (Murnieks and Mosakowski, 2007).

Cast (2004:57) succinctly describes the interaction of identity and role: “an identity is a set of meanings that represent the self in a social role, defining who one is in that status”. So, whereas the role can be seen as a set of socially-held behavioural expectations attached to positions external to an individual, an identity represents the internalisation and incorporation of these expectations into one’s own sense of self-concept (Gecas, 1982 in Murnieks and Mosakowski, 2007). The focus of this paper is on the *identity of an entrepreneur* and how it is formed by merging constituent sub-identities. In doing so I acknowledge entrepreneurs’ multiple sub-identities and roles. In line with the definition proposed by Powell and Baker (2014:1409), I investigate identity as a composite of multiple components including social and role identities and as “the set of identities that is chronically salient to a founder in their day-today work”.

The literature on the identity of an entrepreneur draws on the intellectual heritage of both strands of identity theory, i.e. identity theory as proposed by Stets and Burke (2000) and social identity theory as proposed by Tajfel and Turner (1986). However, there appears to be a bias towards studies that draw on social identity theory (Downing, 2005; Smith and Woodworth, 2012; Miller et al., 2011; Falck et al., 2012; Wry et al., 2011; Kikooma, 2011). Research in this area is based on the argument that the social environment in which the entrepreneur operates has a greater impact in shaping their identity and self-concept than their internal processes, their affects and cognition.

Fewer studies discuss entrepreneurial identity from the perspective of the individual and calls have been made for more empirical work in this area (Hoang and Gimeno, 2010; Fauchart and Gruber, 2011). Some notable research in this area includes Murnieks and Mosakowski’s (2007) attempt to define the characteristics of entrepreneurial identity and explain the relationship

between identity and personal motivation. Additionally, Hoang and Gimeno (2010) proposed that the identity of an entrepreneur is a combination of his/her beliefs, values, ambitions and feelings. Calls have been made for more research into the individual orientation that examines the identity of entrepreneurs and their components and mechanisms (Murnieks and Mosakowski, 2007) and this study is a response to that call.

To understand the identity of entrepreneurs in more detail and respond to the research questions of this study, two key features of identity need further exploration. The first relates to *multiplicity* or *plurality*, and the second to *stability* or *identity equilibrium*.

Multiplicity of identity

Psychologists and sociologists have argued for the acknowledgement of the multiple nature of an individual's identity, arguing that a response to the question - *Who am I?* rarely yields a single answer. Scholars believe that there is "a parliament of identities within the same individual" (Pratt and Foreman, 2000:18). Consequently, entrepreneurship scholars now recognise that the identity of an entrepreneur is a composite of various sub-identities (Fauchart and Gruber, 2011; Murnieks and Mosakowski, 2007). Current research relating to identity in entrepreneurship moves away from the idea of identity being monolithic to one that is multiple and composite (Hoang and Gimeno, 2010; Sveningsson and Alvensson, 2003).

Furthermore, the identity of an entrepreneur needs to display both conformity to the idea of being an entrepreneur, and distinctiveness from other entrepreneurs to help them appear novel (Navis and Glynn, 2010). To fulfil this dual need, an entrepreneur may display sub-identities that are contradictory or oppositional. The presence of such multiple sub-identities may also force the individual to contend with competing priorities and tensions (Pratt and Foreman, 2000). When discussing how identities are developed, Wenger (1999:145) proposed that identities are "pluralistic accomplishments that develop through a process of negotiating the meanings of our

experience of membership in social communities.” A core theme across social psychological theories of identity is that all people have multiple identities because they inhabit multiple roles and identify with multiple social groups (Powell and Baker, 2014). Having acknowledged the multiple nature of the identity of an entrepreneur I look at the literature on identity stability.

Stability of identity

Scholars continue to debate whether identities as a whole are stable, fixed and secure, or evolutionally adaptive and fluid (Brown, 2015). However, there is some recognition among scholars that individuals need a relatively secure and stable sense of who they are within a given situation to function effectively (Erez and Earley, 1993; Schwalbe and Mason-Schrock, 1996 cited in Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999). Schein (1978) posits that identities are by definition relatively stable and enduring and the myriad of attributes, beliefs, values, motives, and experiences that people use to define themselves as a professional remains constant in a specific role. According to this argument changes in identity are seen only when the role changes. This argument may be extended to state that the identity of the entrepreneur remains stable over the period of the venture and through the various stages (Ibarra, 1999).

Conversely, Neilsen and Lassen (2011) argue that the identity of an entrepreneur is developed and modified as the venture unfolds. The idea of changing identities of entrepreneurs has also been highlighted in relation to the specific conditions and challenges associated with the founding stage of a venture (Hoang and Gimeno, 2010; Fauchart and Gruber, 2011). Summarising these arguments, I find that while self-concepts may exhibit continuity over a period of time, there is need for the flexibility provided by a supplier *working self-concept*, which permits dynamic responses to changeable situations (Markus and Nurius, 1986; Markus and Wurf, 1987 in Brown, 2015).

So, taking these two features of identity i.e. multiplicity and stability together presents an interesting argument. If multiple identities exist in an entrepreneur and identities are changeable and unstable through the founding stages, it is fruitful to study the interactions between these two features to further understand how identity evolves in the founding stage. I find that the overall self is constructed from a relatively stable set of meanings, which change only gradually, such as during role or career transition (Ibarra, 1999; Pratt et al., 2006). Within these periods of large transitions, there are temporary instabilities (or disequilibrium) which leads to identity work. During these periods of instability multiple sub-identities can be “acquired, lost, switched or modified much more quickly, and perhaps instantaneously as contexts and preferences alter” through a process of identity work (Brown, 2015:27). This gradualist view on identity work states that identities adjust and evolve at times of disequilibrium ‘only to find and maintain an optimum balance or equilibrium position’ (Brown, 2015:27). In this study I analyse the micro-processes leading to such identity equilibrium.

I posit that an equilibrium between multiple identities is achieved by the entrepreneur, which is subsequently disrupted and an effort to reach another equilibrium is initiated. This nuanced view of how identity equilibrium changes within the founding (and indeed other) stages of the venture is yet to be explored by scholars. With this focus in mind, I now summarise the literature in identity work in entrepreneurship relevant to this paper.

The process of identity work

Identity work is a concept that is seen as a significant metaphor in the analysis of how identities are constructed (Brown, 2015). The term identity work was coined by social psychologists Snow and Anderson (1987) in their seminal work analysing the change in self-concept of the homeless. In the entrepreneurship literature, Sveningsson and Alvesson (2003:1187) define identity work as “*a formal conceptualization of the ways in which human beings are continuously engaged in*

forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising the constructions that are productive of a sense of coherence and distinctiveness.” Identity work builds on and brings together concepts that have thus far appeared in academic literature under various phrases such as identity construction, identity management, identity achievement, identity manufacture and identity project.

In addition to understanding its origins and scope, it is important to take a closer look into the varying views on how identity is constructed and negotiated as a result of identity work. Scholars of identity argue for paying more research attention to the micro-processes involved in identity work (Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003) to understand the conditions required for identity work to occur. A key motivator for undertaking identity work is the need to align work demands with self-identity so that work identity integrity is achieved (Pratt et al., 2006). A review of the literature shows that identity work is usually observed over a period of time and in the setting of a significant change or stimulus. This stimulus could be internal to the individual such as aspirations (Thornborrow and Brown, 2009), morals (Luedicke et al., 2010) or sentiments and image (Davies and Thomas, 2008). Alternatively, the stimulus could be external such as managerial intervention and control (Alvesson and Wilmott, 2002) and work role transition (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010).

Due to the incremental and temporal nature of the phenomenon, scholars have proposed theoretical process models to encapsulate how identity work occurs in different empirical settings and scenarios. These models identify the varying triggers and factors that influence the process (Kreiner et al., 2006) while others map the outcomes and identity structures (Powell and Baker, 2014) that stem from identity work. Table 1 summarises studies that propose identity work process models pertinent to this paper.

The summary illustrates the range of studies and context in which identity work processes have been examined. Various constructs have been proposed and contributions presented that deepen our understanding of how identity work is initiated, observed, measured and theorised. Scholars have called for further fine-grained research to appreciate nuances in how, why and with what implications identity work is engaged in by people (Brown, 2015) which I respond to through this study.

Of the studies included in Table 1, two inform the model proposed in this paper. First, Hoang and Gimeno's (2010) study where the scholars examine identity work in the founding stages, informs the setting of my model in this stage of the venture. Through the study the scholars examine how identity work during role transition helps founders deal with tensions and challenges, and examine the impact of such identity work on the future of the venture. I extend this work by taking a more focused view of the identity work that occurs in the founding stage, and the impact of that work on the evolution of the founders' identity. Some of the challenges around novelty and conflict are common to both studies. Second, the study by Kreiner et al. (2006) illustrates the idea of optimal balance and equilibrium between identities and with regards to the model proposed by Kreiner et al. (2006), the focus on balance or identity equilibrium is similar to the model I propose. However, I examine identity equilibrium as *a balance between multiple identities which provides identity coherence* and not just as a balance between social and personal identities as illustrated in the study by Kreiner et al. (2006).

Title	Definitions/ key concepts	Main contributions	Stimulus for Identity Work identified
<i>Alvesson and Wilmott (2002)</i>	Identity Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A conceptual framework for analysis of identity regulation • Focusing on interplay of regulatory interventions, identity work and self-identity 	Organisational control
<i>Creed, DeJordy, and Lok (2010)</i>	Identity reconciliation, Institutional contradiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A theoretical model of the micro-processes through which marginalized actors become agents of institutional change • The model enunciates the importance of embodied identity work in resolving the experience of institutional contradiction and marginalization. • Micro-processes for identity work include – internalisation of contradiction, identity re-conciliation, role claiming and use 	Conflict or contradiction
<i>Hoang and Gimeno (2010)</i>	Identity transition, Founder role identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model charts transition into founder role identity • Examines how identity configurations influence persistence and dormancy 	Centrality and complexity
<i>Ibarra (1999)</i>	Identity construction Provisional selves, Professional identities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A conceptual framework in which individual and situational factors guides self-construction • Examines how people adapt to new roles by experimenting with provisional selves that serve as trials for possible but not yet fully elaborated professional identities 	New professional role Individual and situational factors
<i>Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010)</i>	Role identity, Identity transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A process model in which people draw on narrative repertoires to engage in narrative identity work in role-related interactions • Successful completion of the transition is facilitated by enduring and coherent repertoire changes to express the new role identity 	Narrative repertoire
<i>Kreiner, Holbse and Sheep (2006)</i>	Identity work, Optimal balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A process model of identity work to show how it is conducted to negotiate an optimal balance between personal and social identities 	Situational and vocational demands Identity tensions
<i>Powell and Baker (2014)</i>	Identity work, Social Identity, Individual identity, Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A process model about the type and structures of founder identity and their differences in firms' strategic responses. • Brings together social and individual identity theory in the model 	Adversity

Table 1: Summary of studies proposing theoretical frameworks for identity work

In addition to proposing theoretical models, scholars have introduced and unpicked a range of micro-processes involved in the identity work of individuals. For example, Pratt and Foreman (2000) categorised four types of managerial response to identity management, namely

integration, aggregation, deletion and compartmentalisation. Ashforth et al. (2000) examined role transitions specifically focusing on segmented and integrated roles. Sveningsson and Alvesson (2003) illustrated how multiple identities are negotiated by an individual for the construction of managerial identities, thereby leading to integration and fragmentation of multiple identities. Pratt et al. (2006) found that identity construction was triggered by work-identity integrity violations, which were resolved through identity customization processes namely enriching, patching, or splinting. I draw on these micro-processes to inform the model of identity work proposed in this study.

The review of literature related to frameworks and micro-processes of identity work shows an appetite for future research into how identity work processes are impacted by a range of factors, including emotion (Brown, 2015). Through this study I explicitly acknowledge the existence and impact of entrepreneurs' affects as a stimulus for identity work, which is missing from the models and micro-processes is cited above. With this in mind I now review the literature around affect in entrepreneurship.

Affect as a trigger for identity work

Affect, or an individual's feelings and emotions, lies at the heart of human experiencing (Throop, 2003). Studies in psychology define affect as "the experience of feeling or emotion" (Hogg et al., 2010:646). The influence of affect on the individual and their work has found favour in various scholarly domains (Cropanzano et al., 1993; Abelson et al., 1982; Baron, 1990; Blaney, 1986) including in entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship is seen an emotional journey (Baron, 2008) due to the extreme experiences, such as significant rewards and the risk involved in the entrepreneurial process (Schindehutte et al., 2006). Baron (2008) highlighted the importance of affect in various stages of the entrepreneurial process, and since then other scholars have found this a rewarding area of

research in contextualising its impact on the venture and its outcome (Cardon et al., 2012; Hahn et al., 2012; Morris et al., 2012).

In entrepreneurship literature, scholars have explored the role and impact of affects on cognition and actions while others have explored the affects stemming from actions. As an example of the former, (Podoyntsina et al., 2012) analysed that conflicting and mixed emotions of the entrepreneur have a direct impact on how they perceive risk. Analysing the impact of affect on actions, Morris et al. (2012) took a situated view of entrepreneurial action studying the experience of entrepreneurship and the various events associated with it. They argued that to understand the link between entrepreneurial events and outcomes, one should consider the role of affect on events that involved the dynamic interplay between “cognitive, affective, and physiological elements” (Morris et al., 2012:12). Further, scholars found that the ongoing impact of the entrepreneur’s affective state (e.g., positive/negative, intense/passive), (Baron, 2008) impact on their behaviour (Morris et al., 2012)

Because entrepreneurship provides an extreme emotional context within which to study affect, it provides a unique opportunity to not only import theories from psychology and other disciplines but also to develop those theories and contribute back to those core disciplines. For instance, scholars have examined the impact of grief on firm and project-level failures (Shepherd, 2003; Shepherd et al., 2009), which led to a better understanding of entrepreneurial grief and extended psychological theories of loss. In addition, Foo et al., (2009) examined the impact of short-term and long-term affects on the entrepreneurial effort. Therefore, through such studies scholars have developed insights that are important for entrepreneurship and also relevant for the literatures in psychology, organisational behaviour, and management. By examining the affect of entrepreneurs in relation to their evolving identities, an attempt is made in this study to enhance the literature on identity work.

In addition to process-based studies of affect over time and at various stages of the entrepreneurial process, scholars have examined how emotion influences entrepreneurship and also how entrepreneurship influences emotions. For instance, there is preliminary evidence that during the initial stages of venture creation, entrepreneurs engage in entrepreneurial actions as a vehicle for manipulating their emotional states (Cardon et al., 2012). Entrepreneurial behaviours such as developing new products or building new business networks are introduced as a means for inducing positive affect (Kato and Wiklund, 2011). A study by Frese and Gielnik (2011) suggests that entrepreneurial action leads to passion, rather than passion leading to action (Cardon et al., 2009). Therefore in studying affect and entrepreneurship it is important to examine the cause-effect relationship from both aspects, which is addressed in this study. The impact of identity work on affects is taken into consideration as is the impact of the affects on subsequent identity work of the entrepreneur.

In this study I investigate the affects of the entrepreneur in the founding phase of the venture and in doing so align my definition of affect to Cardon et al. (2012) where the term is stated as *entrepreneurial emotion* in this context and defined as “the affect, emotions, moods, and/or feelings—of individuals or a collective—that are antecedent to, concurrent with, and/or a consequence of the entrepreneurial process, meaning the recognition/creation, evaluation, reformulation, and/or the exploitation of a possible opportunity”. (2012:3)

As one of its main benefits, the study of affect allows us to not only address the *thinking-doing* connections of entrepreneurs as discussed by Mitchell et al. (2007), but also the *thinking-feeling-doing* connections (Cardon et al., 2012). I also explore this thinking-feeling-doing connection through this study. I isolate thoughts and feelings of founders to observe connections with the doing - which in this case is engaging in identity work to achieve identity equilibrium.

A call has been made for future research to examine how emotions influence the whole entrepreneurial process, including what happens between opportunity identification and exit, since new venture gestation can take several years (Carter et al., 1996). Affect can influence some of these activities. For example, during the early stages of a business venture it is important that entrepreneurs remain excited about their businesses (Foo et al., 2006). A frequent point made by these scholars is that affect influences cognition, and since cognition has been shown to predict opportunity identification and evaluation (Baron and Tang, 2011; Foo, 2011), it stands to reason that affect should also shape these opportunity processes.

My study focusses on the founding phase of the venture and I have found this to be a highly affectual state as founders make important decisions about the future and type of venture, and during this gestation period numerous start-up related activities occur. This includes purchasing equipment and facilities, securing financial support, developing prototypes, hiring employees, organising the team, and deciding whether and when to work full time in the venture. Therefore, the influence of different types of affect on behavioural outcomes of entrepreneurs is well documented; however, its role as a stimulus for their identity work is largely ignored. In unearthing affects and their impact on the entrepreneurial process, scholars highlight the importance of taking a longitudinal process view particularly as it involves a “temporal stream of emotional events” (Cardon et al., 2012:6). My study supports these findings and takes a longitudinal view to understanding the process at the founding stage.

In studying affect and its impact, scholars have developed scales and measurements to contextualise and find a common language to communicate such measures (Shaver et al., 1987; Watson et al., 1988). The 10-item mood scales, Positive Affect and Negative Affect (PANAS) framework was developed as a response to the need for a model to define and measure positive and negative affect (Watson et al., 1988). This was a reaction to the development and testing of

various mood scales devised by scholars which were found to be difficult to administer and unreliable. The PANAS framework was developed to study the characteristics of affect rather than as a model to test theory, which is the way in which it has been applied in this study. The framework is specifically relevant to this study as it offers a detailed definition to assist in the categorisation of the types of affect experienced by entrepreneurs. I take a straightforward approach in the categorisation and examination of the dominant positive and/or negative affects at each stage of identity work separately, rather than undertake an analysis while considering the ambivalence of mixed affects impacting on the entrepreneur. This approach is in line with the work of scholars of affect and entrepreneurship (Baron, 2008; Baron and Tang, 2011) and allows for the examination of distinct identity journeys undertaken by the entrepreneurs through the founding stage of their venture.

Methods

Research design

In this study I adopted an inductive process research design based on longitudinal data from multiple case studies. The research questions lend themselves to process research as this method is useful to study temporally evolving phenomena and affords itself to understanding evolving identities (Howard-Grenville et al., 2013). It aims to address *hows and whys* in unexplored contexts (Langley et al., 2013) and seek to explain change and development over time (Van de Ven, 2007). This study aims to understand the process of identity work in entrepreneurs and the impact of their affects on such identity work. As such, process research by definition calls for longitudinal qualitative data.

I carried out inductive analysis of the longitudinal data as the method was found to be most suitable to build emergent theory. Longitudinal data were essential to observe how processes unfold over time. I have chosen to examine the data through a series of experiences that occur

at the founding stage of a venture to understand the identity work processes of the entrepreneurs. The data were arranged into multiple case studies compiled from interview and observational data collected, and each case study encapsulated the journey of an individual entrepreneur. These cases gave me the opportunity to observe the identity processes as it unfolded for the early-stage creative entrepreneurs, operating in a setting characterised by multiple identities, some of which were in conflict with each other.

As the unit of analysis was the individual, and the emergent process identity work, a multiple case study approach was found to be most suitable for this study. Multiple case studies are more useful than single case studies as they allow for comparison. Additionally, a multiple case study design was considered appropriate as it provided a thorough basis for developing a process model, as multiple cases often yield more accurate explanations than single cases (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007; Walsh and Bartunek, 2011). Such approaches have been advocated by scholars of process (Bresman, 2013; Walsh and Bartunek, 2011), identity work (e.g. Murnieks and Mosakowski, 2007), and affect of entrepreneurs (Cardon et al., 2012; Hahn et al., 2012).

Although my research generated insights into how identity work might yield differing outcomes, I focused my analysis on trying to understand why and how identity work unfolded and, more specifically, how identity moved from a state of disequilibrium to equilibrium.

Research setting

There were three primary reasons for selecting entrepreneurs founding businesses in the creative industries.

Firstly, I believe the creative industries represents an “extreme setting”. An extreme setting likely assists theory-building efforts by providing particularly rich insights due to the “transparently observable” (Pettigrew, 1990 cited in Langley et al., 2013) phenomena of interest. In this case,

the chosen setting was the creative industries, the founders were creative entrepreneurs. This sector is characterised by large numbers of small, micro-businesses and sole traders with a relatively small number of larger organisations. Self-employment, entrepreneurship and business start-up are significant career choices for many of those working in the sector. Similarly, many develop portfolio careers, juggling several part-time positions along with freelance work (Department of Culture Media and Sport, 2006). Due to these factors, many entrepreneurs that work in this sector display multiple identities and roles that occur concurrently. Some of these coexist comfortably while others are in conflict, especially identities related to commercial and creative aspects (Eikhof and Haunschild, 2006). As such, while I acknowledge that entrepreneurs operating in other settings may hold multiple identities, the presence of multiple identities (as well as tension between them) is likely to be more readily observable among entrepreneurs in the creative industries.

Second, the creative industries are growing in importance to the economy of the UK (Department of Culture Media and Sport, 2006), hence it's corresponding importance to academia (Hesmondhalgh, 2008). Although there is growing academic interest in the sector, research to date has mainly focussed on understanding the sector and sub-sector conditions and policy implications, rather than the individuals that work in this setting (Caves, 2000; Florida, 2002). Given the aforementioned challenges creative entrepreneurs are likely to face (e.g. the need for portfolio careers and the likely presence of multiple identities), greater attention to the individual actors in the creative industries is likely to be fruitful for both scholars and in policy circles.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge that my personal experience of working in this sector for thirteen years has influenced my choice of research. I am strongly motivated to understand how entrepreneurs in this setting resolve the challenges associated with founding a business in this

sector. Furthermore, from a pragmatic perspective, I believe my experience in this sector has provided me with the legitimacy to gain access to the entrepreneurs in this sector and for them to speak openly and freely about their experiences.

Case selection

Data were collected from a range of sub-sectors within the creative industries to minimize the effects relating to specific agendas in one or other particular industry (Sarasvathy, 2009). Further, I could think of no reason multiple identities associated with creative and commercial aspirations would not be readily observable in entrepreneurs across all industries within this sector.

I consulted with 15 creative entrepreneurs¹ and their ventures in the creative industries in the UK over a 22-month period. To understand their identity work and processes during the founding phase I created the following target profile of founders: They were (a) starting a new venture (self-defined, but all less than one year old); (b) trained and/or practicing artists and performers; and (c) came from different industries.

The sample was recruited using a variety of methods which included contact with business accelerators and alumni of local universities, conversations with business advisors and mentors specialising in the creative and cultural industries in the UK. This was followed by snowball sampling methods to identify a larger pool of participants. I contacted potential participants by email and telephone to discuss the nature of their involvement and conducted exploratory interviews to identify founders that fit this profile. I screened 26 potential participants to arrive at 15 entrepreneurs that formed my sample. Table 2 describes my sample, including name, background, sub-sector and age of venture.

¹ Names of individuals, locations and companies have been changed throughout to maintain the anonymity of the participants of this study.

Case	Founder	Background (before venture commenced)	Venture	Age of venture (at initial contact)
1	Adam	Practicing actor	Acting Agency	8 months
2	Beth	Arts therapist	Performing Arts Event Management	5 months
3	Clarke	Sculptor	Furniture Making	3 months
4	Daniel	Choreographer	Dance Education & Performance	8 months
5	Jack	Photographer	Photography and Design Agency	6 months
6	Francis	Composer	Music Composition and Production	11 months
7	Gemma	Textile designer	Textile Design	2 months
8	Hilda	Choreographer	Dance Education	10 months
9	Isaac	Composer	Music Production	8 months
10	Eleanor	Multimedia artist	Commercial Art Gallery and Café	4 months
11	Anna	Sculptor	Art Gallery and Consultancy	11 months
12	Linda	Musician and visual artist	Craft Workshops	3 months
13	Zoe	Graphic designer	Cultural Consultancy	5 months
14	Helen	Visual artist	Art Gallery and Art materials shop	6 months
15	Kate	Fashion designer	Fashion Design	11 months

Table 2: Sample description for Article 1: name, background, sub-sector and age of venture

Data collection

I conducted three round of interviews with each founder over the period of the study. The early semi-structured interviews took the form of a life story where I requested to hear more about the childhood, educational and work history of the founders. This allowed me to learn the sequence of events in historical order, thus reducing the likelihood of generating retrospective rationalisations that might occur if someone told me what they had done and then created a narrative to explain why (Powell and Baker, 2014). I maintained a careful tone of supportive neutrality throughout the data collection process in an attempt to minimise any social desirability bias in what interviewees reported (Kahn and Cannell, 1957). The chance of retrospective rationalisation was minimised by the prospective study design, which reduced my reliance on gathering data about past events but allowed me instead to focus on events that I could explore as they unfolded (Carter et al., 2003).

Later interviews were more structured as I explored emerging theoretical themes (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). For example, I asked to hear about specific incidents and occurrences that had an impact on how the entrepreneurs felt about themselves and how the venture was progressing.

In most cases, as part of narrating the journey of the venture, founders provided extensive biographical data, extending well before the founding of the venture. This life history data allowed me to place the identities I analysed in this study as important elements of founders' sense of self before founding.

All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed into approximately 900 single-spaced pages. Average interview length was 89 minutes, with a range of 28 minutes to 101 minutes. Detailed field notes were made after each interview shortly after the interview ended. All quotes in this paper are from transcriptions rather than these field notes. Observational data was also collected by undertaking tours of the business premises and reviewing information published offline and online about the ventures including marketing materials, brochures, and feedback received from clients and customers. Although I only use quotes from the founders as illustrative evidence, the supplementary data helped me make sense of and analyse the data to develop my process model.

Analytical strategy

The data analysis strategy is inductive in nature and based on the principles of thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis involves breaking down the data into discrete "incidents" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) or "units" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) and coding them into categories. Categories arising from this method generally take two forms: those that are derived from the participants' customs and language, and those that the researcher identifies as significant to the project's focus-of-inquiry. The aim of the former is to reconstruct the categories used by subjects to conceptualise their own experiences and world view, while the goal of the latter is to assist the researcher in developing theoretical insights through developing themes that illuminate the social processes operative in the site under study (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

As is common practice in process research, this study used an integrative form of data decomposition in the form of temporal bracketing (Langley, 1999). Temporal bracketing helps

to identify comparative units of analysis within a stream of longitudinal data. Temporal brackets are generally sequential and constructed as a progression of events and activities, separated by identifiable discontinuities in the temporal flow (Langley et al., 2013). I use the principle of temporal bracketing, as devised by Howard-Grenville et al. (2013), where three specific periods were defined to show identity reproductions and resurrections as an interactive process. Using these principles, I delineated two specific phases (named *initial identity work* and *ensuing identity work*) to show how entrepreneurs' identity changed depending on interactive identity work processes and their experiences of running their venture. The results of the thematic analysis are presented within these specific phases.

The analytical strategy also involved process comparison with cross case replication. This is done to advance knowledge while using comparative method across cases. Comparing distinctive cases is not, however, the only way to achieve replication and there is a common misconception that longitudinal case studies represent samples of one (Langley et al., 2013). It is important to note that the sample size for a process study is not the number of cases but the number of temporal observations. In the analysis I also undertook process decomposition through longitudinal examination or in-case analysis. I used the analysis software NVivo to open-end code the responses from the wave 1 and wave 2 of the interviews with entrepreneurs. These codes were used to identify specific identity tactics which formed the thematic codes to understand the types of identity work undertaken. Data from the interviews and field notes were also used to write individual cases based on the factual information. Both cross case and in case analysis has been carried out to build the findings presented in this study. An elaboration of the coding structure used to arrive at the theoretical dimensions is presented in Figure 1, below.

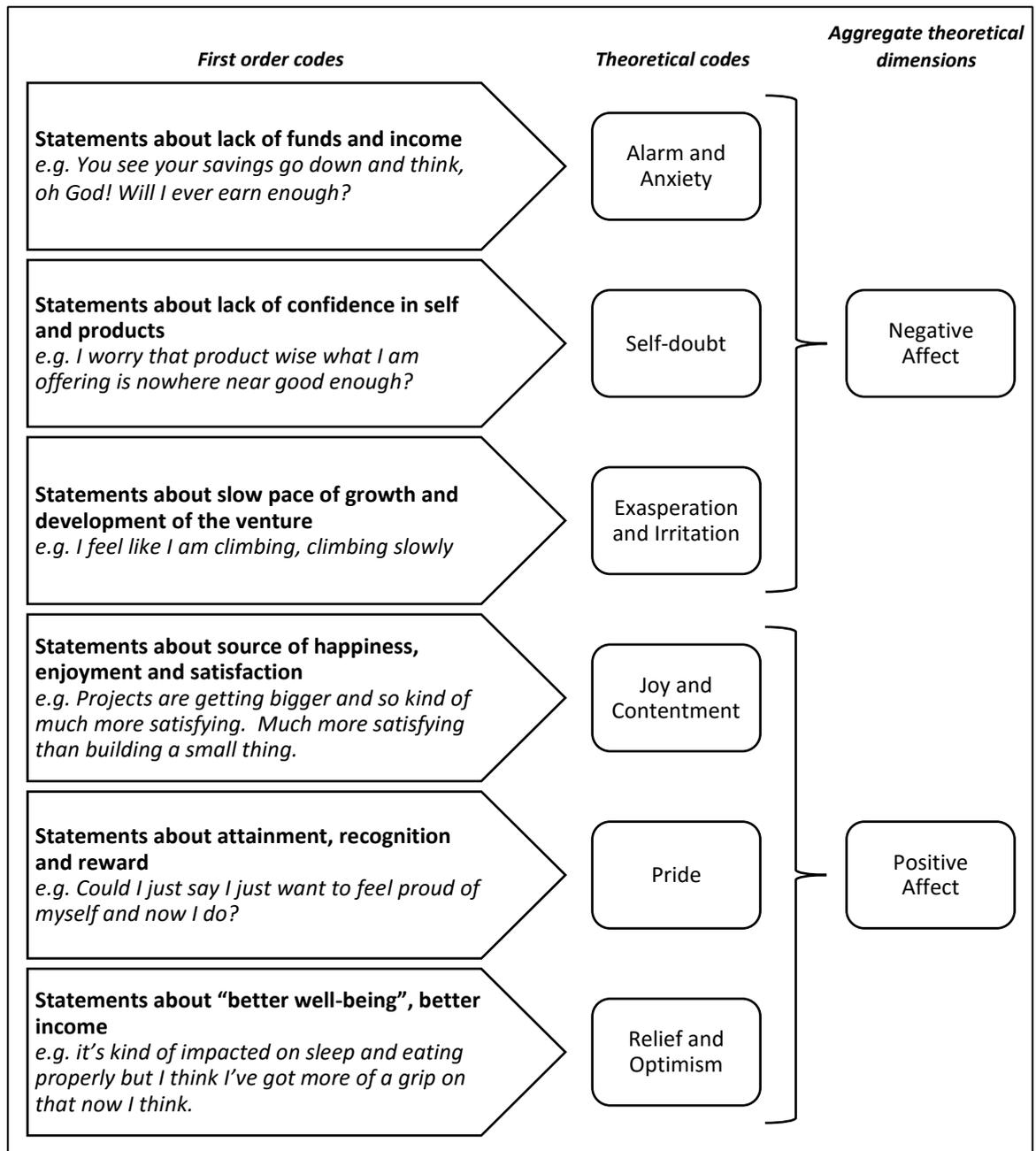
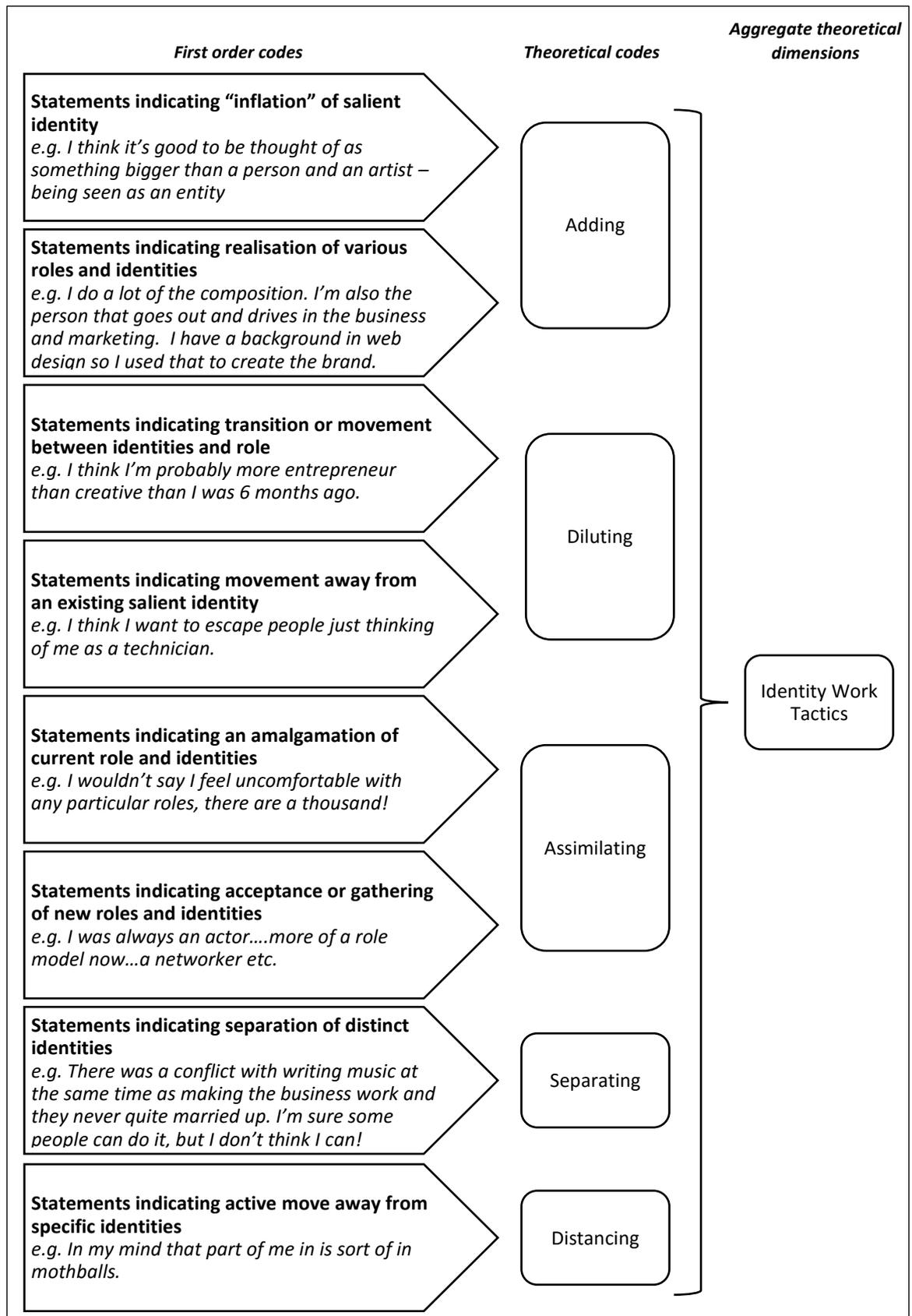


Figure 1: Coding structure for theoretical dimensions
(a) Positive and Negative Affects



**Figure 1: Coding structure for theoretical dimensions
 (b) Identity Work Tactics**

Results

Process model of identity work for identity equilibrium

An overarching finding from my analysis is that an entrepreneur's identity goes through significant change, from pre-founding identity equilibrium to disruption and a subsequent equilibrium, in the founding stage. This suggests that the founding of a venture is a valuable research site for understanding identity work. Figure 2 charts the process model that inductively emerged from my analysis, illustrating the two phases of identity work (i.e. initial identity work and ensuing identity work), the identity tactics (i.e. Adding, Diluting, Assimilating, Separating, Distancing) within these phases and the differing identity routes, i.e. journeys taken from identity disequilibrium to identity equilibrium, by creative entrepreneurs.

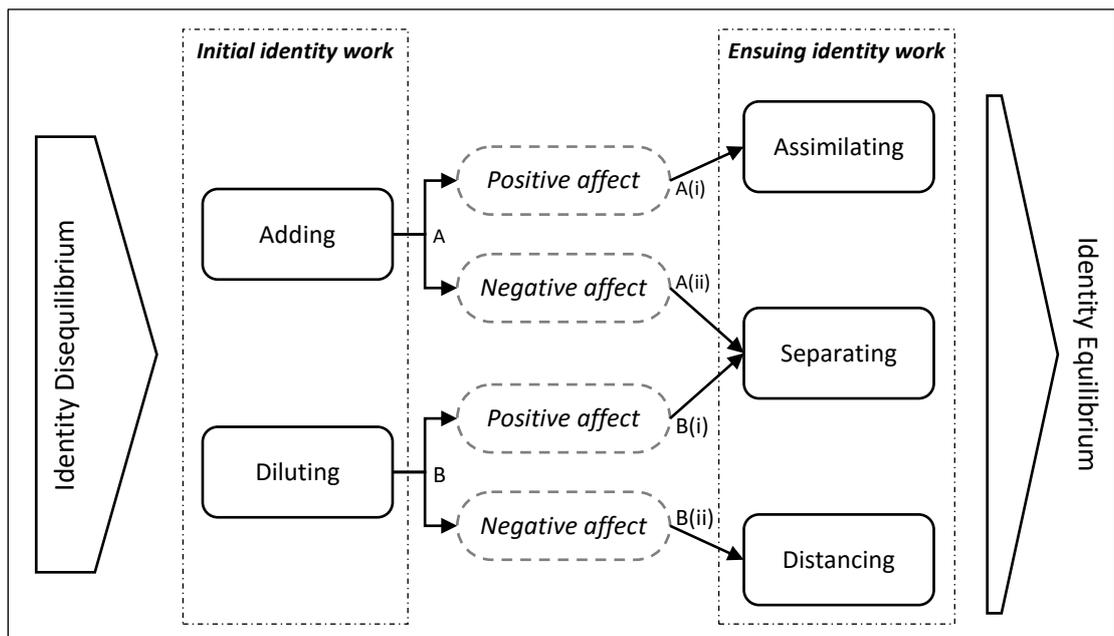


Figure 2: Process model for identity equilibrium in the founding stage

The model takes a temporal view and assumes that the entrepreneur has identity equilibrium, where all multiple identities are aligned, at the pre-venture stage. This balanced position allows the entrepreneur to start the venture; however, this equilibrium is slowly disrupted as the venture develops. My model charts the process of identity work after the venture has

commenced. Two particular phases are identified in this model and some of the key identity work tactics employed by entrepreneurs within these phases are explained. An attempt has been made to acknowledge the impact of affects arising from the first phase and impacting on the second phase of identity work. In phase one, the identity of the entrepreneur is in a disrupted state and phase two sees a gradual return to identity equilibrium.

The *initial identity work phase* within the founding stage is essentially hectic and demanding and marked by identity work which involves a reframing of the original self-concept of the entrepreneur in light of the realities of running the venture. Here identity equilibrium descends into disrupted identity and the identity work that follows is characterised by tactics such as Adding and Diluting. In the ensuing identity work phase, the identity tactics employed are Assimilating, Separating and Distancing. I now illustrate the identity routes through illustrative cases.

Illustration of identity routes

Case	Founder	Venture	Identity Route
1	Adam	Acting Agency	Adding - Positive Affect - Assimilating
2	Beth	Performing Arts Event Management	Adding - Positive Affect - Assimilating
3	Clarke	Furniture Making	Diluting - Positive Affect - Separating
4	Daniel	Dance Education & Performance	Adding - Negative Affect - Separating
5	Jack	Photography and Design Agency	Adding - Negative Affect - Separating
6	Francis	Music Composition and Production	Diluting - Positive Affect - Separating
7	Gemma	Textile Design	Adding - Positive Affect - Assimilating
8	Hilda	Dance Education	Adding - Negative Affect - Separating
9	Isaac	Music Production	Diluting - Positive Affect - Separating
10	Eleanor	Commercial Art Gallery and Café	Adding - Negative Affect - Separating
11	Anna	Art Gallery and Consultancy	Diluting - Negative affect - Distancing
12	Linda	Craft Workshops	Diluting - Negative affect - Distancing
13	Zoe	Cultural Consultancy	Not concluded
14	Helen	Art Gallery and Art materials shop	Not concluded
15	Kate	Fashion Design	Diluting - Negative affect - Distancing

Table 3: Identity routes established by case

Table 3 illustrates the identity routes taken by the different cases in my study. I recognise that for some cases in my study, an identity equilibrium that falls within my theorised categories has not been achieved in the time period of this investigation.

Route A: Adding

The two identity routes initiated by the identity tactic *Adding* are illustrated below. This tactic is an active attempt to expand or add more roles and identities to the initial identity structure to meet the growing demands of the venture on the entrepreneur. Some of the approaches observed in the data include *inflation of identity* and *realisation of new roles*. In phase two key identity tactics are observed: *Assimilating* and *Separating*. *Assimilating* involved creating a hybrid identity or links between identities and roles acquired subsequent to the initial equilibrium. Approaches seen here included *merging of new roles* and *amalgamation of roles*. *Separating* involved creating an identity with two or more dominant sub-identities and some of the methods to undertake this involved *reclaiming an identity* and *separating distinct identities*.

Route A (i) Adding – Positive Affect – Assimilating

This identity route is dominated by positive affects: the entrepreneur adds to their salient identity and this is met with positive affects. This positive affect leads to the founder integrating the multiple identities into a new hybrid identity to achieve equilibrium. Three cases in my sample followed this route. I illustrate this route using Gemma's case.

Gemma's business involves delivery of knitting workshops and sessions across the country. In addition, she designs and sells knitting patterns online. Gemma started the business with the primary focus of designing, knitting and training, but quickly found herself taking on many more roles in addition to these three. Gemma was the key person making and generating leads for the business. She has started gaining skills and experience in web design, photography and blogging.

So on that technology side I've just had to take on board a huge amount of stuff because I'd done absolutely everything myself. I've also started using Pinterest. That's quite fun and I'm sort of getting the hang of that. So yeah that's what, I mean that's a huge achievement that you kind of don't think about when you're starting a business.

Outside of her venture Gemma has had to fill in as a carer for her mother who had unexpectedly taken ill. In order to continue her artistic training, she started taking life drawing classes. The addition of roles was initially difficult but Gemma found a source of joy and contentment in the different roles she was now fulfilling.

I'm enjoying this. On the whole I'm happy. I like the variety of what I do. It is an enormous variety. There's no two, well, sometimes two days are the same, but it, you know, there's a lot more variety. I'm probably more confident, because despite having done some really good things and achieved some things in my life, confidence is not something I have a lot of before.

At the time of the exit interview, Gemma appears more settled and comfortable in her role as a business owner and has accepted the different roles this entailed. She was surprised yet encouraged by the acceptance of her new identity as an entrepreneur from her peers and customers. She saw her new identity as a composite of her being a designer, teacher, a marketer, a bookkeeper, a knitter and an artist. She is happy about the arts lessons and her role as a carer which she feels enhances her life and focusses her time and efforts on her venture.

I've had work in an exhibition with a couple of my friends so that kind of makes me feel more of an artist, because it's been more arty work. Although they said "oh put some of your hand knit stuff in", and so I did. The theme of the exhibition was transitions so my hand knit was showing things I'd done before and linking in to the pieces that I've produced through the business. So yeah when I've done exhibitions, the two times so far, I've been involved in and had to install and everything. I really enjoy it and yeah, I really want to do more of this.

She has done more workshops, has more magazines featuring her work, and sold more products than she expected in the initial stage of her venture.

For the two day workshops I was running I got very nervous because every time I looked on the venue's web site it wasn't advertised. Anyway she then emailed a short while later and said actually this is sold out! And she said would you stay for a third day? So I ended up doing 3 days of workshops, which was great. Went very well, got good feedback and everything and that led to me having someone in London booking me to teach a one-to-one in London for a single day.

And strangely, I don't know quite how this has happened, but at the end of last week I had an email from someone who works for Prima Makes magazine and they want to put something about that particular workshop in their February edition. So hopefully I might actually get some bookings, because I think that, it's not a magazine I'm familiar with, but presumably it has a fairly big circulation. So I don't know how that works, but that's a positive thing. And the one person who did come on the workshops before and came to two of them, has left very good feedback on my web site. So when I'm getting to do things, they're going well and I'm getting good feedback.

The positive affects such as pride and joy experienced by Gemma are clearly highlighted through the passage including in the use of phrases such as “was great”, “a positive thing”, “very good feedback”. Gemma is more confident and comfortable in promoting herself and her products than when she started the business. Overall she appears happier and more settled in the business and is now focussed on building a reputation for herself. In terms of her plans for the business over the next six months, she is on track with most of her business goals.

I feel it's getting into a routine and then you feel that you're doing a job in a sensible way. You feel you have actually got a practice, rather than running directionless all over the place. I think there's a lot less of that going on now.

Route A (ii) Adding – Negative affect - Separating

This identity route is dominated by negative affects: the entrepreneur adds to their identity but this does not sit comfortably with them. The negativity from this addition leads to the entrepreneur segregating their multiple identities or distancing from the identity which causes the most negative affects in order to achieve identity equilibrium. Four cases in my sample followed this route, which is illustrated by Daniel's case.

Daniel is a trained dancer and choreographer, and started a company focusing on dance education for young people. The business capitalises on Daniel's experience of working with young people and his willingness to use creativity to get young people motivated and thinking about life differently. He is part of an entrepreneurial team of two and he leads on programme delivery, while his business partner focuses on operations and finance. In the initial stages Daniel appears anxious about the low income levels from the company and takes up a part time role with a company that supports young people into creative careers. Within months of starting his first company, he starts another company to further his artistic ambitions which were not being met through the first venture. Daniel's time and priorities are divided between his two companies, delivery as an artist, business development and a part time job. He appears unable to fulfil any of them to his satisfaction. He exhibits self-doubt with regards to the quality of work he produces and is irritated with the pace of development of his venture. The dominant negative affects experienced by Daniel are illustrated in the excerpts below, which are further evidenced by use of terms such as "frustrated", "stressed", "torn" and "running before crawling".

Yeah and I think that's what at that stage when we spoke we were just trying to do everything ... you know and it wasn't getting anywhere. I was getting more frustrated, it was getting everybody else frustrated. It was frustrating because we wasn't being able to deliver. You know we're trying to run before we actually even can walk or even crawl.

His wellbeing and personal relationships suffer as he is pressed for time to dedicate to these areas of his life.

My happiness, my well-being, everything was very, very stressful, very torn very, very hard to kind of come along really. But within the past few months I've really kind of thought about how am I going to achieve everything, what I want to do.

I feel like I was a little bit aggressive like very assertive before. Like this needs to be done, this is how it needs to be. But now I'm kind of OK, cool let's just work together to get things done now. I think one thing I tell myself now, let's put a date on it and let's see how we're going to move backwards from that and where we are. Now when talking to people I might come across as ok, calm you know, I've lost my first designer based on that because I wanted a flyer designed so quickly and I did actually need it, but because I said it had to be done, I just wanted it. Whereas now I am like "how are we going to work on this?" "These are the things that need to be done." "I will support you if you need any advice"... and we've got everything done in a matter of days. Based upon just having that core, relaxed approach.

By the exit interview Daniel has given up his part time job and had reduced the time he spent on his first venture to specific days of the week. He is focussed on growing his second venture which fulfils him creatively. He is happier with this new "balance" and feels giving up the job meant that he has less stress and more focus on the venture he enjoys the most.

My well-being was very [low], very stressful, very torn, it was very, very hard to kind of go along really. But within the past few months I've really thought about - what am I about and how am I going to achieve my outcomes, rather than trying to do everything. And I think that's why I've been able to step back a bit more. It's made me feel a lot happier. I make my base income and I'm happy. So like today all I've done is all my [artistic company, venture B] stuff. Today is all about this - what I am about and Venture A, that's other days in the week.

Yeah I feel focussed now. I know what needs to be done and what actually needs to be put in place. And I don't feel like - why am I doing this? So I don't really suffer from high anxiety which I did before. And yeah I really kind of took a back seat, not a back seat, but took two steps backwards and realised I can actually look into the scenario rather than be right in the middle where I can't see exactly what's going on.

Route B: Diluting

The two identity routes initiated by the identity tactic *Diluting* are illustrated below. This tactic involves an active diminishing or redistribution of an initial identity structure. Some of the approaches observed that indicate diluting included *drifting between roles* and *ignoring specific identities*. In phase two, two key identity tactics are observed: Separating and Distancing. *Separating*, as described in Route A above, involved creating an identity with two or more dominant sub-identities and some of the methods to undertake this included *reclaiming an identity* and *separating distinct identities*. *Distancing* involved moving away from a previously salient identity or limiting its salience. A large amount of reflection was observed when individuals were involved in distancing a salient identity.

Route B (i) Diluting – Positive affect – Separating

This identity route is dominated by positive affects: the entrepreneur dilutes their identity which is met with positive affects. The positive affects lead the entrepreneur to operate with separated identities to achieve identity equilibrium. Three cases in my sample followed this route, which is illustrated by Isaac's case.

Isaac is a musician who has travelled extensively and collaborated on a range of projects while on his travels. He starts a music composition business with a view to compose music for collaborative projects in the UK and abroad. In his spare time, he also hopes to teach music to disabled and underprivileged children as a music tutor. As the business progresses Isaac identifies less and less with the entrepreneurial persona. His decision to start the business is based on the

belief that composition was his core skill set and he would find it difficult to work for anyone else.

Well I suppose the real motivation is that it's absolutely fundamental that I do what I love to do, that I enjoy my work, because I have such a short concentration span, such a terrible work ethic that unless I am creatively connected or involved, attached to what I'm doing, then I just won't do it. I'll just go to India for 6 months and live on a beach.

He is conscious of his status and financial security; however, he aims to limit how big he would like his business to be. He appears to be content with this decision and wants his venture to be contained and manageable so as to not interfere with his artistic and social ambitions.

In the second year, Isaac is focussing on marketing and presenting himself professionally. Business is progressing well but he finds that this alone is not enough for him.

I think the work has improved my sense of self-worth and my own sense of creative status, because I'm developing a portfolio of stuff now that is a testament to the fact that I'm a working musician, I'm being paid to write, to produce music. On the other hand I haven't really done any of my own personal projects, because I'm busy with other things.

I think it's had an impact on my interactions with other creative people, because they see me as someone, locally as someone that's probably more successful than I am. Partly because of the way I present myself and partly because maybe they, yeah they think I'm more successful than I am. With other business people I still don't think I'm interacting enough with other professionals face-to-face. And they think I'm presenting a professional enough picture, but I'm still not happy with it.

I have noticed that since I've started taking my composition much more seriously that I do have, I've taken myself more seriously and the way I present myself and describe myself to people in general as well as prospective clients is more confident. I do feel much more able to say that I'm a musician, I'm a working musician. And I'm a successful musician. Even though I'm not quite successful by my own terms yet. So I think publically it's improved my sense, my sense of sort of status, but privately I've missed not being able to do my own music.

There are some changes in his personal life (i.e. change of home and studio space) and in terms of other work, he is drawn to doing more hours of teaching and workshops. Both of these aspects appear to be having an impact on the pace at which his business is growing. He displays a lot of pride in the work he is doing with tutoring children.

Well my other work I would say is doing some private teaching with children who normally have emotional problems or special education needs. I don't really teach them, I collaborate with them to make and record new pieces of music. I had motivation before, but my motivation now is more intrinsic and I feel I'm delivering value to the young people, to myself in financial terms and in emotional terms.

By the exit interview Isaac has made a conscious decision to focus more on teaching and running workshops. He is not actively promoting the venture but is reacting to any projects that are coming his way. He is very excited to be playing in a band again as a hobby and for no financial return. He appears to have separated his identity as a business owner to that of a tutor and a hobbyist (musician).

What I found actually is that I, now that I have financial security I'm actually less motivated to find work, compositional work. I kind of found a cohesion to my educational work where it's all done in a spirit that I work to help people compose new music and then that helped me to clarify psychologically what I was actually doing. It's much easier to describe it in different ways to different people, including myself.

Route B (ii) Diluting – Negative affect – Distancing

This identity route is dominated by negative affects: the entrepreneur dilutes his identity but this is met with negative affects. The negativity leads them to seek some distance from certain salient identities in order to achieve identity equilibrium. A large amount of reflection was observed when individuals were involved in distancing a salient identity. Three cases in my sample followed this route, which is illustrated by Anna's case.

Anna trained as an artists and at our first interview identifies herself as an artist and an entrepreneur. She has a job in an unrelated field which helps her feel financially secure. Anna sees a gap in the market in her city and starts a small selling gallery. A few months into the business she decides to add a consultancy function to her operations. Anna has concrete plans for where she wants to take the business, however there are many unknowns in the coming months with regards to her premises, funding and new clients.

In the second year, Anna's business has gone through major changes as she loses the space for her gallery. She focusses her business more on the consultancy work with a view to relocating the gallery business and if feasible, getting a new space. In addition, she has changed her job to something that is more relevant and fulfilling. As the consultancy work is hard to come by, Anna is exasperated with the pace of her venture and the constant blows and disappointments. She feels that her job, which allows her to take a mentoring role to upcoming creative entrepreneurs, is more fulfilling and winds up her venture as she does not feel she was being effective at running it at the present time.

And I don't like being bad at what I do. I don't. If I'm employed I don't like to feel like I'm letting my employer down. I think you have to be that type of person to do your own thing and run your own business.

At the exit interview Anna believes that being an artist and an entrepreneur at the same time is not a logical career choice.

Because it's not a logical career, being an artist, being an entrepreneur as well, but being an artist...yeah everyone knows you're not going to make any money. You're not going to end up in a mansion with a massive shiny car unless you're Damien Hurst or similar.

Anna is most comfortable in her identity as an artist and less comfortable in her identity as a business owner.

My relationship with money has always been, I wouldn't know how to describe it. I think it's something that you need, I'm not driven by it at all. I don't think I was ever quite comfortable trying to make money from my work in terms of what I'd made.

Like curating and doing what I did at the gallery was different, but in terms of kind of making work ... even when I was quite heavily into photography when I was at college and I was doing that and I was selling pieces, but it just, I never wanted to make work to sell. I always wanted to make the work that I wanted to make. My practice was so process driven that it just never felt right to then try to make money out of exhibiting this and showing that. I think if I put the pressure on of I've got to make money from this work then I don't end up making the work that I want to make. It's the work that I need to make and it doesn't achieve the things that I want it to achieve and also I end up working all the time, because that's what I do to unwind and for fun and to process things that are going on in my life.

She decides to continue with her job as a mentor for other creatives and make art for her personal pleasure. She does not want to let go of her ambitions of running a venture and makes plans to gather skills and resources over the next few years, reflect on her recent experience and start a new venture in the near future.

I think there's been a lot of things that have pushed me to analyse the situation. I think it's a constant process of analysing - well why am I doing this? I like to be out of my comfort zone. I like to be a bit scared about what I'm doing. This job relies on who I am as a person (an artist and an entrepreneur) because even though it's my job, it relies on who I am. I will start a business again and have some plans on what it might be.

As illustrated in the cases, the *initial identity work phase* shows a marked increase in positive and negative affects of the entrepreneur. Using the PANAS framework of affects (Watson et al., 1998), these include joy, contentment, pride, relief (positives); and anxiety, exasperation and alarm (negatives). I find that that the nature of the affects dominant at this phase influences the identity work tactics in the *ensuing identity work phase*. The ensuing identity work phase is focused on returning to a level of identity equilibrium so that disruption is minimised and a balanced self-concept is achieved. It is anticipated that the subsequent equilibrium in turn impacts on the entrepreneurs' behaviour and decision making with regards to the future of the venture. This is because identities shape behaviour when they become salient to an individual (Hogg et al., 1995 in Powell and Baker, 2014). An analysis of these behaviours and outcomes and the extension of the process model to incorporate these element is beyond the scope of this paper.

Although through this theoretical framework I have tried to plot a linear path across temporal lines, in the founding stage, in practice this is not always the case. For some entrepreneurs the two identity work phases overlapped. Additionally, a range of affects of the entrepreneur are intrinsically linked to all activities and decisions of the entrepreneur and are continually present throughout the founding stage. The focus of this study involved delineating and examining the importance of the affects in between the two identity work phase. I now discuss some of the main contributions of this study.

Discussion

As the main contributions of this study, I propose that identity work is undertaken for identity coherence and equilibrium, identity work tactics change over time and these changes are influenced by the changing affects of the individual. This study addresses the need for a better understanding of the micro-processes involved in identity work. In doing this it contributes to three gaps in research in identity work. First, it responds to calls by scholars to undertake “further fine-grained research” in order to “appreciate nuances in how, why and with what implications identity work is engaged in by people” (Brown, 2015:31; Ibarra, 1999:765). Second, it responds to the “considerable scope” identified by scholars to research “how identity work processes are affected by factors such as emotions” (Brown, 2015:31). Finally, it acknowledges the need to examine “the importance and affects of people’s need for self-coherence” (Brown, 2015:31).

Micro-processes of identity work

The theoretical process models and strategies of identity work (see Table 1) devised by scholars suggest varying identity tactics. However, at their core, most recognise the dimensions of multiplicity and balance or “identity plurality” and “identity synergy” (Pratt and Foreman, 2000). The other similarity in these identity tactics relates to dichotomous dimensions of Integration and Separation of multiple identities. I believe that they take a simplistic view of identity work tactics and do not explore a staged approach to unearth micro-processes within these two broad categories of identity tactics. The study that informs the micro-process in the identity model in this paper to the greatest extent is Pratt and Foreman’s (2000) framework exploring how multiple organisational identities are managed. The scholars propose four broad tactics; I propose a more nuanced model with two phases of identity work as I find this to provide a more thorough explanation of the identity work process in the context of this study.

Pratt and Foreman (2000) label their identity tactics as: *Aggregation* (finding links between identities), *Integration* (combining identities to build a new one), *Compartmentalisation* (separating identities) and *Deletion* (removing an identity completely). My process model of identity work of creative entrepreneurs builds on this model in three ways. I introduce an additional phase to the identity work processes with two additional identity tactics (i.e. *Adding and Diluting*) thus analysing the process with more granularity. Secondly, I identify categories of positive and negative affects of the entrepreneur stemming from phase one and impacting on phase two of the identity work process. Finally, the categories of identity work tactics differ from the ones previously proposed.

Delving more into the specific tactics of identity work in the second phase of the process model, and comparing them to those identified by Pratt and Foreman (2000), I find the tactic *Assimilating* can be seen as a composite of what the scholars term *Integrating and Aggregating* i.e. fusing or finding links between various sub-identities. *Separating* almost exactly follows the definition for what the scholars label as *Compartmentalisation* i.e. separating distinct identities and maintaining them as such. This is a key identity work tactic proposed by other scholars (Kreiner et al., 2006; Ashforth et al., 2000) for dealing with competing or conflicting identities.

Finally, Pratt and Foreman (2000) identify a tactic they label as *Deletion*. Through the empirical research into the founding stage of the creative industries I find that in this context, there is a tendency to *Distance* from certain identities (mainly due to the inability to fulfil the aspirations of that identity) but not delete it. This is novel to my model derived from the context of this study. Individuals show a willingness to reassume that identity or reclaim in at a later date by using distancing rather than deleting as an identity tactic. It may be that *Deletion* of identity does occur in this context, but the time period of this research did not reveal identity work that results in changes with such a level of finality. The other reason for deletion to appear in the

model proposed by Pratt and Foreman (2000) could be the fact that their process model deals with managerial responses to multiple organisational identities. Managerial action can be imposed on an individual (or in this case an organisation or a team) over time. The identity work tactics highlighted in this paper are derived from internal identity processes of the individual and for that reason are less final. The staged model proposed in this paper has parallels with other staged models such as the remedial identity process model proposed by Lutgen-Sandvik (2008) when studying workplace bullying. However unlike the model discussed by the scholars, I incorporate the impact of affect within the micro-processes which is a novel feature of this model.

Role of affect in identity work

Many models of identity work (see Table 1) are studied as a response to demanding situations or at times of transition (Creed et al., 2010; Kreiner et al., 2006). In these situations, scholars have acknowledged that “strains, tensions and surprises are prevalent, as these prompt feelings of confusion, contradiction and self-doubt” (Brown, 2015:25). However, affects and feelings are underexplored in relation to identity work. In the entrepreneurship literature there is a growing interest in studying affect (Baron, 2008; Baron and Tang, 2011; Cardon et al., 2012) however the connection of affect with identity and identity work of entrepreneurs is yet to be made.

As the second contribution of this study, I explore this connection between affect and identity work processes. My analysis reveals a variety of affects stemming from identity work and in my model I illustrate how these affects can act as a trigger for further identity work. As a stimulus for identity work, Ibarra (1999) acknowledges the influence of situational and individual influences on the identity adaptation process. However here individual factors include traits, abilities, and past experiences. Yet again affects do not get a mention as a trigger for identity work. Although there is a growing interest shown by scholars in devising and modifying identity

work models (cf. Brown, 2015 for a review), these are largely presented in isolation of affect. My work demonstrates that founding in the presence of multiple identities can trigger identity work, which in turn creates an affective response in entrepreneurs. The nature of these affects can subsequently influence the identity work tactics the entrepreneur adopts in order to return to identity equilibrium. By illustrating the role of both positive and negative affect in shaping entrepreneurs' identity work, I make a novel contribution to identity work (which has largely ignored the role of affect) and an important contribution to the entrepreneurship field.

The need for coherence through identity equilibrium

As the third and final contribution of this paper, I illustrate the need and pattern for identity equilibrium of entrepreneurs in the founding stage. The gradualist view of identity work accepts that identities adjust and evolve at times of disequilibrium “only to find and maintain an optimum balance or equilibrium position” (Brown, 2015:27). Such identity work is undertaken to move from disequilibrium to equilibrium or from fragmentation to coherence. Therefore, I define identity equilibrium as a balance between multiple identities which provides identity coherence.

While scholars acknowledge the existence of multiple identities within a single individual, (Shepherd and Haynie, 2009; Fauchart and Gruber, 2011), “relatively few frameworks exist to explain why multiple identities are harmful and when they are beneficial” (Pratt and Foreman, 2000:36). Among some of the earlier work in this area Hoelter (1985) reported that individuals that have few identities do not have the requisite strategies to respond to complex situations, while individuals with many identities have to deal with enhanced conflicts. Disrupted identities and an imbalance in the identity structure can be “emotionally draining and take precious cognitive resources away from performing roles effectively” (Kreiner et al., 2006:1033). Scholars

believe that understanding the dynamics related to restoring equilibrium can lead to greater esteem, self-worth, efficiencies and overall well-being (Hahn et al., 2012).

Limitations and areas of further research

In proposing a process model for identity work of creative entrepreneurs in the founding stages, I make the following assumptions. Firstly, as scholars have outlined, multiple identities can be and are managed by individuals. Additionally, these multiple identities involve multiple conceptions of that individual and their priorities, i.e. what is important to them. Some of these identities may contradict or compete with each other, as is the case with commercial and creative identities of creative entrepreneurs (Markusen, 2006). As the venture progresses through the founding stage, experience in the venture is gained. There are external influences such as recognition, competitive success, feedback etc. that also have an impact on identity work. Some of these external triggers and their impact on identity work in the founding stages has not been dealt with in this study.

This research was based on in-depth study of 15 founders of creative ventures based in the UK. While I have conducted an inductive analysis of the data in a manner that supports theoretical generalizability (Eisenhardt, 1989), the process of theoretical sampling that I followed restricts the direct empirical generalisability of the findings. I invite scholars to extend these findings of this study and the process model to analyse further staged approaches to identity work in other phases of the venture i.e. the growth or decline phase. This will develop a more detailed understanding of identity changes in the entrepreneur over the life of the venture and address the gap in entrepreneurship literature relating to the relatively static perspective taken on entrepreneurs' identity.

In this study, the identity route from disequilibrium to equilibrium passes through two specific stages of active identity work and changing affects. Such a study contributes to our understanding

of how identity coherence is achieved over time. I believe that more research in this area would lead to an enhanced and more detailed understanding of how time impacts on identity coherence. As Brown (2015:31) suggests “there is considerable posturing around the notion that identities provide people with a sense of temporal coherence” but few scholars have ventured to build on this insight.

Conclusion

Founding is disruptive and can trigger identity work in creative entrepreneurs who hold multiple identities. Founding and the associated identity work stimulate affective responses which induces further identity work. I present two main identity routes i.e. *Addition* and *Dilution* that entrepreneurs take in their quest to (re)gain a level of equilibrium in the founding phase. As my main contribution I propose that adopting a process approach allows us to go beyond identity tactics to show how identities evolve in entrepreneurs and acknowledge the role of affect in this evolution.

ARTICLE 2: NEGOTIATING DIRTY WORK – THE USE OF NARRATIVE IDENTITY WORK BY CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS

Abstract

Although entrepreneurship is seen as a positive activity by society and individuals, entrepreneurs are often faced with conflicting roles and related identities not all of which are positive. In the creative industries, I find that some entrepreneurs feel that commercialising their talent gives them a negative sense of self and diminishes their identity as a creative. This conflict between commercial and artistic identities and the resulting identity work is examined in this paper through the concept of *dirty work*. Through a longitudinal, qualitative study of ten creative entrepreneurs, I propose that when faced with this identity conflict, the narrative of the creative entrepreneurs take two clear identity paths that help them make sense of dirty work. I label these identity paths as *altruistic* and *commercially expedient*. I make two contributions; first I extend theory of identity work of entrepreneurs when faced with identity conflict in the initial stages of the venture by suggesting identity paths taken by individuals to reduce this conflict; secondly, I examine how dirty work relates to entrepreneurs in the creative industries. Additionally, I advocate for the use of narrative identity work to study identity conflict and resulting identity work of entrepreneurs.

Introduction

“Some people are the greatest people on Earth with good hearts and will get in the studio and make the most negative music in the world for the sake of success. That’s what the music business does to you.”

Lupe Fiasco (rapper, record producer, and entrepreneur)

Scholars have recognised entrepreneurship as a predominantly positive activity for individuals (Rindova et al., 2009) and society (Schumpeter, 1934; Henderson and Executive, 2007). On a societal level this optimism can be attributed to the positive effects of new ventures on economies

such as through wealth and job creation. On an individual level, entrepreneurs can feel emancipated (Rindova et al., 2009) and build high levels of psychological capital (Baron et al., 2013), both of which are positive effects of starting and running a venture. However, starting a venture is also stressful (Sexton and Bowman, 1986). For some entrepreneurs, this stress comes from having to reconcile different roles such as salesperson, financial controller and administrator, each of which may be associated with different sub-identities. As illustrated in the quote above, a few sub-sectors of the creative industries have suffered from such a fate. Entrepreneurs in the creative industries, need to make sense of multiple identities which may conflict with each other. These entrepreneurs need to find ways of commercialising their talent which may contradict with their artistic aspirations. Through this study I observed that the act of creating a business as a means of commercialising one's creative ability was contentious, with financial success being associated with a sense of 'selling out'. For creative entrepreneurs, this can be a real challenge because making money from artistic product carries a level of stigma (Bridgstock, 2013; Beckman, 2010). I was intrigued, therefore, about the possibility that entrepreneurship felt stigmatised in some quarters of the creative industries. This aspect of entrepreneurship resonates with the notion of dirty work which has hitherto not been explored in relation to entrepreneurship.

Coined by Hughes (1951), "dirty work" refers to tasks termed as degrading or disgusting. This definition was later expanded to cover tasks that were "physically, socially or morally tainted" (Hughes, 1958:22). Dirty work has thus far been explored in different empirical settings involving stigmatised work such as funeral workers (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999), tattooists (Wicks and Grandy, 2007), and exotic dancers (Grandy, 2008; Grandy and Mavin, 2011). These studies illustrate how organisations and professional groups make sense of, and deal with, the stigma associated with their professions and means of livelihood (Ashforth et al., 2007; Kreiner

et al., 2006). The process and methods for the construction of a positive and “esteem enhancing” social identity is at the heart of these studies (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999:416). It is interesting that the studies take a societal view in analysing what is perceived as dirty and do not engage in the conceptual exploration of dirty work from an individual perspective. To understand how individual identities respond to dirty work a setting that allows us to analyse individual cognition and action is required. Entrepreneurship is seen as an individualistic act (Morris et al., 1994), and thus provides a theoretically interesting setting to research dirty work. More specifically, the concept is pertinent to the creative industries and offers a unique perspective to analyse how some entrepreneurs deal with the idea of making money from their talent and trading in it when this is seen as ‘losing integrity’ by themselves, their peer group and by certain sections of society. There are age old tensions in the creative industries around money. Money here has been seen as a dirty word and making money by catering to the market can be seen as dirty work. Although the negativity associated with money in the creative sector has been discussed by scholars (Caves, 2000; DiMaggio, 1983), the discussion of dirty work with regards to these entrepreneurs is yet to take place. It is surprising that this valuable concept of dirty work has not been examined conceptually in this setting. By discussing this scenario faced by creative entrepreneurs, more specifically identity conflict that manifests as dirty work, this study brings the discussion of dirty work into the entrepreneurship literature. It explores strategies used by these entrepreneurs in the very initial stages of their venture to cope with dirty work.

In response to the research gaps proposed, the primary aim of this study is to examine *how dirty work is experienced by entrepreneurs*. In the course of exploring this query within this study’s empirical setting, I also explore *how creative entrepreneurs use identity work to make sense of and cope with dirty work*. I argue that the creative industries represent a theoretically interesting setting in which to study dirty work because entrepreneurs operating in these

industries deal with conflict between their creative and commercial identities. This conflict manifests as dirty work in the initial stages of the venture. Additionally, my inductive research suggests that (narrative) identity work is used to reconcile the identity conflict that emerges from perceptions of entrepreneurship as dirty work. In management studies, the use of narrative identity as a method to observe identity work in groups and individuals has been consistently gaining ground (Watson, 2009). It has proved to be a valuable method for scholars that look to analyse entrepreneurs' identity work processes at the initial stages of a venture through the analysis of their narratives (Phillips et al., 2013; Wry et al., 2011; Jones et al., 2007). These scholarly works lend support to my choice of this method for this study.

In what follows, I outline the literature on dirty work and explain the relevance of studying it within entrepreneurship. Next, I explore literature on identity work of entrepreneurs specifically dealing with multiple identities and identity conflict and briefly review the use of narrative identity work as a method for studying identity of entrepreneurs. These provide an explanation of the key concepts employed to evaluate the findings from my longitudinal inductive study with ten creative entrepreneurs in the UK. I then present a series of themes from the data analysis of the participants' accounts of how they make sense of dirty work. Specifically, that which manifests through a conflict between their commercial and creative sub-identities in relation to their ventures. Following this with a discussion, I pull together the findings of the study and conclude by suggesting my contributions and identifying a few avenues for further research.

Theoretical background

The concept of dirty work and its applicability to the creative industries

Dirty work refers to tasks or activities which may be termed as “degrading or disgusting”, however Hughes (1951), who coined the term, later felt the need to expand its scope to include tasks that were “physically, socially or morally tainted” (Hughes, 1958). More recent studies in this field have further expanded the discussion to “move beyond an exclusive focus on intense dirty work occupations by mapping the broader landscape of stigmatised work” (Kreiner et al, 2006:619). It is this broader definition of dirty work as stigmatised or tainted work that I adopt in this study. In essence, it engages with the concept of “emotional dirt” defined as “expressed feelings that threaten the solidarity, self-conception or preferred orders of a given individual or community” (McMurray and Ward, 2014:20). Scholars have explored stigmatised work in different empirical settings such as funeral workers (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999), identity construction of tattooists (Wicks and Grandy, 2007), and exotic dancers (Grandy, 2008).

Studies in dirty work have analysed how organisations, occupations and collectives are influenced by the stigma of dirty work. By analysing the media portrayal of the occupation of exotic dancers, Grandy and Mavin (2011) outlined the importance of the media in forming the image of this dirty work occupation. Wicks and Grandy (2007) examined the types of culture that exist within collectives of tattooists seen as a dirty work occupation. The scholars analysed how tattooists sought membership and participation in collectives to negotiate dirty work. While the studies cited above analysed dirty work in specific empirical settings, Ashforth et al. (2007) attempted to offer a more comprehensive understanding of how dirty work is negotiated. Through their study with managers from 18 dirty work occupations, the scholars investigated the specific challenges faced by these managers and how the taint they felt was normalised. Four types of practices for countering taint were adopted by these managers which included

“occupational ideologies, social buffers, confronting clients and the public, and defensive tactics” (Ashforth et al., 2007:157).

From this discussion, I believe there are two key areas of research that are yet to be explored in relation to dirty work. Firstly, the individual’s identity, especially discussion of their multiple identities, is missing in this literature. Analysing how people cope with dirty work on an individual level, in light of their multiple sub-identities, provides a useful lens to acquire a more comprehensive understanding of coping with dirty work. Secondly, these papers fail to outline how self-concept and identity of these professionals, managers or business owners faced with a sense of taint evolves over time. This transitory approach can enhance our understanding of how these ventures and individuals develop. I argue that expanding the scope of how dirty work manifests and is normalised from societal to an individual level and, over a period of time, would give us a more holistic view of the concept and its application. This paper seeks to address both these gaps by using the creative industries as the empirical setting and placing creative entrepreneurs at the heart of this research.

Certain enterprises have negative associations or stigma related with them and although academic literature has focussed on identity processes of workers (Grandy, 2008) in such professions or businesses, analysing the identity work of the entrepreneurs has thus far not had much academic interest. This is especially true for the creative industries. The creative entrepreneur has been identified as one who has the “creativity to unlock the wealth that lies within themselves” (Howkins, 2001:128). Some creative entrepreneurs produce goods and services with artistic merit. Assigning a monetary value or commercialising such products and services according to market forces has a certain level of stigma attached to it (Markusen et al., 2006). Although creative individuals have always needed to find a market for their output in order to earn a livelihood, how they feel about commercialising their output is not wholly

positive. Therefore, I find that the concept of dirty work is pertinent to creative entrepreneurs as it offers a unique perspective to analyse how some entrepreneurs match the idea of making money from their talent and trading in it. For some creatives this idea of commercialising talent is seen as “selling out” or “losing integrity” by certain sections of society (Beckman, 2010). Money here is the dirty word (Bridgstock, 2013) and making money by catering to the market is seen as dirty work. The negativity associated with money in the creative industries has been discussed by scholars (Eikhof and Haunschild, 2006; Caves, 2000; DiMaggio, 1983), but the discussion of dirty work with regards to creative entrepreneurs is yet to take place.

Interestingly, as the creative industries grow in size and scale and acquire greater social recognition as an organised sector, there are visible shifts in its perception by society. Most importantly, the sense of stigma associated with commercialisation of certain creative and artistic products and catering to a wider market is diminishing (Eikhof and Haunschild, 2006). However, for creative entrepreneurs, identity conflict between their multiple identities, especially their commercial and creative identities, can still lead to a sense of dissatisfaction towards their work (Hackley and Kover, 2007). As Bridgstock (2013) observed, while most entrepreneurs are ‘pulled’ into venture creation, for artists starting out as entrepreneurs this is more an act of necessity or a ‘push’ to make a livelihood. If this holds true, then the sense of identity conflict stemming from such a decision is inevitable. For this reason, it is important to investigate the identity work of these entrepreneurs in order to shed light on the conflict generated by their role as an entrepreneur. The conflict is especially apparent in the initial stages of a venture where key identity transformations start to surface (Fauchart and Gruber, 2011). Studying identity conflict and resolution through the framework of dirty work at this stage of the venture will enrich our understanding of identity work especially as it relates to entrepreneurship. I now examine the literature in identity work in entrepreneurship with a focus on identity conflict.

Narrative identity of entrepreneurs

Narrative identity may be defined as a method of construction of self-identity whereby an individual integrates life experiences into an “internalized, evolving story of the self”, that provides the individual with a sense of unity and purpose (McAdams, 2001:103). The concept of narrative identity gained ground through the work of McAdams (1985, 2001) who built on the work of narrative theorists and psychologists such as Bruner and Polkinghorne (Squire, 2008) to propose a life-story model. McAdams (1985) suggested that stories narrated by individuals are character building and hence more than a way of remembering past events and experiences. Additionally, “our narrative identities are the stories we live by” (McAdams et al., 2006:4, cited in Bamberg, 2010) and “self-defining stories” (McAdams and Janis, 2004:161, cited in Bamberg 2010). The discussion presented by scholars outlines the importance of narrative identity as a field of study and its use for analysing identity construction of individuals and groups in academic disciplines such as psychology, sociology and anthropology.

Narrative identities have been outlined as a sophisticated concept due to its mutable and multiple nature. As Brown (2006) indicates, it is pivotal to appreciate that narrative identities are “complexes of in-progress stories and story-fragments, which are in a perpetual state of becoming” and therefore need to be acknowledged as such (2006:732). Individuals tend to author multiple identities about themselves (Brown 2005:313); these identity narratives are not static, and nor are they ever completed. They are almost constantly in the process of being accomplished (assembled, disassembled, refined, elaborated, and embellished) with “whole” stories, and what Boje (2001:5) refers to as story “fragments”, sometimes coming together and at other times pulling apart in a complex communicative storytelling milieu. (Brown 2005:314). I add to this view taken by scholars by exploring the longitudinal nature of forming and reforming multiple identities by creative entrepreneurs in the founding phase of their venture while

acknowledging the impact of identity conflict among their multiple sub-identities on the re-authoring of their 'stories'.

Some of the key discussions in this area that inform this study include narrative identity work in role transition (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010); narrative identity creation and maintenance of entrepreneurial identity (Down and Warren, 2008); and most importantly, identification of narrative paths in response to novel discourse (Humphreys and Brown, 2008). Humphreys and Brown conduct an analysis of changing narratives of employees and proposed different identity routes taken by individuals in an organisation when faced with a novel discourse i.e. corporate social responsibility policies. Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010) emphasise the role of narrative identity work in macro role transitions of individuals. They argue that when transitions occur narrative identity work is more prevalent than when there are no transitions. The transition into entrepreneurship can be viewed as a significant role transition (Hoang and Gimeno, 2010), and as such analysis of the narratives of creative individuals as they create new businesses might usefully generate new insights into the nature of the identity work these entrepreneurs undertake. Like the scholars that influence my work, this study has "drawn on and draws together research into narratives and identities" (Brown 2005:315) as I analyse narratives of creative entrepreneurs to gain a better understanding of their identity work.

Identity work in entrepreneurship – from conflict to coherence

Scholars have argued that who entrepreneurs believe they are (i.e. their self-concept) has an impact on the nature of their entrepreneurial activity (Fauchart and Gruber, 2011; Hoang and Gimeno, 2010; Murnieks and Mosakowski, 2007; Murnieks et al., 2014; Navis and Glynn, 2011; Shepherd and Haynie, 2009). Yet some argue that researchers have only scratched the surface with regards to the insights identity theory can offer our understanding of the entrepreneur and entrepreneurship (Conger et al, 2012). Consequently, a review of related literature in

entrepreneurship and identity shows that the study of entrepreneur's identity processes or identity work, is a growing area of research (Navis and Glynn, 2011; Fauchart and Gruber, 2011; Hoang and Gimeno, 2010). Sveningsson and Alvesson (2003:1187) define identity work by calling it "a formal conceptualization of the ways in which human beings are continuously engaged in forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising the constructions that are productive of a sense of coherence and distinctiveness".

Identity work becomes all the more important if one subscribes to the view that the identity of an individual is not monolithic but made up of multiple sub-identities (Hoang and Gimeno, 2010; Fauchart and Gruber, 2011). The desire for coherence as defined by Sveningsson and Alvesson (2003) is heightened when an individual is faced with the need to bring together competing priorities and related sub-identities. To understand how such identity work transpires, it is important to take a closer look into the varying views and processes that have been examined by scholars when researching multiple identities. Identity work involves processes by which the co-existing and conflicting sub-identities of an entrepreneur are negotiated (Pratt and Foreman, 2000). Sveningsson and Alvesson (2003) illustrated how multiple identities of an individual are negotiated for the construction of managerial identities and proposed that identity work leads to integration and fragmentation of the multiple identities of the individual. Kreiner et al. (2006) proposed integration and differentiation as two separate strategies to cope with multiple identities of priests. Some scholars have also looked at more multi-dimensional strategies such as Pratt and Foreman (2000) drawing on individual-level theories to demonstrate strategies for identity work such as deletion, aggregation, compartmentalization and integration (Pratt and Foreman, 2000).

In addition to some of the strategies proposed for negotiating multiple identities, I examine some of the factors that scholar's believed motivated identity work. A key cited motivator for

undertaking identity construction was found to be the need to align work demands with self-identity so that work identity integrity and coherence was achieved (Pratt et al., 2006). Identity work can also help resolve identity struggles, tensions and conflicts. Situational factors within which individuals operate may contravene their internal beliefs and needs, which can cause identity tension. In analysing one such scenario, Kreiner et al. (2006) found that identity work occurs while these tensions are being resolved. The scholars also concluded that identity work tactics that are developed in resolving identity tension are transferrable and can be “shared and taught” (Kreiner et al., 2006:1052). In the context of change in policing policies, Davies and Thomas (2008) found that the introduction of a new discourse to a specific role can result in instability or fragmentation of identities and identity work occurred to resolve the fragmentation and find a state of identity equilibrium. Additionally, by examining the role of gay, lesbian and transgender priests in Protestant churches, Creed et al. (2010) offered a theoretical model of the micro-processes that actors undertake to bring together the institutional expectations with their marginalised identities. The scholars proposed that the internalisations of the contradictions lead to identity reconciliation which has inward manifestation on identity and outward manifestations on the behaviour of individuals (Creed et al., 2010).

Although the context of the literature drawn on here varies greatly, scholars agree on the need to understand how and why identity work occurs in response to identity conflict and tensions between multiple identities. Identity work is undertaken for coherence of identity and coherence refers to individuals’ sense of “their own continuity over time, clarity in awareness of the connections between their multiple identities, a sense of completeness or wholeness” (Brown, 2015:27). Therefore, there is a need to understand how identity conflict stemming from multiple identities is negotiated and understand the identity processes sought by individuals that feel this conflict. Looking at this identity conflict as dirty work, and its negotiation through

identity work processes, presents a unique perspective that enriches our understanding of identity work theory. With this in mind, I analyse identity work undertaken for coherence as a result of identity conflict which manifests as dirty work in entrepreneurs in the creative industries.

Methods

Research setting

The research setting of this study is the creative industries and the participants are creative entrepreneurs in the founding phase of their venture. This sector is characterised by a large number of small, micro-businesses and sole traders with a relatively small number of larger organisations. Self-employment and business ownership are significant career choices for many of those working in this industry. Similarly, many develop 'portfolio' careers, juggling several part-time positions along with freelance work (Department of Culture Media and Sport, 2006). Due to these factors, many entrepreneurs that work in this industry display multiple identities concurrently. Some of these coexist comfortably while others are in conflict, especially identities related to commercial and creative aspects. These are the main identities under investigation as part of this research. Conflicts between commercial and creative aspirations and identities have been observed by scholars (Hackley and Kover, 2007) which makes it an interesting setting to study identity conflict and negotiation.

There are other reasons for the choice of the creative industries as the setting for this research. Research in this sector is primarily focused on understanding the sector and sub-sector conditions and policy implications rather than the individuals that work in it and their cognitive aspects. This makes individual level research into creative entrepreneurs a fruitful and required field of research. Lastly, it is important to acknowledge my interest in creative individuals and ventures which is one of my motivations for situating the research in this setting.

Data collection

Ten creative entrepreneurs¹ in the UK who had started ventures in various sub-sectors of the creative industries were included in the study. As I was interested in unearthing the identity work undertaken at the early stages of a venture, which is identified as a site for intense identity work (Navis and Glynn, 2011), only entrepreneurs that were less than a year into venture creation were chosen to be part of this study. The sample was recruited using a variety of methods which included contact with business accelerators and alumni of local universities, and conversations with speciality business advisors and mentors that work in the creative industries in the UK. No specific sub-sector of the creative industries was used to situate the empirical research. This was deliberate to ensure that any sector based biases were eliminated. I sought ventures from diverse sectors e.g. Acting, Dance, and Craft. This criterion of sampling from diverse sectors also helped minimize the effects relating to specific agendas in one or other particular industry (Sarasvathy, 2009). Table 4 below summarises the types of ventures and age of the venture at the point of initial contact.

Case	Founder	Background <i>(before venture commenced)</i>	Venture	Age of venture <i>(at initial contact)</i>
1	Adam	Practicing actor	Acting Agency	8 months
2	Beth	Art therapist	Performing Arts Event Management	5 months
3	Clarke	Sculptor	Furniture Making	3 months
4	Daniel	Choreographer	Dance Education and Performance	8 months
5	Jack	Photographer	Photography and Design Agency	6 months
6	Francis	Composer	Music Composition and Production	11 months
7	Gemma	Textile designer	Textile Design	2 months
8	Hilda	Choreographer	Dance Education	10 months
9	Isaac	Composer	Music Production	8 months
10	Eleanor	Multimedia artist	Commercial Art Gallery and Café	4 months

Table 4: Sample description for article 2: name, background, sub-sector and age of venture

¹ Names of individuals, locations and companies have been changed throughout to maintain the anonymity of the participants of this study.

Data were collected through a longitudinal, qualitative study with these entrepreneurs in the initial stages of their business. Three rounds of semi structured interviews were carried out with each entrepreneur at regular intervals over a 22-month period. The early semi-structured interviews took the form of a life story where I asked them about their childhood, educational and work history (Watson, 2009). This allowed me to learn the sequence of events in historical order, thus reducing the chance of generating rationalisations that might occur if someone talks about what they had done and then created a narrative to explain the reasons for their action (Watson, 2009). I maintained a careful tone of supportive neutrality throughout the data collection process in an attempt to minimise any social desirability bias in what interviewees reported (Kahn and Cannell, 1957). Later interviews were more structured as I explored emerging theoretical themes (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). For example, I asked to hear about specific incidents and occurrences that had an impact on how the entrepreneurs felt about their ventures, its development, its challenges and themselves.

All 30 interviews were audio recorded and transcribed into approximately 700 single-spaced pages. Average interview length was 89 minutes, and ranged from 28 minutes to 101 minutes. I supplemented interviews with field notes after each interview and collected observational data by undertaking tours of the business premises and reviewing information published offline and online about the ventures including marketing materials, brochures, and feedback received from clients and customers. All quotes in this paper are from transcriptions rather than field notes. The narrative data gathered through the semi-structured interviews and the temporal nature of the data collection process gave me the opportunity to observe the identity work processes as it unfolded. Ten case studies were compiled from the interviews, observational data and related documentation collected over the period of time. A multiple case study design was considered

appropriate as multiple cases often yield more accurate and generalisable explanations than single cases (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007; Walsh and Bartunek, 2011).

Analytical approach

Narrative, along with its cognates such as story, tale, account, myth, legend, fantasy and saga, has received attention from scholars that undertake research which brings together “tales from the field” (Van Maanen, 1988) and engage in literary forms of “disciplinary reflection” (Czarniawska, 1998:14). In this study I bring forward narrative data from individual creative entrepreneurs about their identities and in doing so I draw on the work of Pentland (1999) whereby I use narrative theory for analysing structural features from the data. In narrative theory, “stories are abstract conceptual models used in the explanations of observed data” (Pentland, 1999:771). Additionally, the narratives (stories) are seen as accounts of value-laden symbolic actions embedded in words and incorporating sequence, time and place (Brown 2005:313). Both these features are observed and analysed in the findings related to identity work of creative entrepreneurs. As a result of their narrative based study, termed “identity talk”, Snow and Anderson (1987) introduced the term *identity work* in academic literature. Ever since the inception of the term in this seminal study, one can argue that the heritage of research into identity work lies in using narrative data and talk as key sources of data.

The study takes a narratological approach in building concepts rather than constructs. This was done to move away from pure construct elaboration, which is a danger of the traditional approach of qualitative analysis. Concepts are less well-specified notion capturing qualities that describe or explain a phenomenon of theoretical interest. Put simply, concepts are precursors to constructs in making sense of organizational worlds (Gioia et al., 2013:16). I followed the methods of analysis proposed by Gioia et al. (2013) to avoid critique that is usually directed to narratological based studies of the researcher cherry picking quotes to fit the reporting that

support predetermined constructs (Gioia et al., 2013). In the findings I demonstrate how the data were gathered and the analysis undertaken in a systematic way.

My choice of a narratological approach is guided by two assumptions which are grounded in the literature. First, pluralistic identities and their conflict are evident in individuals' narratives (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010); and second, as active agents, entrepreneurs undertake identity work through narrative (Down and Warren, 2008; Phillips et al., 2013). The narratological approach was also based on other scholarly work which has demonstrated the value of analysing narratives to better understand entrepreneurs' identities as well as the processes leading to the formation of a coherent entrepreneurial identity (Wry et al., 2011; Phillips et al., 2013; Fauchart and Gruber, 2011).

The choice of this approach is also based on the advantages it offers in observing and contextualising identity work over time. It is by focusing attention on identity narratives, that the identity journey of individuals can be most easily observed (Foucault, 1977). Narratology, which refers to "the theory and systematic study of narrative" (Currie, 1998:1), leads to an understanding of identity that unfold over time and is embedded in broader discursive practices, which is something that this study benefits from.

In analysing the data, I have been influenced by the "linguistic turn" in the social sciences (e.g. Alvesson and Kärreman, 2000: 136 cited in Humphreys and Brown, 2008) which recognises that "language is a form of social practice" (Wodak, 2003:187). I used the narratives gathered from each entrepreneur to compile a case study of their founding journey. I then undertook in-case analysis to unearth how individuals use narratives to describe their experiences and activities. For this paper, I wanted to produce "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) i.e. a detailed stratified hierarchy of meaning, and to achieve this the transcripts were subject to a form of thematic analysis (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). In doing this, coded categories were derived in an inductive

process of interaction and integration of theory and empirical data (Putnam, 1983; Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Coded categories relating to multiple sub-identities exhibited, conflicts and synergies, events and actions and emotions were assigned through this process. A sample of the coding framework is presented in Figure 3. This approach led to the systematic presentation of both a first order analysis (i.e. an analysis using informant-centric terms and codes) and a second order analysis (i.e., one using researcher-centric concepts, themes, and dimensions) (Van Maanen, 1979). Taken together, the reporting of both the voices of the informant and the researcher allowed me to demonstrate qualitative rigor in the way that findings were derived and offered a framework for devising and presenting insights.

The codes were then collated to refine into two coherent identity narratives that I labelled as *altruistic* and *commercially expedient*. These narrative *identity paths*, which I define as *the routes taken by the overall identity of the individual to placate conflicting sub-identities*, along with representative data are presented in the next section. It should be noted that the identity narrative paths show the result of the identity work of entrepreneurs in dealing with dirty work and sense of identity conflict, rather than outline their identity structures, resulting behaviours or venture outcomes. Although the entrepreneurs took one of two main identity paths in the founding stages of the venture, the resulting behaviours of the entrepreneurs in relation to the outcome of the venture varied greatly. During the period of the study some of these entrepreneurs terminated their ventures or were considering termination while others grew or started new ventures. The elaboration of these areas fall outside of the scope of this paper.

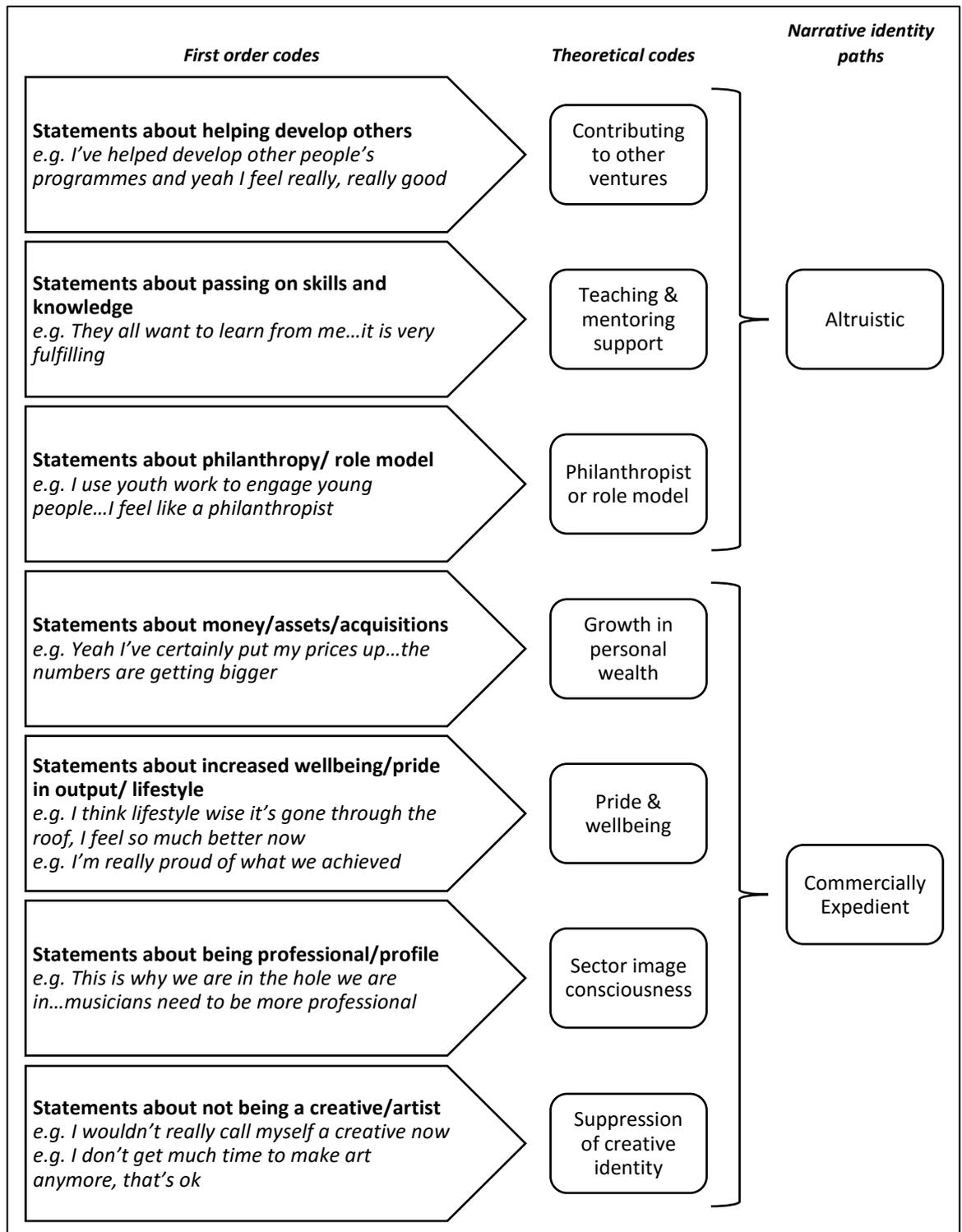


Figure 3: Sample coding structure for narrative identity paths

Results

In this section I discuss the findings from specific cases from the empirical study to address the two research questions, i.e. *how dirty work is experienced by entrepreneurs* and *how creative entrepreneurs use identity work to cope with dirty work*. I first explore the applicability of the dirty work concept to the context of the creative industries by examining the entrepreneurs' narratives. In the following section I explain the two narrative identity paths in response to and inducted from the data, and present narrative data and discussion from two cases for each identity path.

Dirty work related identity conflicts in the founding stage

A discussion of the identity tactics or coping mechanisms cannot be had without an illustration of how dirty work and the related identity conflicts between the commercial and creative identities manifested in the narrative of the entrepreneurs. Data is presented from four cases to illustrate, through the narrative of the entrepreneur, how the conflict in their identities influenced their desire to prioritise their work and structure their venture. The sense of taint and dirty work in relation to the venture is illustrated through the identity conflict.

Eleanor is a trained artist and having completed her art degree in London has now, a few years later, embarked on her first solo venture. During our first interview she is in the process of setting up a commercial gallery and café with the aim of providing local artists a platform to sell their work through this gallery and make a commission on sales. In addition to the gallery business she plans to run a small café selling food and offer art workshops in the space. During the planning stages of the venture, her narrative highlights clearly the dilemmas and conflict she feels that relates to her commercial and artistic identities.

What I don't want to happen is for artists to price themselves at a justified price and the general public not appreciate that and try and knock that value down, because what I see is artists knock the value of their work down in order to sell it cheap and I don't think that's right. So I don't want to do them a disservice, but then if I don't sell any of the artwork, I feel like I've done them a disservice as well. And I also worry that I'm going to have to commercialise the artwork that I have in the space. Go for things that are incredibly fashionable or commercially, you know, interesting, but not necessarily... artistically interesting and challenging. I want, things that are challenging at the gallery café. I don't want artwork to just be twee or you know pretty. If that makes sense? I want a mixture of both. But I worry how, how that's going to work. How you fit that together.

Eleanor, Interview 1

In addition to elaborating a conflict, and how that might shape their venture, some entrepreneurs questioned whether putting some distance between their creative aspirations and the product of their business (which was created towards a commercial end) was required at the early stages of the venture. This is illustrated by Francis's comment below who, at the onset of this study, is 11 months into his music composition business. Francis is a trained musician and after completing his masters in music composition, decided to start a venture offering music composition services to film, TV and gaming companies. He is very keen to bring a level of professionalism and high quality output to the sector where he believes it is seriously lacking. He expresses a need to detach his creative identity from his commercial one to produce outputs that would be commercially successful. In this he is illustrating a sense of dirt associated with the product.

To succeed in this business you have to ask, 'Can you separate yourself from what you're producing? 'Cause ultimately you're selling it and it might be worth less creatively than you think it is. Or more.' I would almost say – early on, you have to focus – are you more interested in making the business a success or what you do [creatively] a success? The reality is it's a product. In the creative industries, it's really difficult to not be personally attached to what you produce. It's about providing for their (the clients) need rather than your own, so you kind of have to go with it and say, actually, OK, I need to provide them with what they need.

Francis, Interview 1

Perhaps one of the most revealing incidences of dirty work related conflict stemmed from how some entrepreneurs reacted to them being defined as entrepreneurs in the initial stages of the venture. Both Beth and Isaac are wary of defining themselves solely as “entrepreneurs” and initially dismiss the term due to the sense of taint they feel associated with the commercial nature of this term. However, if the term “entrepreneur” was combined with the term “creative” it appeared to offer them a more acceptable self-concept definition. The narratives below underline the taint associated with a purely commercial identity, however the acceptance of the term with a qualifier offers some compromise. At the time of our initial contact, Beth is in the process of setting up an arts management company as part of an entrepreneurial team of five. In the initial stages she saw herself as the core artistic person in the team. Isaac is eight months into setting up a music production company and at this stage is the sole employee of the company.

People think of the entrepreneur as the man in the suit. They think of Richard Branson ... They don't necessarily think of it as people that make things and have a craft. Well, yeah, I'd say I'm probably a creative entrepreneur and the characteristics of an artist. I don't think I am just an entrepreneur... But then maybe being a creative entrepreneur is just a combination of artist and entrepreneur. That kind of – that would kind of work, wouldn't it?

Isaac, Interview 1

When I think of the term [entrepreneur] I think of somebody wearing a suit. I think of the Apprentice. I think of somebody who's going to make something and reproduce it. I think of patenting. Dragon's Den. I've got a very like TV view of things I suppose, but then I'm none of those things. I think if you could have a different term, I think if you could have a creative entrepreneur I'd be a creative entrepreneur.

Beth, Interview 1

The narratives above present a flavour of the identity conflicts and sense of dirty work that manifested in the entrepreneurs from that conflict in the initial stages of the venture. I observed that these conflicts impact on how they prioritise and make decisions about their ventures, and define themselves. The conflict stems from a subconscious association of money and commerciality of their products and services with dirt. The narrative above is a small sample of how the dirt is felt by the entrepreneurs. Quotes from the four illustrative cases presented below further demonstrate identity conflicts that manifests as dirty work. I now look at how identity work in response to these identity conflicts are apparent through the narratives of the entrepreneurs.

Narrative identity paths

Having illustrated the manifestation of dirty work as perceived by the entrepreneurs, the data analysis showed two clear narrative identity paths taken by these entrepreneurs to cope with the identity conflict generated by their experience of starting the venture. Based on the key features exhibited by the identity paths, I labelled these paths *altruistic* and *commercially expedient* as illustrated in Figure 4 below.

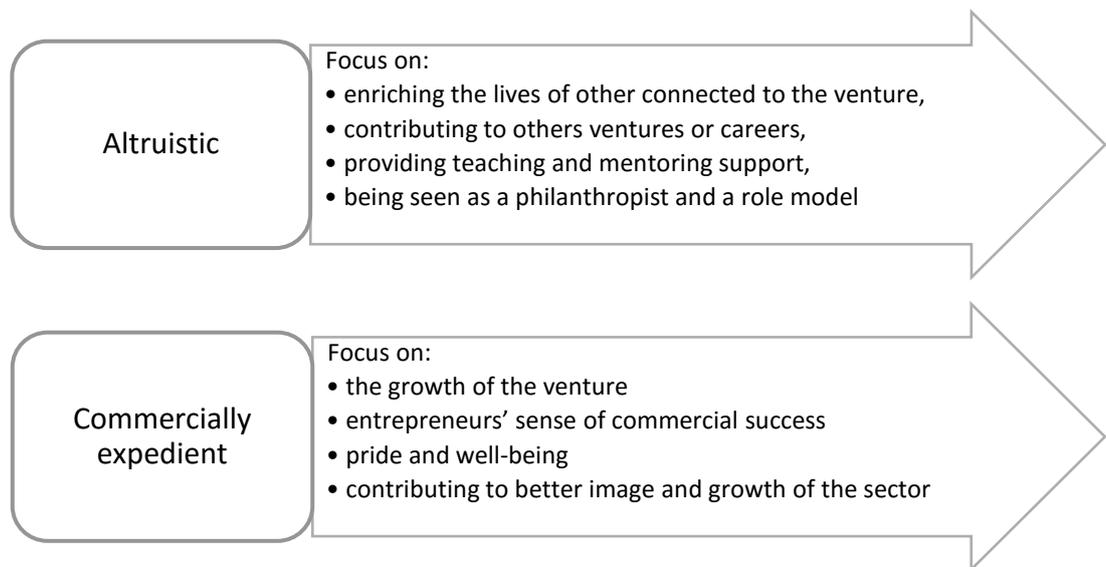


Figure 4: Properties of the two narrative identity paths identified

It should be noted that the analysis of my empirical data led to the identification of two *identity paths* (as defined previously) and not a fixed set of *identity structures* (i.e. a formed and stable identity). It is anticipated that these identity paths give rise to multiple identity structures and the determination of those fall outside of the scope of this paper. I now illustrate these identity paths using narratives from four illustrative cases to demonstrate how they unfolded. The length of the narratives in the ten cases prohibits presentation of all the cases in this paper. Therefore, an attempt has been made to present typical narratives which illustrate the key findings that address the research questions. The case name is referred to at the end of the quote along with the time when the data was collected (i.e. Interview 1, Interview 2, Interview 3) to provide an insight into identity processes and elucidate the temporal nature of the data.

Path one: Altruistic identity narrative

Case	Founder	Venture
1	Adam	Acting Agency
2	Beth	Performing Arts Event Management
4	Daniel	Dance Education and Performance
8	Hilda	Dance Education
9	Isaac	Music Production
10	Eleanor	Commercial Art Gallery and Café

Table 5: Altruistic narrative identity cases

The narrative of the altruistic entrepreneur indicates identity work focussed on finding ways to enrich the lives of people connected to the venture. Six cases from my empirical research have been categorised as adopting an altruistic identity narrative to seek coherence in their identity as an entrepreneur and cope with identity conflict between their creative and commercial identities. This identity conflict is clearly outlined in their narratives and there is a willingness to distance themselves from the growing commercial success of the venture. From time to time, these entrepreneurs highlighted the diminished artistic quality of their output. However, the feeling that their venture contributed to individuals' lives and society as a whole provided a sense of satisfaction with and validity to the venture and their own identity as an entrepreneur.

Some of the areas of success as highlighted by the cases include satisfaction derived from contributing to other ventures or careers; providing teaching and mentoring support, and acting as a philanthropist or a role model. Narratives that illustrate these factors are presented below. There appears to be a strong narrative around the need for making a difference to society to feel that the venture is a success. The entrepreneurs also demonstrate a sense of loss of their own creative practice or artistic quality of their output to benefit their venture and contribute to society. This helps them diminish the stigma of commercialising their creative talents and move away from the dirt or taint they associated with their venture. Narratives that demonstrate these factors and the altruistic identity path are presented in two illustrative cases below.

Hilda's narrative

So I've always danced since I was little, but never in a competitive sort of way. I've always just done one class a week. I started off in acrobatics and then developed in to the modern, just one class a week. Always wanted to do more and then didn't get the opportunity to do it at school. Then went to college and got my A levels in dance and theatre studies. Went to University in Chichester and did a dance degree and graduated in 2009 and since then thought I would set up dance classes, and that's it really.

Before I left for university I volunteered at a residential care home teaching dance to the elderly there and then kept that up whilst I was at university I taught down there as well in a care home and special needs school. So it's kind of fizzling away underneath the surface while I was at university. I was making contacts up here as well so I knew what I wanted to do and it was kind of like making dance accessible and kind of affordable.

My mum's actually a special needs teacher and my dad's a youth worker but when I was growing up he was a welder. So there's no art, nothing arty at all about my family apart from me.

Hilda, Interview 1

Hilda is passionate about dance and has been running dance classes since she graduated, but she formalised and registered her business as a company 10 months before the initial interview. She identifies herself as a dance teacher and seems uncomfortable about being seen as an entrepreneur or a business owner. Her business is borne out of her passion to make a difference in other people's lives. She feels stigmatised about charging money in the initial interview and feels that if the business grows it would become too commercial and would not fulfil her social and artistic aspirations. She treasures the social interactions and impact of her venture and worries that she is not being "*business minded*" in the way she is approaching the venture.

I hate even saying a cost to people. I hate it, I don't like it at all, because I don't know how they're going to react. There's all these old people they really want to do it [dance classes], we should go in and do it, because then again I'm looking at the individual, not the organisation [venture]. So it's – it's being more business minded about it all, but at the end of the day it's not how I want to be. I'd rather them have it than not have it. If it's a difference of £5

Hilda, Interview 1

Running the business in keeping with her artistic and social aims ensures that her “job satisfaction is huge, it's massive”. She gets a lot of satisfaction in interacting with her clients and finds it an enriching experience.

I just look at the people and think it's given me a chance to see like life from the tiniest to the oldest and I get to see it all in one day sometimes.. Like I teach them dance, but I think they don't realise how much they teach me about just, like life. Do you know what I mean? So it's as much about the people as it is about the dance.

Hilda, Interview 1

Through the period of the study Hilda has applied for a trademark, grown the business geographically, from a team of two to six members of staff and won a young business owner award. The venture has exceeded her income targets and is continuing to grow. However, she does not like to call her venture a business as she feels that it taints the purpose of the venture.

It's not a business to me, it's not a business, my friends are like 'ah she runs her own business.' That just freaks me out. I'm like 'no I don't. I dance.'

Hilda, Interview 2

Hilda takes pride in highlighting her position as a role model in the lives of her students and derives greater success from this than the financial rewards of her business.

As an example, satisfaction for me is basically, one of the parents text me and said oh it's a wet Friday morning the children have just gone to school dressed as super heroes for Children in Need. June, she's 7, comes down dressed in all her own Dance Company X stuff and her mum was like 'what are you doing you're meant to be a super hero.' She's like 'no I'm dressed as Hilda.' Hilda is my super hero and she's real. So something like that, like a child gone to school dressed as me! Like that's just mind-blowing really, little things like that for me are more satisfaction than kind of any financial gain really.

Hilda, Interview 3

Hilda is passionate about the value of dance to children, disadvantaged groups and people with limited ability. Her artistic need to pass on her skills in dance and her social aspirations are very high. It is clear that she finds it difficult to marry this up with the commercial needs of the business. She takes pride and derives satisfaction from the mentoring she provides to her staff and in her position as a role model to her students. For her, these make it worth running a venture. She is now comfortable in her identity as a business owner or the "boss".

I can advise the girls [other tutors] I'm obviously their first point of contact if anything goes wrong but a lot of the ones that are now set up are running great and kind of take care of themselves, which is brilliant. So I'm kind of like their sort of, their boss. I'm their boss.

Hilda, Interview 2

Throughout the period of research, it was clear that no matter how much the business grows, she does not want to distance herself from her role as a dance teacher and active dancer/choreographer for her company.

I think because I want to remain like on the ground with the dancers. I want to remain teaching, being part of them, I don't want to be someone that's in the office. I just need somebody who can take, the office roles. I'm the heart of it so I'd want to keep it that way.

Hilda, Interview 3

Hilda's case highlights how she defines success and derives satisfaction through the social and artistic impacts of her venture rather than its commercial success. The conflicts in her identity are manifested through her identity as a dancer/teacher and that of the owner of a thriving business.

Adam's narrative

When I finished my degree I decided that I was going to go and become an actor, because I couldn't face the thought of Economics and Geography for the rest of my life. And I've never been motivated particularly by money, but I wanted to do something that I felt that I would enjoy. I just jumped at the chance of joining a theatre company and I stayed with them for many years basically. since then I've been a freelance writer and actor.

I've had over my kind of acting career, three agents all based in the Midlands and they've got me work. But last year probably around this time my agent rang me up and said that she had decided to close the business, she didn't want to run it any more. And she said "why don't you become an agent?" and I thought, I thought about it for a minute and then thought well, it just seems the most obvious thing to do. I am going to have to chase around looking for an agent myself otherwise...

Adam, Interview 1

Adam is the owner of what is now the largest acting agency in the region, having started this agency eight months before I contacted him. The agency also runs workshops and drama classes. As an experienced actor, he started the venture to fill a gap in the market of marketing experienced actors for stage, TV and film. During the period of this research, his agency triples in size, however highlighting the social benefits of his venture appears to be more important as a measure of success. In relation to his venture, he has his own definition of what it is to be an entrepreneur which is organised around social and not commercial aims.

Usually I introduce myself by saying that I'm an actor and do a bit of writing and I run an agency and a drama club. The drama club is on a Monday at our local school and that was because I thought there isn't any drama at the school, why don't they just, so I sent out a letter to all the schools and now we have 25 kids every week on a Monday afternoon, just after school which is great. [...] that's because I always get this thing about 'oh I'm an entrepreneur'. I feel entrepreneurial, but I'm not about wanting to make loads of money. To me that's not entrepreneurship. To me entrepreneurship is about seeing opportunities, developing opportunities and it can be social things as well as money making things

Adam, Interview 2

Adam takes pride in helping people connected to his venture and not prioritising his commercial identity as a business owner.

I've paid a couple of people before the money came in to make sure they'd got some money. Like Mary one of our actresses she got married last weekend and she'd just done a job, which I probably won't get paid for another month, but I've given her the money for it because she's gone off on honeymoon to India...she was really chuffed as well to get it, you know, before she went.

Adam, Interview 3

For him there appears to be two main areas of conflict which makes the venture feel tainted. Firstly, making money from selling others efforts (in this case actors) does not always sit comfortably with him. The venture also promotes competition between his commercial aspiration as a business owner and his creative aspirations as an actor and writer. He feels that his own creative practice suffers due to the fact that he promotes others and is not able to promote himself in competition with his clients. In spite of such conflicts his narrative highlights that he focusses on the social benefits he offers through his venture that helps him reconcile his identity as an entrepreneur. These conflicts are apparent throughout his narrative.

I miss my own kind of personal creative development. You may be unaware I'm a little bit troubled at the moment. I haven't pushed myself to do any acting work or writing while I've been doing this [setting up the agency]. And I'm wondering how long I can do that, because I just don't want to lose it. I suppose the acting and the agency is competing with each other. I'm not really pushing my own acting and the writing, the writing competes with that as well and that has been squashed by the other two.

Adam, Interview 1

It does impact on my acting and my kind of own artistic requirements I suppose. One of my business mentors said, she thought I should take myself off the web site as an actor. She said you can still be an actor, but in terms of business it might be better just to take your photo and stuff off it so it doesn't look like you're just promoting yourself. And I haven't done that yet. I don't know whether that's because I'm kind of reluctant to take a step towards not being an actor.

Adam, Interview 2

But with the acting and the agency I tend to certainly put [other] people forward for work, I'll think twice about putting myself forward. Generally if there's somebody, you know, if there's only 3 or 4 actors in my sort of age group on the books, males, and so I generally will think twice about putting myself forward.

Adam, Interview 3

Adam's case highlights the conflict associated with his diminishing practice as an artist and the growing success of his venture. Although his venture is very successful commercially he derives satisfaction from its social impacts.

The two cases highlight the altruistic identity paths taken by the entrepreneurs to negotiate their creative and commercial identities and aspirations stemming from them. Through illustration of this conflict, they illustrate how their venture feels like dirty work and how they normalise the taint they feel because of it. Through their narrative they negotiate these conflicts and focus on the altruistic and social successes of the venture.

Path two: Commercially expedient identity narrative

Case	Founder	Venture
3	Clarke	Furniture Making
5	Jack	Photography and Design Agency
6	Francis	Music Composition and Production
7	Gemma	Textile Design

Table 6: Commercially expedient identity cases

This narrative focusses on the growth, commercial success and gains of the venture and the positive impact of such a gain on the entrepreneurs' sense of pride and well-being. Four cases from my empirical research, illustrated in Table 6, has been categorised as adopting a commercially expedient narrative to seek coherence in their identity as an entrepreneur and creative. I illustrate how they cope with their identity conflict and a personal sense of taint associated with commercialising their creative talents. Some of the areas of success, as highlighted by the cases, include *satisfaction derived from growth in personal wealth; pride and well-being; contribution to the image and acceptability of the sector;* and *separation or suppression of the creative sub-identity*. There appears a strong narrative around the need for commercial acceptance of the creative sector making it similar to other business sectors. The founders demonstrate a pragmatic approach to the venture and a deliberate shift away from the preconceived notion of what it is to be an artist/creative. Narratives that demonstrate these factors and the commercially expedient identity path are presented in two illustrative cases below.

Clarke's narrative

I never considered myself an artistic child and then I had a great teacher at school who essentially made me do Art GCSE {...} and then the same happened again with A Levels. And then it was during A Level, I think, that I decided that I kind of had an aptitude for it and it was something I found interesting, and then started a fine art degree in Leicester straight after that, and dropped out after a year – it didn't go particularly well.

So then I had lots of manufacturing jobs {...} production-line things, lots in the automotive industry. Kind of really menial, low-paid, slightly soul-destroying jobs but I did pick up lots of processes. I think that got me really interested in the act of making things, because until then I think I probably thought I was a painter, as everyone does, because that's the art you're exposed to.

I became a visitor assistant at Gallery A, and then really slowly started getting regular work on their installations [...] Until recently I was just saying yes or no to people that asked me if I'd do things for them. I think I started this business because I want to escape people just thinking of me as a technician. Lots of galleries have just a set install rate that they pay all of their technicians, which is quite limiting. They're generally quite low. And there's a worry that if people can get your expertise and skills and quite often tooling and facilities for that, then they will.

Clarke, Interview 1

Clarke has a background in visual art and sculpture and having found a gap in the market in his local area, started an art fabrication and creative furniture making business. At the initial meeting, it is apparent that Clarke values commercial success of the venture and is focussed on using his skills to cater to the market.

I think I don't have a particularly artsy relationship with money. I do see this as a business where I'm building things and should be getting paid and I finish the work and I invoice promptly and I think I'm just supplying a service it doesn't necessarily matter which sector I'm in.

Clarke, Interview 1

When Clarke describes his products, a sense of dirt or taint is observed. He describes artistic and creative outputs as “beautiful” and his market led outputs as “functional”. He underlines the need to focus on commercial success by creating products in response to market needs.

I think if you're making objects to try and sell out in the world, I think that you might have to be quite market led. It's all very well making beautiful things, but until you can find the guts to market them, you're just making beautiful things that aren't really worth anything until you've sold some. People want functional things, they tell me what they want and I make them.

Clarke, Interview 1

Over the period of the study, the narrative shows a change in how strongly Clarke associates with his identity as a business owner and a diminishing identity as a creative. He asserts with some sense of sorrow that he has now “given up the idea of being an artist”. Although he feels that he looks at the products and approached his making with the “eyes of an artist”, the output does not give him any “creative satisfaction”. Additionally, Clarke’s business is growing in scale and he has reconciled to the fact that he cannot see himself “making any art in the foreseeable future”. At the same time Clarke appears more comfortable in his identity as an entrepreneur stating that “I think I’m probably more entrepreneur than creative than I was six months ago.” As the venture progresses Clarke appears more comfortable in this identity as an entrepreneur and business owner and, unlike his peers in the sector, does not appear to subscribe to the taint associated with the term entrepreneur. With the success of his first venture, he is planning a second venture which would be slightly different to this first one. He is tight lipped about what it is going to be and how it would be different.

I'm fine with the word entrepreneur. I'm sure that some people who work in creative industries feel that that is somehow tainting them and they relate it to awful human beings on Dragons Den that – try to climb to the top. But no I think that's, I think that's fine. I think that's certainly what I am. Especially with this second beginning [plans for a second venture] that's going on. I kind of define myself by my profession

Clarke, Interview 2

At the final stages of the study, Clarke is happy and satisfied with the commercial success of his venture and in his identity as an entrepreneur. However, he outlines a growing “frustration” with his inability to create output that satisfies him creatively. He demonstrates a level of dissatisfaction with operating to market forces and wants to find ways to reawaken his creative side. He reveals that to build on the success of his current venture he is about to embark on a new venture to make more artistic products and build a market for them.

So now I'm just trying to reframe myself a little bit I think, as rather than someone that's just technically able, someone that has design skills as well that I can apply to things. I think I need to reawaken the creative side of things to some extent to be happy. It's not purely about money. I think I need to reawaken the creative side of things

Clarke, Interview 3

This case highlights how Clarke has engaged in identity work through the initial stages of his venture and chosen an identity path that allows him to derive satisfaction from the commercial success of his venture. Although towards the end of the study, a sense of dirty work in relation to his now successful venture is detected. It is clear that the lack of creative satisfaction means that some part of his identity conflict remains unresolved, he hopes to address this conflict through future initiatives.

Francis's narrative

I grew up playing lots of instruments with a keen interest in physics, as well, and just generally making things. I was quite arty. So then I came up to University A and studied music composition for my undergraduate and it sort of brought out the entrepreneurial side in me, so that's where it all started, really. I think my compositional traits feed through to businesses, as well. I like to set things up, I like to create things {...} the crucial thing was recognising, actually, setting up a business can almost be a bit like an art form, as to how you can structure it and how well it presents itself and how well it communicates an idea.

There was an award that came up, which was for £10,000 for sort of creative enterprises. So, I approached a fellow composer on my Masters course, and I said, 'I'm looking to set this up but I want to do it as a partnership.' {...} I see a lot of composers who work by themselves, and the way they portray themselves – I actually wanted to have a team of composers, market it as an entity, rather than a person and better provision. Just because there's so many people out there who are bedroom composers, and actually the market's extremely flooded so we're just trying to provide clarity as to what we do.

This is a bit sort of opinionated, but I think the models for which music is supplied and paid for are extremely archaic and really complicated. I get annoyed by that. I think the music industry doesn't make it easy for people to have good music so we're out to kind of innovate that. I wanted to be doing what I trained in as my job, but I also wanted to create something that would be successful and also have a reputation.

Francis, Interview 1

Francis trained as a music composer and along with a business partner started a music production company and subsequently a gaming company. One of his main motivations for starting his first venture was to provide a level of professionalism to how composers sold music to producers of film, TV and games. Francis aspired to be a business owner as he enjoyed the concept of creating something new and in this he sees his business as a creative venture. However, the core conflict of his creative and commercial identities appears in his need to separate the two to resolve the conflict between them and reduce the sense of dirt he feels.

I thought I might set up a business. I didn't think it would be a media music business, and I wonder if that's why I get so excited about the business side of things, rather than the – I mean, I do – I shouldn't say that. I do enjoy and love writing music, but I almost think the music wouldn't be successful if it wasn't for the business and how it's marketed.

Francis, Interview 1

In running his venture, he finds conversation about money and charging his clients difficult. He is very aware of the dirt associated with money in the sector and has difficulty in assigning a monetary value to his creative output. He is troubled by how clients see music as a “cheap” commodity. He wants to bring about a change in this situation by providing a degree of professionalism to the sector and by providing transparency and better structures to how music is made for a client. He is convinced that “musicians aren’t business people” and because of this they are taken advantage of by clients as they “don’t know how to price what they do.”

We’re starting to get better at talking about money. Money is difficult conversation with a creative, especially musicians – I mean, this is why we’re in the hole we’re in. I think I heard from four different people within the BBC in the last two months that they’re absolutely ecstatic about how cheap music is and you think, how have we let ourselves get to this point? You know? Where everyone else is OK to charge the rates they do, to get a normal wage... but music is so cheap.

Francis, Interview 2

At his first interview, Francis underlines that to ensure quality of output he was personally involved in making the music pieces they sold to clients. However, later on his enjoyment of making music is diminished. Distancing himself from the rhetoric of being a creative and focussing on his identity as an entrepreneur appears to help him resolve his identity conflict.

What I’ve had to do is learn to compartmentalise what my involvement is [in the venture], what it is and when it is. So at the moment I’m not even thinking about the music or anything like that. My pure role at the moment is to get this up and running and make sure the business is successful. Actually it’s even got to a point where I think if it came to it I may get someone else to do the music, while I focus on making the business successful, I’d probably do that because it’s just, it’s not worth the stress of trying to do both.

Francis, Interview 3

Through Francis' narrative it is clear to see how important it is for him to have commercial success and bring a level of professionalism for his sector. Initially he feels the taint associated with money and "charging for his work" however, he gets better at it as his venture progresses and appears happier to do so. He engages in identity work in response to the "stress" he feels between his commercial and creative aspirations and feels this is best resolved by separating the two identities by focussing on running the venture rather than producing creative work for the market.

The two cases highlight the commercially expedient identity path taken by the entrepreneurs to negotiate their creative and commercial identities, and aspirations stemming from them. Their choice focusses on making their venture a commercial success and taking pride in that success. A degree of separation between their conflicting identities is observed, which is one of the tactics used to normalise the taint associated with the commercial success of their venture. Having presented the findings of the empirical study, I now discuss some of the contribution of this paper.

Discussion

Two research questions underpinned this paper: *how is dirty work experienced by entrepreneurs* and *how do creative entrepreneurs use identity work to make sense of and cope with dirty work*.

In response to the first question I illustrate how dirty work manifests for entrepreneurs through a conflict between their multiple identities. With respect to the second research question, I demonstrate the evolving nature of the entrepreneurs' narratives to illustrate how the entrepreneurs' make sense of and normalise feelings of taint (i.e. dirt) associated with their work. I identify two distinctive identity path the entrepreneurs take. Altruistic identity path sees the entrepreneur normalising taint and deriving satisfaction by enriching the lives of individuals and groups connected to the venture. In the commercially expedient identity path I see the

entrepreneur negotiating dirty work by focusing on the commercial success and gains of the venture and the positive impact of such a gain on the entrepreneur's sense of pride and well-being. A discussion of the main contributions is presented below.

As my first contribution, I extend theory of identity work of entrepreneurs in the initial stages of the venture by highlighting the process and outcome of identity conflict at this stage. Like scholars before me, I find that the initial stages of the venture are ripe for identity work (Navis and Glynn, 2011; Fauchart and Gruber, 2011). The initial stages of the venture can be seen as uncharted territory for the entrepreneur. It is very dynamic and filled with new experiences. These experiences may lead to conflicting sub-identities and identity work takes place in response to these conflicts (Fauchart and Gruber, 2011). I find that in negotiating dirty work (in this case stemming from conflicting commercial and artistic identities), entrepreneurs appear to take one of two specific identity paths in their search for coherence between their conflicting identities. In taking these identity paths (altruistic and commercially expedient) entrepreneurs make decisions about which identities are salient and dominant and who the entrepreneurs want to be. Although narrative (identity) paths in response to novel discourses (e.g. corporate social responsibility in organisations) has been explored by scholars (Humphreys and Brown, 2008), the narrative identity paths in response to dirty work has not been investigated.

My analysis of the identity work performed in the initial stages of entrepreneurship lends support to the idea that analysing narratives provides a very rich source of data for observing how identity work unfolds (Phillips et al., 2013; Wry et al., 2011). I further suggest that taking a longitudinal approach to narrative identity work can be invaluable in studying identity conflict stemming from dirty work. Specifically, how founder's talk about themselves, their identities and their founding journey helps them to undertake identity work and make sense of stigma associated with their venture. I stress that narratives in the initial stages of a venture are perhaps one of the

richest sources of information about the rapidly changing identities of entrepreneurs. Recent studies have found that narrative identity work is a useful way of contextualising changes in the identity of individuals when faced with role transition (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010) and fragmentation of identities (Sveningsson and Alvesson 2003:1187). None of the studies however tackle the challenge of taking a narratological approach to understanding an individual's identity work in the light of identity conflict such as that when dealing with dirty work. This study finds that narration and storytelling by entrepreneurs helps them to construct their identity and are also powerful tools for illustrating how they evolve. In doing this, and recognising identity paths and distinct identity processes, this paper advocates for the use of narratives as a source of data to investigate dirty work in entrepreneurship. An understanding of these processes opens up our understanding of the power of narratives in influencing an entrepreneurs' identity which has an element of internal conflict and negativity attached.

My second contribution is to the literature on dirty work. Through the review of the literature I find that the research on dirty work focusses on the workers and not the entrepreneurs or owners of the business (Wicks and Grandy, 2007; Ashforth et al., 2007). I argue that the concept is applicable and can provide insights into studying entrepreneurs who have a higher stake and a deeper relationship to the business than the workers. Ashforth and Kreiner (1999) surmise that, 'dirty workers' have a difficult time creating a positive sense of self but often appear able to create and maintain a positive identity. I propose that this phenomenon extends to creative entrepreneurs that initiate and grow a commercial venture where aspects of the work they must perform are perceived as dirty work by them. I find that the entrepreneurs in this study take one of two identity work paths (altruistic and commercially expedient) to assist in constructing such a positive identity that helps them overcome the identity conflict they experience when engaging in entrepreneurship. Other identity processes (such as reframing, recalibrating,

refocussing proposed by Ashforth and Kreiner (1999) and assumption of salient roles (such as Loner, Opportunist, Competitor as proposed by Grandy, 2008) have been discussed in the literature as methods employed by dirty workers to normalise the taint of dirty work. However, the proposition of identity paths that provide a specific orientation towards creating a positive identity in the face of dirty work is novel. The identity paths proposed benefit from the longitudinal nature of the empirical data collected during the initial stages of a venture rather than in a reflective manner. This I believe is one of the key strengths of this study.

My review of the dirty work literature also revealed that the definition and focus of research into dirty work takes a societal view and the “dirt is a product of social construction” (Ashforth and Kreiner 1999:413). The fact that the ‘dirtiness’ of working in a dirty work occupation can come from within the individual (in this case the creative entrepreneur) and can be experienced and felt by them has not been recognised and is a gap in the literature. I find that the sense of negativity associated with dirty work can be as much intrinsic as it is extrinsic to the entrepreneur. I propose that this internal orientation needs to be recognised in the definition and elaboration of the concept of dirty work. In this I hope to extend the discussion of the taint of dirty work into having a more individual orientation in addition to a social one. Through my empirical research I find that although attitudes towards money and assigning a monetary value for creative products and services may have changed socially and become much more acceptable (Hackley and Kover, 2007; Eikhof and Haunschild, 2006), these attitudes are not necessarily aligned with how creatives feel about commercialising creative talents. The study does not focus on the social stigma towards creative entrepreneurs but one that is internal to the entrepreneur arising from their pluralistic identity.

Having summarised the main contributions, I conclude by outlining some of the limitations of this study and propose areas for further research.

Limitations and further areas of research

In this paper, I find that in negotiating conflicting identities, entrepreneurs appear to take one of two specific identity paths where decisions about which are crucial elements of their identity and which are expendable are taken. The specific paths (*commercially expedient* or *altruistic*) entrepreneurs take may impact on their subsequent behaviour and eventually the overall survival of the venture. Although these areas of research are beyond the scope of this paper, I invite fellow researchers to investigate the relationships between different identity paths, resulting identity structures, and venture outcomes. The entrepreneurs I studied had very small ventures which is characteristic of the sector but nonetheless investigations into entrepreneurs of larger, more competitive and high growth ventures may lead to more varied findings. Future research should explore extensions of my findings around identity path of entrepreneurs and their characteristics to other sectors and conditions, possibly over longer periods of time.

While I have conducted an inductive analysis of the data in a manner that supports theoretical generalisability (Eisenhardt, 1989), the process of theoretical sampling that was followed restricts the direct empirical generalisability. The study draws participants from different sub-sectors of the creative industries and the results indicate that the differences in the entrepreneurs' attitudes toward money and the value of creative output cannot be assigned by the various sub-sector of the industry (i.e. craft, visual arts, music etc.). These attitudes are more intrinsic and linked to the personal motivations of the entrepreneur than what is acceptable behaviour for the sub-sector. This requires further empirical exploration. The narratives of these entrepreneurs illustrate the messy nature of identity work of entrepreneurs that are involved in ventures which are associated with feelings of taint or stigma. In addition, the narratives also illustrate how a better understanding of the complexity of identity work of entrepreneurs can offer insights transferable to other dirty work occupations.

My study focusses on entrepreneurs within a specific industry and I invite fellow scholars to undertake individual level empirical research in other sectors, such as with academic entrepreneurs. Here too individuals demonstrate plural identities and priorities which are not always aligned with each other (Franklin et al., 2001). Academic entrepreneurs demonstrate a scholarly identity which may conflict with their commercial identity as a business owner, giving rise to dirty work as demonstrated in this study. In the same vein, other sectors where ventures largely have social aims such as those working within agricultural development, conservation, food and nutrition could be investigated. The examination of dirty work as a concept, its application to these sectors and how dirty work is normalised could prove to be a rewarding avenue of further research.

Conclusion

Dirty work is more than a social view of tainted professions. Through analysing dirty work in the creative industries I find that although creative entrepreneurs are influenced by how they and their work is perceived, the feeling of taint or stigma from commercialising their venture comes from within. When conflict between multiple identities occur, entrepreneurs take two identity paths (i.e. altruistic and commercially expedient) to resolving this conflict. These conflicts in an entrepreneur's identity need resolution for them to function to the best of their abilities. In the founding stage, when the identity of the entrepreneur is newly formed, the conflicts between their commercial and creative identities are strong and apparent in their narratives about themselves and the venture.

ARTICLE 3: FROM CRITICAL INCIDENTS TO IDENTITY – AN EXAMINATION OF IDENTITY WORK OF NASCENT CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS THROUGH SENSEMAKING

Abstract

On the basis of a two-year longitudinal study with 10 nascent entrepreneurs in the creative industries, I examine critical incidents as a trigger for identity work. I identify events from the day-to-day work of an entrepreneur which they identify as significant to their venture and their newly formed identity as an entrepreneur. I outline the importance of sensemaking of incidents throughout the founding phase and propose a typology of critical incidents that impact on the identity work of the creative entrepreneur. I also explore the influence of the same incident on the multiple sub-identities of the nascent creative entrepreneur.

Introduction

The life of the nascent entrepreneur is filled with new and disparate experiences such as seeking financing, acquisition of clients and launch of products (Morris et al., 2012), some of which have a marked impact on both the individual and the venture (Cope and Watts, 2000; Morris et al., 2012). Therefore, the analysis of incidents (Chell and Pittaway, 1998), surprises (Baum, 2003) and events (Cope, 2003) that are identified as important or critical to the entrepreneur has captured the interest of entrepreneurship scholars. For instance, scholars have defined business failure (Ucbasaran et al., 2010), family conflict (Shepherd and Haynie, 2009), and learning events (Cope, 2003) as important or critical and studied their impact on entrepreneurs and their ventures. The focus has been on analysing important, large-scale events largely of a negative nature (Cope, 2011; Cope et al., 2004).

Research in entrepreneurship has focussed on unearthing the potential impact of critical incidents on an entrepreneur's cognition (Cope, 2011), action (Cope and Watts, 2000), affects

(Morris et al., 2012) and behaviour (Chell and Baines, 2000). However, research into the impact of events and incidents on the identity of the entrepreneur is limited. This is surprising given the recognition that the self-concept of the individual (i.e. their individual identity) can shape their future action (McMullen and Shepherd, 2006; Morris et al., 2012). Additionally, I find that the definition of a critical incident in extant literature is focussed on a social perspective (i.e. externally determined view of 'critical' or 'important') rather than that of the individual affected by such incidents. Small and, from an outsider's perspective, seemingly mundane everyday occurrences may however, have a significant impact on the entrepreneur but these occurrences are largely ignored by researchers.

In this study I argue that day to day events, which may not be seen as critical by the external eye, can be critical to the identity work of the nascent entrepreneur in the founding phase. Here the entrepreneur is constructing new knowledge that produces an enlightened understanding of their self-concept and the venture (Morris et al., 2012). Therefore, it is important to acknowledge seemingly ordinary events that are commonplace in the founding phase but which are viewed as critical to the entrepreneur, and explore their potential impact on the identity work of the entrepreneur. So far, the literature on identity work has examined demanding situations or momentous events as external triggers for identity work such as macro role transition, workplace bullying, and business failure, (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2008; Ucbasaran et al., 2010; Davies and Thomas, 2008; Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010). Although the understanding of identity work is necessary during these high pressure situations, scholars have also highlighted the potential to explore continuous identity work that occurs day to day during 'run of the mill' or mundane events (Brown, 2015).

In this study, I analyse the importance of everyday events in the founding stage. In particular, I explore critical incidents in the founding phase, as perceived by the entrepreneur, as a trigger for

their identity work. By introducing the theoretical framework and method of critical incidents in identity work I attempt to present a more rounded view of the types of triggers for identity work.

My inductive analysis of the relationship between critical incidents and identity work suggests that this relationship can be, at least partly, explained by how entrepreneurs make sense of such incidents. Sensemaking, the process by which “people make sense out of their experience in the world” (Klein et al., 2006:70) is one of the fundamental processes by which entrepreneurs interpret their practice, including events connected to their venture (Downing, 2005). As such, numerous sensemaking scholars acknowledge the process’s importance in shaping the identity of the actors involved (Petriglieri, 2011; Lutgen-Sandvik, 2008). It is then remarkable that the relationship between incidents, sensemaking derived from these incidents, and their impact on identity work is yet to be examined in academic literature.

I propose that studying the relationship between critical incidents, sensemaking and identity work is likely to be particularly revealing in the context of entrepreneurs operating in the creative industries. In this context, entrepreneurs are likely to hold several sub-identities (e.g. the creative and the commercial) (Hackley and Kover, 2007; Markusen, 2006) and I argue that the same critical incident may impact the sub-identities in different ways. The interplay of multiple identities and resulting impact on their overall self-concept and behaviour of the entrepreneur has been explored by (Murnieks and Mosakowski, 2007). Here the scholars propose that integrating multiple identities leads to positive impacts for the entrepreneur. However, the triggers that may influence that process have not been explored. As such, a more detailed exploration of the connections between critical incidents (as a trigger for identity work), how nascent entrepreneurs make sense of them, and how they impact on their identity work, is lacking in entrepreneurship research. In light of these shortcomings in extant research, the

research questions at the heart of this study are: *What types of critical incidents impact identity work of nascent entrepreneurs that exhibit multiple identities? What is the role of sense making in this process?*

In what follows, I briefly review the literature on triggers for identity work. This is followed by an exploration of the literature on sensemaking as a process and its relation to identity work and finally a review of the current literature on critical incidents technique and its use in entrepreneurship research. Following the review, the methods used and data analysis of the study is described before explicating the main findings from the research. I then discuss the implications of these findings and assess the critical incidents technique's usefulness when researching identity work of (nascent) entrepreneurs.

Theoretical background

Identity work – internal and external triggers

The study of identity in relation to various fields of academia has been gaining momentum over the last few decades (Watson, 2009), and identity scholars believe that we have only scratched the surface with regards to the insights identity theory can offer to the examination of the entrepreneur (Conger et al., 2012). How entrepreneurs form, negotiate and change their identity as the venture progresses is now studied by scholars under the term identity work. Scholars define identity work as “a formal conceptualization of the ways in which human beings are continuously engaged in forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising the constructions that are productive of a sense of coherence and distinctiveness” (Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003:1165). The definition highlights the differing processes associated with identity work and its continuous nature. It does not, however, provide any indication on how identity work is initiated. A better understanding of the reasons or scenarios that stimulate identity work would help to contextualise the process.

I argue that in order to understand the process of identity work it is essential to acknowledge the range of triggers for this process. An exploration of extant literature in identity work unearths that scholars have suggested that the triggers for identity work could be internal to the actor or present in their external environment (Kreiner et al., 2006). Some internal triggers identified include their aspirations (Thornborrow and Brown, 2009), morals (Luedicke et al., 2010) and sentiments (Davies and Thomas, 2008). Some of the external triggers explored include the introduction of a new discourse to an organisation (Davies and Thomas, 2008), transition of work role (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010), managerial intervention and control (Alvesson and Wilmott, 2002) and adversity (Powell and Baker, 2014).

Within the entrepreneurship literature, the study of triggers for identity work is dominated by a focus on internal stimuli very closely related to the identity of the entrepreneur. Hoang and Gimeno (2010) analysed how complexity and centrality of identity can bring about identity work in entrepreneurs which in turn assists in the persistence of the venture. Cardon et al., (2009) focused on the passion of entrepreneurs and its impact on the entrepreneur, their cognition and behaviour. Fauchart and Gruber (2011) examined identity conflict in the founding stages and showed how the difference between the entrepreneurs' identity structures impacted on their future actions. The starting point of these studies stem from within the entrepreneur whereas through this study I take a step back to examine an external trigger i.e. critical incidents and its impact on identity work of entrepreneurs.

Before I discuss the nature and scope of critical incidents, it is important to acknowledge the process by which an event is analysed and their significance interpreted by individuals. Scholars have called this process sensemaking (Weick, 1995; Maitlis and Christianson, 2014). To understand the process in more detail and identify the context in which it has been researched by scholars, I review the literature on identity and sensemaking in the next section.

Identity work and sensemaking

Making sense of incidents and events is a process that results in far-reaching implications for the individual actor, in this case the nascent entrepreneur, and their ventures (Morris et al., 2012).

Due to the importance of this process to individuals and their activities, it is important to consider it in some detail with specific reference to its components and features. Weick (1995) clearly outlined its features by stating that “Sensemaking is understood as a process that is (1) grounded in identity construction, (2) retrospective, (3) enactive of sensible environments, (4) social, (5) ongoing, (6) focused on and by extracted cues, and (7) driven by plausibility rather than accuracy.” (1995:17).

Many of the features outlined in this definition have attracted scholarly interest, and scholars have found investigation of sensemaking in different management settings a rewarding field of study (Brown et al., 2014). A full review of the literature in sensemaking is beyond the scope of this paper however as a testament to current scholarly interest in sensemaking, scholars have recently authored reviews of theoretical and empirical studies in sensemaking in a management setting (cf. Brown, 2015 and Sandberg and Tsoukas, 2015). Therefore, I draw on such reviews to analyse the literature around two features of sensemaking outlined in the definition by Weick (1995) relevant to the research questions at the heart of this study. These are identity construction or identity work, and the importance of cues (triggers).

Scholars have acknowledged the multifaceted nature of sensemaking calling it a complex, continuous phenomenon (Maitlis and Christianson, 2014) and although scholars have studied sensemaking in different academic domains, research into the process has predominantly found favour in organisational studies. Within this body of work, studies that explore the link between identity and sensemaking are popular (Brown et al., 2014). In their review of the current literature on sensemaking, Sandberg and Tsoukas (2015) found that around ten percent of studies

in their review explicitly investigated the way identity and sensemaking were connected (2015:S15). Some of the studies include Dutton et al.'s (1994) investigations on the process of sensemaking and identity construction in organisations, and Patriotta and Spedale's (2009) study exploring the social nature of sensemaking and identity formation in expert groups through group level interactions. In comparison, my research interests are in studying sensemaking at an individual level using narrative data from the entrepreneur to ascertain sensemaking processes. In this, my study aligns with the individual approach taken by Lutgen-Sandvik (2008) in studying workplace bullying using narratives. More specifically, my study builds on extant work by scholars taking an individual approach by investigating how the process of sensemaking helps to assign meaning and criticality to an incident or occurrence that an individual, in this case an entrepreneur, has been involved in. Here occurrences in the life of the entrepreneur are seen as the trigger and identity work as the outcome. Sensemaking is situated in the middle as the process which translates one to the other, i.e. when incidents are deemed critical through sensemaking, it impacts on the identity work of the entrepreneur. In essence this study investigates the sensemaking stemming from an incident and as a precursor to identity work.

Sensemaking derived from an external trigger to identity work is examined by Kjærgaard et al. (2011) where a longitudinal approach is taken to examine the impact of positive media coverage on an organisation's identity. Here, the media coverage over time may be seen as set of critical incidents that trigger identity work. Scholars find that identity work is impeded as the external narrative is more favourable than the internal narrative in the organisation (Kjærgaard et al., 2011). Korica and Molloy's (2010) study sensemaking and its impact on professional identity work and find that identities are in constant flux. My study benefits from the insights offered by these scholars and builds on these by studies by investigating sensemaking of entrepreneurs in the founding stage triggered by critical incidents. I take a longitudinal, individual level,

narratological approach, to investigate how sensemaking occurs while recognising that the identity of the entrepreneur is in flux even through the sensemaking period.

In entrepreneurship literature, studies exploring identity work and sensemaking are limited (O'Neil and Ucbasaran, 2015; Jain et al., 2009), especially studies that make sense of differing triggers to identity work of entrepreneurs. As such, studies in this area focus on negative triggers. For example, sensemaking in light of threats to identity and the resultant identity work has been explored in detail by Maitlis and Christianson (2014). Additionally, Petriglieri (2011) highlighted different kinds of sensemaking triggered by an identity threat, and indicated that when the identity under threat is a new one (as is the case with nascent entrepreneurs) individuals are prompted to change the meaning of the new identity. Both studies appear in support of the view that "identity only becomes an issue when it is in crisis" (Mercer, 1990:43 in Lutgen-Sandvik, 2008). Based on the review, sensemaking during positive and seemingly mundane scenarios that impact on identity has not attracted much scholarly interest, which is the gap where my study is situated. This study builds on the work in sensemaking and identity work undertaken by scholars in examining critical incidents that occur in the founding stages as a trigger to their identity work. The process of sensemaking is used by the entrepreneurs to internalise the meaning of the specific incident. The meaning derived through this process impacts on identity work of the entrepreneurs. The study focusses on all incidents highlighted as important by nascent entrepreneurs, and no specific attention is given to negative over positive events.

Before I examine the findings of this study, I explore the literature on critical incidents and its use in entrepreneurship research.

Critical incidents

Flanagan (1954) distinguished critical incidents from other incidents as follows: “An Incident is any observable human activity that is sufficiently complete in itself to permit inference and predications to be made about the person performing the act. To be critical, an incident must occur in a situation where the purpose or intent of the act seems fairly clear to the observer and where its consequences are sufficiently definite to leave little doubt concerning its effects” (Flanagan, 1954:327). This definition suggests a critical incident is one which allows inference about the individual involved in or affected by the incident, and that the effects of the incident must be definite. This interpretation lends itself to our analysis of events in the founding stage that stimulate identity work in nascent entrepreneurs.

In defining what is *critical* in critical incidents, there appears to be varying perspectives from scholars. In a majority of studies in this area, the definition of criticality is assigned by the researcher and the individuals’ perspective is largely missing. Additionally, scholars have observed that the term critical may be problematic and terms such as “significant” or “revelatory” may offer a more assessable framework to include events and incidents which at first glance may not appear critical but are important to the individual in their sensemaking (Keating, 2002:34). In line with these suggestions, scholars argue for the need for self-definition of criticality saying “critical incidents are produced by the way we look at a situation” or make sense of it and thus a “critical incident is merely an interpretation of the significance of that incident and this interpretation is based on the individual making a judgement about the significance of that event” (Tripp, 1993:8). Cope and Watts (2000:112) advocate for this type of self-definition of criticality by entrepreneurs so that an “entrepreneur’s personal representation of salient moments which was of prime importance” to them can be accounted for as a critical incident for

them. This self-defined approach to critical incidents (Tripp, 1993; Cope and Watts, 2000) has been used in this study.

The Critical Incident Technique (CIT) was introduced by Flanagan (1954) in his seminal article in *Psychological Bulletin* where he provided a detailed description of the process. Since then, not much has changed in the way the technique is implemented. In summary, the technique involves the collection, content analysis and classification of observations of human behaviour in line with the aim of the study being undertaken (Gremler, 2004). Once collected and collated, incidents are classified using either a general frame of reference to define the categories or by developing categories assigned by “inductive interpretation” (Stauss, 1993) of data. Overall “the goal of the content analysis is to arrive at a classification system that provides insights regarding patterns of factors that affect the phenomenon of interest” (Gremler, 2004:68). In order to gain acceptance, early researchers utilising the technique used “quantitative language and in some cases used quantitative validity and reliability checks” (Butterfield et al., 2005:482). More recently it is accepted as a significant qualitative method with acceptance in different disciplines of academic research (Spencer-Oatey, 2013).

Since its inception, the technique and its use has given rise to debate among scholars (cf. Gilbert and Morris, 1995) around its strengths and weaknesses. The technique’s main strengths lie in its ability to lend itself to different settings and engage participants at a personal level (Spencer-Oatey, 2002). Additionally, the information gathered requires analysis and reflection, reducing the temptation of seeking answers from a single expert (Fowler and Blohm, 2004:59). Some of the main weaknesses of the technique lie in the time and effort needed to identify, reflect on, and interpret the event and its impact. Critical incident technique gives way to an iterative process of analysis which can be lengthy and frustrating (Spencer-Oatey, 2013).

Despite these debates, entrepreneurship scholars have seen merit in using this technique for identification and analysis of learning, sensemaking and problem solving by entrepreneurs and teams (Chell and Pittaway, 1998; Cope, 2003; Oliver and Roos, 2003; Shepherd and Haynie, 2009). Cope (2000) found that the critical incidents methodology in entrepreneurship research was in its exploratory stages at the turn of the century. However, current entrepreneurship literature suggests that it is growing in popularity and has been used successfully to study a wide range of areas in the entrepreneurship field. For example, the technique has been successfully used to study entrepreneurial behaviour in a specific industry setting (Chell and Pittaway, 1998), entrepreneurial marketing (Stokes, 2000), the nature and extent of networking activities of entrepreneurs (Chell and Baines, 2000) entrepreneurial learning (Cope and Watts, 2000; Cope, 2003) and early stage venture issues (Kaulio, 2003).

The technique, however, has not been used to analyse how critical or significant incidents can influence the entrepreneur's self-concept or identity. It is this use of the critical incident technique, with specific reference to the identity work of nascent entrepreneurs in the creative industries, that is the focus of this study. A broader perspective to include all events that may influence the entrepreneur's identity will offer a richer and more detailed insight into the identity processes of the nascent entrepreneur. This should include mundane, expected and unexpected events, with a positive or negative orientation. This argument is supported by the fact that in the founding stages the majority of events are novel to the entrepreneur and have potential to have an impact. As Morris et al. (2012) suggest, if entrepreneurship is fundamentally based on experiences, events, and occurrences; it is surprising that we know little about the nature of the experience, and lesser still about the impact of everyday experiences on the identity of the entrepreneur. With this in view, I approach this study using principles of the critical incident technique.

In my review of extant literature into triggers for identity work of entrepreneurs, I found a lack of focus on triggers that are external to the entrepreneur, which is essential to provide a comprehensive understanding of the different ways in which their identity work is stimulated. To address this gap, I focussed my research questions to evaluate the impact of critical incidents as an external trigger for identity work in entrepreneurs. As sensemaking of an entrepreneur assists in interpreting the importance of incidents, and internalising its impacts, I then analysed the literature in sensemaking as it relates to my research concerns. Here I found that studies in identity and sensemaking focus on negative scenarios and events. Triggers related to all types of significant incidents in the founding stages are yet to be explored. I then outlined the use of critical incident technique in entrepreneurship and identified its potential for use in analysing significant yet everyday events of nascent entrepreneurs. Before I move to the findings from the data in response to the research questions, I elaborate on the methods used in this study.

Methods

Research approach

The aim of the research is to explore, in depth, the types of everyday events in the founding stage highlighted by nascent entrepreneurs as having significance to them in terms of their identity and venture. With this in mind, I approach this study using principles of critical incidents technique. The method assumes the principles of subjective research; that reality is phenomenal and not tangible, data is subjective and not objective and that knowledge is constructed and not positivist (Chell and Pittaway, 1998).

As illustrated above, the technique has been successfully used in empirical studies in entrepreneurship including research into entrepreneurs' cognition and resulting actions (Cope and Watts, 2000). This study takes a longitudinal and qualitative approach that allows for the collection of detailed accounts from participants with a view to understanding the events, the

sensemaking of the events and the resulting impacts on identity work. A focus on critical incidents can be a useful way of managing great volumes of qualitative research data (Angelides, 2001) and the strengths of this make this technique suitable for this study. The method involves a detailed account, record and analysis of the events that occurred in the entrepreneurial journey while noting the sensemaking resulting from these events.

It is useful to reflect on the validity of the critical incident methodology in researching sensemaking and identity work. An important issue to consider here is that the methodology is based on recollection and reconstruction of events and for that reason may not be accurate in the detail or the intensity of its occurrence. In moderating these problems somewhat, Chell (2004) argues that the advantage of examining critical experiences is “the fact that the incidents are ‘critical’ means that subjects usually have good recall” (2004:47). This shortcoming is moderated in our study by the short time lag (around six months) between the time that the incidents occurred and when the entrepreneur narrated them to the researcher. However, despite this shortcoming, reflection is seen as a powerful tool and is seen as essential for sensemaking. Additionally, the fact that the incident must have had an impact on the participant for them to highlight it to the researcher, and reflect on their developmental impact underlines its criticality.

The primary research for this study takes a longitudinal case study approach (Yin, 1989) and includes a sample of 10 nascent (first time) entrepreneurs operating in the creative industries. Studies that collate sensemaking are dominated by single case studies (Maitlis and Christianson, 2014). I move away from this and include multiple cases to illustrate my findings, as studies that include multiple cases often yield more accurate and detailed explanations than single cases (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007; Walsh and Bartunek, 2011).

Before I outline the data collection and analysis using the critical incident technique, I briefly outline the reasons for choosing the creative industries as a research setting for this study.

Research setting

There were three primary reasons for selecting entrepreneurs founding businesses in the creative industries. First, I believe this setting represents an “extreme setting”. An extreme setting is likely to assist theory-building efforts by providing particularly rich insights due to the “transparently observable” (Pettigrew, 1990 cited in Langley et al., 2013) phenomena of interest. In my case, the chosen setting was the creative industries and the founders were creative entrepreneurs. This industry is characterised by large numbers of small, micro-businesses and sole traders with a relatively small number of larger organisations. Self-employment, entrepreneurship and business start-up are significant career choices for many of those working in the sector. Similarly, many develop portfolio careers, juggling several part-time positions along with freelance work (Department of Culture Media and Sport, 2006). Due to these factors, many entrepreneurs that work in this sector display multiple identities and roles that occur concurrently. Some of these coexist comfortably while others are in conflict, especially identities related to commercial and creative aspects (Eikhof and Haunschild, 2006; Markusen, 2006). As such, while I acknowledge that entrepreneurs operating in other settings may hold multiple identities, the presence of multiple identities is likely to be more readily observable among entrepreneurs in the creative industries.

Second, the creative sector is growing in importance to the economy of the UK (Department of Culture Media and Sport, 2006), hence it’s corresponding importance to academia (Hesmondhalgh, 2008). Although there is a rapidly growing academic interest in the sector, research to date has mainly focussed on understanding the sector and sub-sector conditions and policy implications rather than the individuals that work in this setting (Caves, 2000; Florida,

2002). Given the aforementioned challenges creative entrepreneurs are likely to face (e.g. the need for portfolio careers and the likely presence of multiple identities), greater attention to the individual actors in the creative and cultural industries is likely to be fruitful for both scholars and policy circles.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge that my personal experience of working in this sector for thirteen years has influenced my choice of research. I am strongly motivated to understand how entrepreneurs in this setting resolve the challenges associated with founding a business in this sector. Furthermore, from a pragmatic perspective, I believe my experience in this sector has provided me with the legitimacy to gain access to the entrepreneurs in this sector and for them to speak openly and freely about themselves and their experiences.

Case selection

Data were collected from a range of sub-sectors within the creative and cultural industries to minimise effects relating to specific agendas in one or other particular industry (Sarasvathy, 2009). Furthermore, I could think of no reason multiple identities associated with creative and commercial aspirations would not be readily observable in entrepreneurs across all sub-sectors of this industry. I studied 10 entrepreneurs¹ and their ventures in the creative industries in the UK over a two-year period. To understand their identity work during the founding phase I created the following target profile of founders: They were (a) in the process of starting a new venture (self-defined, but all less than one year old); (b) trained and/or practicing artists or performers; (c) came from different subsectors of the industry (d) this was their first commercial venture in the creative industries. First time entrepreneurs were chosen with the aim that no prior venture experience could influence their sensemaking with regards to the incidents they

¹ Names of individuals, locations and companies have been changed throughout to maintain the anonymity of the participants of this study.

considered significant in the founding stage. The primary aim therefore was that some complementary aspects of the complex phenomenon of sensemaking and entrepreneurial identity would be provided by the different cases (Eisenhardt, 1991).

Case	Founder	Background <i>(before venture commenced)</i>	Venture	Age of venture <i>(at initial contact)</i>
1	Adam	Practicing actor	Acting Agency	8 months
2	Beth	Arts therapist	Performing Arts Event Management	5 months
3	Daniel	Choreographer	Dance Education & Performance	8 months
4	Jack	Photographer	Photography and Design Agency	6 months
5	Francis	Composer	Music Composition and Production	11 months
6	Gemma	Textile designer	Textile Design	2 months
7	Hilda	Choreographer	Dance Education	10 months
8	Isaac	Composer	Music Production	8 months
9	Linda	Musician and visual artist	Craft Workshops	3 months
10	Kate	Fashion designer	Fashion Design	11 months

Table 7: Sample description for article 3: name, background, sub-sector and age of venture

The sample was recruited using a variety of methods which included contact with business accelerators and alumni of local universities, conversations with speciality business advisors and mentors that work in the creative industries in the UK. This was followed by snowball sampling methods to identify a large pool of participants. I contacted potential participants by email and telephone to discuss the nature of their involvement and conducted exploratory interviews to identify entrepreneurs that fit my profile. Table 7 describes my sample including, name, age of venture at initial contact and geographic location.

Data collection

I conducted three rounds of interviews with each entrepreneur over the period of this study. Semi-structured interviews were carried out over a 22-month period, with the primary aim of understanding the background of the individual, their experience of starting the venture and running it, and noting how they believe their identities have evolved over this period. The early semi-structured interviews took the form of a life story where I asked them about their childhood, education and work history (Watson, 2009). This was useful to provide context to the

current and future situation of the venture and the motivations and aspirations of the entrepreneur. Subsequent interviews had a greater focus on reflections related to the experience of the venture and the changing identities and priorities of the entrepreneur.

Within this framework, various approaches of the critical incident methodology were incorporated. This was mainly to “deploy a wide range of interconnected interpretive methods, always seeking better ways to make more understandable the worlds of lived experiences that have been studied” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005:12). Through the narratives of the entrepreneur and their venture, critical incidents were highlighted as they emerged in the flow of the conversation. The interviews overall were loosely structured and the participants were asked to focus on their personal reflections of what had occurred over a period, highlighting any occurrences that were memorable or they believed had an impact on how they felt about themselves or the venture. Questions such as “describe any memorable events or surprises that have happened in the last few months/since we last met?” were included in conversation to identify incidents that were deemed as memorable and significant by the participants. Follow up questions included “How did you respond to that?”, “How did that make you feel?”, “Do you see yourself / the venture any differently now?”

The critical incidents therefore represented self-contained stories within the overall story of the experience of running the venture. This was in-line with the objective of gathering narratives from the participant, offering an account of the incident and its resolution (Curran et al., 1993:15). Care was taken to not present inquiries relating solely to negative incidents; events that were positive and beneficial were given an equal emphasis. Therefore, the criticality of the incidents included in the research are defined by the participant and are their personal representation of what has been significant to them and their venture.

All 30 interviews were audio recorded and transcribed into approximately 650 single-spaced pages. Average interview length was 89 minutes, and ranged from 28 minutes to 101 minutes. Detailed field notes were made after each interview shortly after the interview ended. All quotes in this paper are from transcriptions rather than field notes. I supplemented interviews and field notes with direct observation, including facilities tours, and review of information published offline and online about the ventures, including marketing materials, brochures, feedback received from clients and customers. Although I only use quotes from the entrepreneurs as illustrative evidence, the supplementary data helped me make sense of and analyse the data and provide context to the cases. The narrative data gathered through the semi-structured interviews and the temporal nature of the data collection process gave me the opportunity to observe impacts of specific incidents and resulting identity work, in the form of 'stories'.

Data analysis

Using principles of the critical incident technique as proposed by Flanagan (1954), the analysis involved disaggregating each case study into a number of recognisable "critical episodes" (Cope and Watts, 2000:112) (i.e. a period of time, usually during transition when many critical incidents occur simultaneously) and then critical incidents within each episode. The description, context, experience, sensemaking, and consequent action for each incident were noted. This was followed by assigning categories to the incidents with reference to the aims of the study. The data analysis was carried out in the three stages described below.

Once the narrative data surrounding the critical incidents were collected (in stage one), I carried out content analysis of the stories. The stories within each case were divided into critical episodes which were further divided into critical incidents as defined by the entrepreneur in their narrative. In total 119 significant incidents were highlighted in the data from 10 case studies.

Stage two involved making decisions about a general frame of reference to describe the incidents and an inductive development of categories of the incidents (Gremler, 2004). Scholars observe that in performing these tasks, the researcher generally considers the aim of the study, the ease and accuracy of classifying the incidents, and the relation to previously developed classification schemes in this area (Neuhaus, 1996). Scholars suggest that the information contained in the narratives should be examined to identify data categories that summarise and describe the incidents (Grove and Fisk, 1997; Stauss, 1993). With the aim of understanding the identity work of the entrepreneur, occurring as a result of the incident, I attempted to categorise the incidents using the six categories proposed by Chell and Pittaway (1999) based on the principles of grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). These were:

- *Positive incidents*: where the business owner viewed the event in a positive light.
- *Negative incidents*: where the business owner viewed the event in a negative way,
- *Proactive incidents*: where the business owner acted according to personal or organisational objectives.
- *Reactive incidents*: where the business owner acted in response to pressures within or outside the business.
- *Tangible incidents*: which involved a change to the business which could be observed or measured,
- *Intangible incidents*: which involved situations which could not be observed or measured and were open to different participant's perceptions.

This outcome of this process has been elaborated in the findings of this study.

In stage three, through a process of induction, new categories were assigned to the incidents. The incidents were coded on the basis of their origin (i.e. where it happened, how it was initiated,) and nature of impact on the entrepreneur (i.e. short or long term impact, shallow or deep impact).

The resultant categories of incidents were named, *Functional*, *Relational* and *Aspirational*. A detailed description of these categories is included in the findings (for a summary, refer to Table 10). I now illustrate the findings from the study to respond to the research questions posed in this paper.

Results

Assigning criticality to an incident

Before I discuss the impact of critical incidents on the identity work of the entrepreneur, I illustrate how the variety of events and occurrences during the founding phase were assigned importance or criticality by the entrepreneur. Given that the focus of this study is on analysing the overall identity work of the entrepreneur and not just the identities directly relevant to the venture, all events and occurrences highlighted by the entrepreneurs in their narrative during the period of the research were considered for analysis. From the coded incidents within each case, the narrative data relating to incidents was analysed to identify how the incidents prompted sensemaking through reflection, thinking, and finally an impact on identity work.

A wide range of events and incidents occurred in the founding stage. Guided by prior research (Cope and Watts, 2000; Rae, 2004), criticality was attributed by the fact that, either unprompted or when prompted, the entrepreneurs chose to discuss these events. The chosen events were memorable and held meaning for them over and above others events that occurred during the period of the research. Their narrative accounts demonstrated that the events had resulted in sensemaking before, or in some cases during, the interview. Recounting the episodes further allowed each entrepreneur to reflect, organise and integrate the sensemaking from the incidents. (Rae, 2004; Maitlis and Christianson, 2014).

Cope and Watts (2000) suggest that routine occurrences should be analysed to identify their impact, and this is especially pertinent to nascent entrepreneurs, where even common

occurrences are novel and can trigger unique impacts on them and their venture. It is this definition of criticality that has been used to outline the findings of this study. To get a better understanding of the sensemaking that occurred as a result of incidents, Table 8 shows a sample of critical incidents from five cases and the resulting sensemaking as outlined in their narrative.

Case	Critical incident	Category	Narrative sensemaking assigning criticality to the incident
Beth	Disagreement with a team member before a client meeting	Functional	<i>I felt it was really a crucial meeting, and she [team member] kind of went 'oh I don't think I'm going to come' and I just went 'well maybe I don't think I'm going to come either'. She was very upset, but it sort of shocked her into deciding that she did want to do it [continue in the venture] and she definitely was in, rather than out, it took her a while to think well is it even worth doing this? And it's kind of that incident that made the difference and ever since then it's been a lot better.</i>
Daniel	Buying a new car with business income	Aspirational	<i>All these little things make it more satisfying. Being able to purchase my new car was satisfying for me because I worked hard for that. I can look at my car and go – "I worked hard for that" you know. To be able to save and buy it, that's a sense of achievement for me, because when I go to my meetings I'm like yes this is my car that I've got. I think I'm in a good position now. I feel like I can buy what I want, I can talk to who I want to talk to. I just don't want to slow down now.</i>
Jack	Devising first business plan	Functional	<i>When I first started out in photography I never thought that I'd be interested in the business-ey side of things. The idea generation and putting it together, the parts of the company that isn't seen is actually starting to really take hold and that's primarily the thing that I most get revved up about now.</i>
Francis	Started playing in a band	Aspirational	<i>it's been great but I'm still not 100% sure, what I can't work out is I've spent a lot of time training in music in writing composition and I'm trying to work out whether I want to go back to that or whether it was because that was what I was told I should be doing, if that makes sense, should I be writing that music or am I ok just writing band music?</i>
Linda	Being asked for a discounted place at a workshop	Relational	<i>There was one instance where somebody said that their friend was interested in coming to the class, but she had twins and she felt it was a lot of money and I said I understand that but, you know I have to cover my own expenses. I can't make a special case because it's just not possible... I had to be firm, it is a business.</i>

Table 8: Sample of critical incidents and resulting sensemaking outlined through narrative

The incidents and related narrative presented above illustrate events that are commonplace in the founding stage of a venture. Incidents from different categories (i.e. *Functional*, *Relational* and *Aspirational*) have been chosen to illustrate that sensemaking occurred as a result of a range

of incidents. The narrative descriptions and explanations offered by the entrepreneur show a deep engagement with the incident and the meaning derived from it.

This study takes a narratological approach to sensemaking research as undertaken by Brown et al. (2008) where the scholars explored the reasons “why people interpret differently experiences they have in common” (2008:1035). In a similar vein this study explores how the interpretations of a single incident can have differing impact on the identity of an individual. Sensemaking allows the individual to internalising the experience of the incident and assign meaning to it. It then impacts on them, affirming or negating one of their multiple identities.

For Jack, putting together his business plan made him reflect on the enjoyment of the process and affirmed his identity as business owner. For Beth and Linda, commonplace incidents relating to how they resolved a specific issue resulted in them affirming their position in the venture and underlining their identity as business owners. For Daniel, the incident of buying a car affirmed his achievements and his willingness to continue and grow the venture. The illustrations above provide examples of narratological sensemaking as proposed by Brown et al. (2008) and Boudes and Larouche (2009), where “reports are artefacts of authoritative sensemaking” that serve many purposes for the individual (2009:78). They are a narrative vehicle for reporting the incident and at the same time for reflecting and planning future action. Having illustrated the sensemaking derived from the incidents to assign it criticality, I analyse the types of incidents and their varying impacts on the identity work of the entrepreneur.

Impact of critical incidents on identity work

From the 10 case studies, I delineated 119 critical incidents mentioned by entrepreneurs through the period of the study. Table 11 in the Appendix of this article summarises these incidents by case. In line with the analysis method prescribed by the critical incident technique, it was

important to provide a framework to categorise the incidents and to recognise similarities in relation to their impact on identity work.

Traditional Critical Incident Technique (TCIT) suggests that incidents and the resulting 'stories' could be categorised as positive or negative (Flanagan, 1954; Stauss, 1993). There is an assumption that the impact of the incident is on one entity, say a venture. However, when critical incidents and their impact on multiple identities of an individual are being considered, where some of the identities may be contradictory, a simple positive-negative categorisation is not sufficient. An incident may act as positive reinforcement for one sub-identity while negating another. Through the analysis I find that the same incident had a positive impact on one identity and negative on another. For example, acquiring a large order for products could be positive for the commercial sub-identity but negative for the creative sub-identity of the entrepreneur.

I illustrate this further by focussing our analysis on the commercial and creative sub-identities of the nascent creative entrepreneur. At the start of the study, I recorded the multiple sub-identities that the entrepreneurs described as salient at that point in time. This exercise was repeated at each round of interview. Table 9, below illustrates one critical incident per case, the initial salient sub-identities and the subsequent salient sub-identities that followed the incident highlighted by each creative entrepreneur. The critical incident per case is described along with the identity work impacts inducted from the narrative in each case.

Case	Critical incident	Category	Initial salient identity	Subsequent salient identity	Inducted impact on identity work
Adam	Decided to not audition in favour of a client	Aspirational	Actor, Agency owner, Entrepreneur	Entrepreneur, Mentor, Actor	Adam's decision to forgo an acting audition in favour of a client had a negative impact on his identity as an actor and a positive impact on his identity as an entrepreneur
Beth	Took a lead on devising the business plan on behalf of the team	Functional	Arts therapist, Arts programmer	Arts therapist, Strategy development lead, Mother/Grandmother	Beth took a lead on the business planning process on behalf of the entrepreneurial team, the incident had a positive impact on her identity as a business owner but a negative impact on her identity as the arts programmer (creative) in the business
Daniel	Quit his part time job	Aspirational	Managing director, networker, marketer	Philanthropist, Choreographer	As the part time job was taking time away from his creative practice, the outcome of this incident was positive for Daniel's creative identity and negative for visibility in the sector and his identity as a networker/marketer
Jack	Went to a hackathon and pitched an idea	Aspirational	Photographer, Networker, Programmer	Entrepreneur, Technician	The business idea was very well received and resulted in a new start up in the tech sector, this incident was positive for Jack identity as an entrepreneur but negative for his identity as a photographer
Francis	Developed first (video) game	Functional	Composer, Entrepreneur	Entrepreneur, Team Leader, Musician	Leading the team in developing their first successful game gave Francis a new interest in the gaming business and this incident had a positive impact on Francis' identity as an entrepreneur but a negative impact on his identity as a composer
Gemma	Developed a new blog	Functional	Artist, Designer, Tutor	Entrepreneur, Tutor, Artist	Gemma's blog had a very high reach and prompted more business and requests for workshop, the outcome of this incident was positive for her identity as an entrepreneur and negative for her identity as an artist

Case	Critical incident	Category	Initial salient identity	Subsequent salient identity	Inducted impact on identity work
Hilda	Terminated contract with a client	Relational	Dance teacher, Director (of a company)	Teacher, Play leader, Creative artist, Agony aunt.	Hilda decided to terminate her contract due to differences with the client based on her artistic and social values, the impact of this incident was positive for her identity as dance teacher but negative for her identity as an entrepreneur
Isaac	Composed music for free for an old client	Relational	Musician, Composer, Entrepreneur	Musician, teacher, Role model	Isaac chose to compose music for free for an old client and the outcome of this incident was positive for his identity as a musician and negative for his identity as a business owner
Linda	Growth in number of private music classes	Aspirational	Artist, musician,	Teacher, performer, parent, householder	Linda saw a growth in requests for private music lessons and the outcome of this had a positive impact on her identity as a teacher but a negative impact on her identity as a business owner
Kate	Marketing the collection through sending press packs	Functional	Knitwear designer, Artisan	Mother, Business owner, Creative,	Due to the specialist nature of the work and time involved in reaching the press with her work, this incident was positive for Kate's identity as a business owner but negative for her identity as a mother and a creative

Table 9: Critical incidents, and resulting identity work

Having established that a positive-negative categorisation is ineffective, I considered some of the other ways in which critical incidents have been categorised, with a view to understanding which theoretical categorisations would be effective in segmenting critical incidents to understand their impacts on identity work. In their study on entrepreneurial behaviour, Chell and Pittaway (1999) suggested categories of critical incidents based on perceptibility (i.e. tangible and intangible) and orientation (i.e. proactive and reactive). These categories were based on the principles of grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1990) and analysis of entrepreneurs in the restaurant and café industry.

Using the orientation categories to analyse these critical incidents I find that proactive incidents, “where the business owner acted according to personal or organisational objectives” (Chell and Pittaway, 1998:29), dominate the founding stage. This may be attributed to the motivation of the nascent entrepreneur to initiate action in order to define and develop the venture in this stage. Reactive events, where “the business owner acted in response to pressures within or outside the business” (Chell and Pittaway, 1998:29), is a broad category which does not ascertain whether the reaction was to an external opportunity, feedback, or requests. Additionally, it does not highlight the relationship of the entrepreneur to the initiator of these pressures. The data for this study shows that the impact of identity work triggered by different sources is different. Therefore, this categorisation was ineffective for the purpose of this study.

Chell and Pittaway (1999) also propose categories related to perceptibility of the incident on the venture. Here tangible incidents were defined as “that which involved a change to the business which could be observed or measured” while intangible incidents “involved situations which could not be observed or measured and were open to different participant’s perceptions.” (Chell and Pittaway, 1998:29). Due to the change of focus from impact on the venture to impact on the identity of the creative entrepreneur, using these categories to classify critical incidents is not beneficial. For certain critical incidents, their impact on the entrepreneurs’ identity may be tangible and on the venture intangible.

Kaulio, (2003) reviews types of critical incidents in an *infant venture* defined as the “phase between start up and growth” (Kaulio, 2003:165). The focus is solely on venture related incidents and their impact on the running of the venture and not that which are personal to the entrepreneur. The four categories identified include “Recruitment or finance events”, “Reference or first customer events”, “Utilization of entrepreneurial service providers’ events” and “Decisive

events”. They offer a narrow view of how incidents can be categorised based on a context not applicable to identity or identity work.

The analysis of the data using theoretical classification schemes for critical incidents was ineffective. Assigning a frame of reference and categories for critical incidents requires a thorough understanding of the context within which they originate and the purpose of their analysis (Gremmler, 2004). Hence, I propose that an attempt to outline a generic frame of reference for these critical incidents is redundant. For this study the categories need to consider the actual behaviour of the entrepreneur in a relationship view to the incident, thereby ensuring that the actors “behaviour is included as a consequence of criticality within a relationship” (Roos, 2002). As the context, relationship and resulting behaviour is essential to study the impact on identity work, I derived a categorisation of critical incidents in the founding stages as inducted from the data in this study. The categories I propose cut across the positive-negative, perceptibility and orientation paradigms and focus on aim, origin and relationships of the incident to the entrepreneur. Based on these principles, three categories were identified as defined below:

Functional: The majority of incidents in the data were of a functional nature. These incidents occurred in the course of *forming the business to run it at a stable level*, and originated within the venture and the immediate team. Data suggests that such incidents have a low but consistent impact on identity work, however the impact is sustained over a long period time. Incidents such as 'rebranding the company', 'writing a business plan', or 'registering as limited company', lead to sensemaking that affirms or negates the individuals' identity as a business owner.

Relational: This is the second most common category of incidents, which occurred in *maintaining and developing relationships with the entrepreneurs' related network*. The origin and relationships with individuals involved in the incident lie outside the venture but within the immediate network surrounding the entrepreneur, such as family, peers, suppliers, customers

and competitors. Data suggests that the level of impact on identity work is related to the depth of the relationship with the individual or group, and the impact is sustained over a long period of time. Incidents in this category included 'fall out with web-designer', 'request for free products from peers', 'complaints from family members about lack of time'.

The range of incidents in this category varied greatly and I observed that where the incident was related to individuals that were close to the entrepreneur the impact of the incident was high e.g 'being asked by peers to judge an acting competition' helped Adam derive confidence as an acting agency owner. Equally, 'starting a new partnership with a local community centre' was a real highlight for Beth; the immediate impact of the incident on her was low but long term as it made her feel secure in her identity as an arts programmer

Aspirational: This was the least frequent category of incidents observed which occurred *to support the aspirations and opportunities identified by the entrepreneur*. The origin and relationships could lie either inside or outside the venture. However in most cases the entrepreneur was responding to an external opportunity in the founding phase and the outside origin of the incident was more common. The data suggests that such incidents can have a high impact on identity work but the impact is not sustained. Incidents in this category included 'started playing in a band', 'started working in a book-store', 'submitted design to a well-known American magazine'.

These incidents and the outcome had a high impact on the individual and their multiple identities, however the impact was short-lived and not sustained. Opportunities and ambitions changed in this phase of their venture, and the individuals moved from one opportunity or ambition to the next one. The data suggests that the experience gathered through living these incidents to some extent stayed with the entrepreneurs.

The aim of this study is to analyse self-defined critical incidents by creative entrepreneurs in the founding stage, with a view to understanding their impact on the entrepreneurs' identity work. A full list of incidents and categories inducted from the data is included in Table 11 in the Appendix of this article, and a summary of the definition of each category is presented below in Table 10.

Category of incident	Origin of incident	Intensity of impact on identity	Duration of impact on identity
Functional <i>forming the business to run it at a stable level</i>	Outside the venture	Low	Long-term
Relational <i>maintaining and developing relationships with the entrepreneurs' related network</i>	Outside the venture	Depends on nature of relationship	Long-term
Aspirational <i>to support the aspirations and opportunities identified by the entrepreneur</i>	Inside OR Outside the venture	High	Short-term

Table 10: Critical incident categories identified

The categories above offer a relevant framework for using critical incidents to analyse identity work in contexts where the actor has multiple priorities. It should be acknowledged that attribution of absolute causality to critical incidents is complex, as there are many other factors in play during the founding stage. Additionally, given the newness of the incidents, (narratives were collected within six months of the event occurring) the observed impacts of these incidents on identity work is indicative. Further, critical incidents are emotionally laden (Cope and Watts, 2000) which impacts on their interpretation. With these factors in mind I conclude that this framework is an exercise "driven by plausibility rather than accuracy" (Weick, 1995:17). However, in each case an impression of the incident on the entrepreneur was observed which suggests that the incidents had an impact on the identity work of the entrepreneur and their future behaviour.

Discussion

The research questions that underpinned this study were as follows: *What types of critical incidents impact identity work of nascent entrepreneurs that exhibit multiple identities? What is the role of sense making in this process?* In response to the first research question I find that the impact of the critical incident on the identity work of the entrepreneur relates to the type of incident. I propose three different types of incidents i.e. *Functional, Relational* and *Aspirational*, and within each category I theorise the type of impact they may have on identity work. I also find that the same incident may have differing impacts on the multiple sub-identities of the entrepreneur. In response to the second question, I find that sensemaking plays a crucial role in assigning criticality to incidents. The process of sensemaking is used by entrepreneurs to internalise the incident, understand and derive meaning from it, and to inform their future identity work. I now outline the main contributions of this study.

My first contribution is to identity work as through this study I extend the scope of incidents used to analyse the process of identity work. In this study I outline how day to day and mundane events that are self-defined as critical by the actors can act as triggers for identity work. In doing this, the study responds to calls made by scholars to extend the scope of research into identity work by including the analysis of 'run of the mill' and "mundane events" in relation to identity work (Brown, 2015:25). As Morris et al. (2012:11) explain, the founding experience is replete with mundane and momentous events, "changes in pace as things slow down or speed up, developments that represent emotional highs and lows, and periodic turning and tipping points". In doing this (Morris et al., 2012) argue for an experiential perspective in entrepreneurship. Through this study I explore the potential for these experiences and events that are seen as significant or revelatory (Keating, 2002) and analyse their impact on the identity work of the entrepreneur and in turn their venture. Therefore, through this study I illustrate that incidents

that impact on the identity work of individuals do not necessarily come across as “dramatic or sensational” and may take the form of “common place events” (Tripp, 1993:23).

In addition to mundane events, I argue that both positive and negative incidents should be considered when exploring their value as triggers for identity work. The literature in this area is currently dominated by events and outcomes that are crisis-led or predominantly negative in nature, focussing on areas such as failure (Cope, 2011; Ucbasaran et al., 2010), identity conflict (Shepherd and Haynie, 2009) and threat (Petriglieri, 2011; Maitlis and Christianson, 2014).

Second, I extend the scope of research into sensemaking in light of multiple identities, by proposing that single incidents have the potential to take on more than one meaning. I illustrate this by examining the impact of one critical incident on the creative and commercial sub-identities of the creative entrepreneur. Through sensemaking, a single incident can be interpreted in differing ways and different meaning can be derived from it. This contribution addresses the need for more “in-depth research into how sensemaking connects to identities and identity work processes” (Brown, 2015). Through this study I find that analysing the impact of a critical incident on identity work on a simple positive-negative paradigm is ineffective and a more complex method of categorisation should be considered. As Snell (1992) outlines, there is more to critical incidents than seeing them as wholly negative. In the literature on identity work and sensemaking, predominantly only one type of impact of a critical incident has been explored and I argue that the scope of this can be extended to consider other impacts of the same incident on the individual.

In summary, critical incidents are complex and not independent of the entrepreneur (Cope and Watts, 2000). Therefore, in analysing identity work triggered by critical incidents, all types of incidents deemed significant by the entrepreneur should be considered for analysis, irrespective of size or frequency of occurrence. Additionally, with regards to meaning or sense derived from

incidents, the potential of an incident to produce differing meaning needs to be considered by scholars. I now outline some of the implications of this study and avenues for further research.

Implication and areas of further research

The context of the study is the founding stage of the venture, where the entrepreneur has little prior experience and the majority of incidents are new to the entrepreneur. This work can be extended to research 're-sensemaking' of these incidents at a later stage of the venture, to see if they are interpreted or impact on the identity work of entrepreneurs in different ways. Equally, mundane events may be less and less important to the entrepreneur in subsequent stages of the venture as their experience in running the venture and their identity as an entrepreneur is enhanced. This is an area that could provide a fruitful area of research with practice implications for entrepreneurial support and learning.

Scholars have highlighted a bias in the studying of disruptive events and episodes at the expense of more mundane forms of sensemaking implicated in routine activities (Sandberg and Tsoukas, 2015). When looking at a negative event, some of the outcomes may be positive. Through this study I make a case for studying negative and positive incidents in parallel to gather insights from the overall experience of running a venture rather than obtaining a skewed view of the process. I invite researchers to look at positive and negative impacts of incidents connected to the venture to appreciate their differing impacts on multiple priorities under consideration.

Stimulation and support for new ventures can also be enhanced by understanding the impact of critical incidents through various stages of the venture. The research can provide useful insights to assist in training and supporting entrepreneurs and the development of their identity in the founding stage. Prior knowledge of venture experience and understanding of events can be useful to support the growth of the venture "through the crisis and achievements" and can make business ownership a more positive experience for nascent entrepreneurs (Cope and Watts,

2000:116). In addition to the work of business mentors, studies such as these can inform practice based development of nascent entrepreneurs.

Conclusion

The life of a nascent entrepreneur is replete with mundane and varied events and occurrences. Nascent entrepreneurs continually make sense of these incidents through analysis and reflection. Part of this sensemaking assigns criticality to the incident in relation to its importance to the venture and in turn to the identity of the entrepreneurs. Incidents that are deemed critical also stimulate identity work. Where more than one salient identity exists, the same incident can impact on these differently.

Appendix

Case summaries

Adam

Adam is an experienced actor and did not consciously decide to start an acting agency but somehow fell into it. In addition to running this agency he has a few other jobs that help him pay the bills. He still practices as an actor and director when opportunities arise and this makes him very happy. He sees himself as an entrepreneur, mentor and an actor.

Beth

Before setting up her performing arts event management company, Beth had been a musician and an art therapist for many years. She runs the company along with four other people, that came together to address a gap in the market of having a small scale venue in the area. The company is growing organically and various people in the entrepreneurial team take on different roles. Beth predominantly takes the role of creative lead in the team and sees herself as an artist and a facilitator.

Daniel

Daniel started his dance education and performance with an aim of providing creative interventions to help young people that are not in education or are not achieving at school. Daniel is part of an entrepreneurial team and his business partner manages the business while he is in charge of the delivery of services and managing other personnel that work with him. Daniel was creative as a child and was attracted to the arts and trained as a choreographer. He sees himself as a philanthropist, choreographer and an entrepreneur.

Jack

Jack graduated in 2012 and while at university was part of a business enterprise scheme. His business started in response to a gap in the market in 3D photography. He feels that he set up his

business in a hurry and on reflection does not appear to be comfortable about its name, its scale, products or operations. Jack trained in theatre and feels that his artistic training has helped him a lot in his business. He sees himself as an entrepreneur and a photographer.

Francis

Francis is co-owner of a music composition and production company, which he started with his friend from university after his masters in music. Francis played many musical instruments as a child, and at university he specialised in music. He started the business to fill a gap in the market for a professional approach to music composition for moving media. Francis sees himself as an entrepreneur, a team leader and a musician.

Gemma

Gemma started her textile business selling knitting patterns and running workshops. She has a background in a scientific sector, in which she worked for many years. A few years ago she decided to change her career and enrolled herself into a Masters course in Textile Design specialising in knitting. Being a business owner is her third career transition.

Hilda

Hilda is passionate about dance and doing something meaningful with her life. She identifies herself as a dance teacher and seems uncomfortable about being seen as an entrepreneur or a business owner. Registering her first trademark has had a huge impact on how she sees her business. She is reflective and more focussed on the future. Her relationship with her staff has changed for the better and she is coming to terms with being an entrepreneur. She is still very much a dancer and creative first and a business person second.

Isaac

Isaac is a musician who has travelled extensively and collaborated on a wide range of projects while on his travels. He is a musician first who is learning the ropes of running his own business. His decision to start the business is based on the belief that he would find it difficult to work for someone else. He is also conscious of his status and financial security however has prescribed an upper limit to how big he would like his business to be. He wants his venture to be contained and manageable so as to not interfere with his artistic ambitions.

Linda

Linda set up her business to further her ambitions of creating art with children and adults in a community setting. She works in leisure centres or hired spaces and currently has a regular programme of workshops. Linda is also a part time music teacher and a trained musician. She identifies herself as a teacher, performer and a parent.

Kate

Kate is a confident and experienced fashion designer with many years of experience working for large brands. She set up her business in 2012, just before she had her first child. She has had a lot of support from other friends and entrepreneurs before she set up this business so is fairly in touch with the realities of running a fashion design business. Kate is currently divided in her role as mother and as a business owner and has decided to prioritise being the former than the latter in the short term.

Critical incidents and categories by case

Critical Incident	Origin	Depth of impact	Duration of impact	Category
Adam				
Recruited new clients from a wide geographic area	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Made plans to have an office in London	Inside	High	Short	Aspirational
Got a part time job	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Gathered a large number of followers on Twitter	Outside	Low	Long	Relational
Abandoned plans to move to London	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Met with a business mentor	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Asked to judge an acting competition	Outside	High	Long	Relational
Suffered from ill health	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Got negative feedback on branding and website	Outside	Low	Long	Relational
Decided to not audition in favour of a client	Inside	High	Short	Aspirational
Grew the client list by a significant number	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Beth				
Developed first business plan	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Was invited to programme for a festival	Outside	Low	Long	Relational
Registered the company	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Received bad publicity	Outside	High	Long	Relational
Met with the council about business funding	Outside	Low	Long	Relational
Attended a business planning training session	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Bought premises for the business	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Devised a blog to counter negative press	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Started new partnership with a local community centre	Outside	Low	Long	Relational
Devised a staff structure	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Got a part time job in a book store	Outside	High	Short	Aspirational
Had a disagreement with a team member before a team meeting	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Took a lead on devising the business plan on behalf of the team	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Daniel				
Completed first set of tax returns	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Marketed services to schools and explained the product and services	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Participated in a Social Enterprise initiatives	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Reviewed negative cash flow situation	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Took-on the role of 'broker' to market others' services	Outside	High	Long	Relational
Received business support funding	Outside	Low	Long	Relational
Launched a new website, working with a new designer	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Offered new office space by the council	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Fell out with web designer (also a friend)	Outside	High	Long	Relational
Was asked to do workshops for free	Outside	High	Long	Relational
Was challenged by family member that he only talked about the business when with family	Outside	High	Long	Relational
Started a new creative company	Inside	High	Short	Aspirational
Left part time job with first employer, who helped start the venture	Outside	High	Short	Aspirational
Took on interns and trained them	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Won award for work with young people	Outside	High	Long	Relational

Critical Incident	Origin	Depth of impact	Duration of impact	Category
Bought a new car with income from business	Outside	High	Short	Aspirational
Repaired relationship with sister	Outside	High	Long	Relational
Jack				
Received rejection from first pitch to a potential client	Outside	High	Long	Relational
Delivered project with 2012 Olympics, giving access to new networks	Outside	Low	Long	Relational
Rebranded the company and structured the services offered	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Devised first business plan	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Participated in a Hackathon, pitching an idea	Outside	High	Short	Aspirational
Set up a complete new business - Venture B	Inside	High	Short	Aspirational
Rented a new office space	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Encountered cash flow issues	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Was offered a job by a major client	Outside	Low	Long	Relational
Acquired new projects (all using technical skills)	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Francis				
Got a business mentor	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Started an audio based games company	Outside	High	Short	Aspirational
Funded a networking seminar	Outside	Low	Long	Relational
Received very low payment from a large client	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Got positive feedback from first pitch	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Won an award (business funding)	Outside	High	Long	Relational
Received advice from business mentor on how to increase profile	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Produced first computer game	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Started teaching composition at college level	Outside	High	Short	Aspirational
Started playing in a band	Inside	High	Short	Aspirational
Exited original venture	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Started working in a design company	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Gemma				
Set up new website, blog and social media channels	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Set up new bank account	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Put first knitting pattern up for sale online	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Received request from peer for free patterns	Outside	High	Long	Relational
Was invited to run a workshop at a local craft shop	Outside	Low	Long	Relational
Was contacted by a magazine for more patterns	Outside	Low	Long	Relational
Could not attend family wedding due to business commitments	Outside	High	Long	Relational
Used the newsletter to inform family about the schedule	Outside	High	Long	Relational
Started individual tuitions	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Was recognised by name by previous student	Outside	Low	Long	Relational
Submitted design to well-known American magazines	Inside	High	Short	Aspirational
Hilda				
Had showcase praised by Mayor of the city	Outside	High	Long	Relational
Ran classes with ex-offenders	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Recruited a business mentor	Inside	Low	Long	Functional

Critical Incident	Origin	Depth of impact	Duration of impact	Category
Received business funding and finance support from an external body	Outside			Relational
Was profiled on funders website as best new business	Outside	High	Long	Relational
Applied for trademark	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Terminated a contract with a client	Outside	Low	Long	Relational
Expanded the business geographically and hired new staff	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Redesigned website	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Fired a member of staff	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Invited to speak at a creative entrepreneurs' event	Outside	Low	Long	Relational
Issued employment contracts	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Got new clients from a wider geographic area	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Isaac				
Received feedback on website from potential client	Outside	Low	Long	Relational
Completed a project with an Australian client and charged very low rates	Outside	High	Long	Relational
Composed music for free for an old client	Outside	High	Long	Relational
Did market research to identify competitors	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Went to a networking event for creative individuals	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Had a bad experience working with graphic designer (who was also a mutual friend)	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Was asked by peers about current music making activities (Do you play in a band?)	Outside	High	Long	Relational
Met with new business mentor	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Moved house and studio	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Developed a portfolio of music	Inside	High	Short	Aspirational
Started private teaching and other educational workshops	Outside	High	Short	Aspirational
Was told his rates are too high	Outside	High	Long	Relational
Linda				
Used Facebook to do the initial marketing of workshops	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Created a LinkedIn account	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Got booking for 1st workshop	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Taught first music class in a school	Outside	High	Short	Aspirational
Was called by a nursery for first booking	Outside	Low	Long	Relational
Was asked by potential client for free place on the workshop	Outside	High	Long	Relational
Logged all incomes and expenditures	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Observed sudden growth in number of private music classes	Outside	High	Short	Aspirational
Wound up art workshops	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Got a new job	Outside	High	Short	Aspirational
Relegated arts venture to a hobby	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Kate				
Registered as a limited company	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Designed first collection	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Had a baby	Outside	High	Long	Relational
Produced a Look book (catalogue of designs)	Inside	Low	Long	Functional

Critical Incident	Origin	Depth of impact	Duration of impact	Category
Responded to urgent need to market the designs through press, social media and fairs	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Researched trade fair costs – realising that a financial backer is needed	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Did the first set of tax returns	Inside	Low	Long	Functional
Took on a consultancy project to design maternity clothes	Outside	High	Short	Aspirational
Sold stock on online marketplace	Inside	Low	Long	Functional

Table 11: List of critical incidents and categories for each case

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Having presented the three articles that were derived from the analysis of my two year, qualitative, longitudinal, study with 15 creative entrepreneurs in the UK, I present a summary of the main contributions of my thesis. I outline the empirical and practical implications of this study and propose future research directions for fellow researchers, which I believe would further our knowledge of identity work and bring “vitality to the entrepreneurship field” (Shepherd, 2015:489). I conclude by reflecting on the process and findings of my study.

Theoretical contributions

The theoretical contributions of this study relate to the literature on identity work. First I explain how identity work is used as a mechanism to achieve identity coherence and second by highlighting a number of triggers for identity work. The triggers discussed are affect, dirty work and critical incidents and I outline the specific contributions relating to the different triggers for identity work in the section below.

Identity work for coherence

This study addresses the need for a better understanding of the micro-processes involved in identity work. In doing so, it responds to calls by scholars to undertake “further fine-grained research” in identity work in order to appreciate “nuances in how, why and with what implications” individuals engage in identity work (Brown, 2015:31; Ibarra, 1999:765). Some scholars see the self-concept of an individual as relatively stable and continuous (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999; Petriglieri, 2011) which is prone to change only during significant change in role or other such large transformations (Ibarra, 1999). I recognise that, underlying an overall stability of self, there are disruptions in identity due to the presence of multiple identities. The start of a venture is the site of one such disruption which is followed by a journey to identity coherence.

Through this article I respond to the call of scholars to examine “the importance and effects of people’s need for self-coherence” in identity work literature. (Brown, 2015:31).

The main contribution of the first article, is to elaborate on the identity work undertaken for identity coherence or equilibrium, using micro-processes that change over time. I demonstrate this by presenting a staged identity work model where identity work occurs over two phases as identities progress from disequilibrium to equilibrium. I define the latter as *the process by which identities adjust and evolve to find and maintain an optimum balance*. I surmise that depending on which type of affect is dominant, i.e. positive or negative, the entrepreneur achieves equilibrium of their multiple identities through different routes (i.e. Adding or Diluting), each of which is associated with different micro-processes. (i.e. Assimilating, Separating and Distancing).

Although micro-processes and identity tactics (i.e. specific ways in which these processes occur) have been examined by scholars of identity work (Creed e al., 2010; Kreiner et al., 2006; Pratt and Foreman, 2000), this study builds on the work of scholars by providing more granularity in such an examination. At their core these studies recognise dichotomous dimensions of identity tactics such as *Integration* and *Separation* of multiple identities. In doing this scholar have taken a simplistic and broad view of identity work and do not explore a staged approach to unearth micro-processes within the broader phase of identity work. Where staged models of identity work are presented, such as the remedial identity process model proposed by Lutgen-Sandvik (2008) when studying workplace bullying, the role of affect on identity work is not acknowledged in the model. I build on the work of scholars by examining micro-processes of identity work using different identity tactics within a staged model of identity work while acknowledging the role of affect within that model, thereby explicitly establishing a connection between affect and identity work.

Triggers for identity work

Each of the articles involve an investigation of different triggers for identity work. Although various triggers for identity work has been explored by scholars (Alvesson & Wilmot, 2002; Luedicke, 2010; Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010; Powell and Baker, 2014), the three triggers (affect, dirty work and critical incidents) discussed in this study have not been included in the identity work literature. In each article I make a case for the need for a better understanding of these triggers for identity work, especially for identity work of entrepreneurs, and find a place for them in the identity work literature. In Article 1 I look at affect as a trigger for identity work. Article 2 includes an examination of how identity work is triggered by identity conflict between two sub-identities of the entrepreneur, and how this conflict manifests as dirty work. Article 3 focusses on the role of critical incidents as a trigger for identity work. Entrepreneurs make sense of their experience of these incidents, which in turn can trigger identity work. I elaborate on each of these triggers below.

Affect

In Article 1, I respond to calls to explain further “how identity work processes are affected by emotions” (Brown, 2015:31). I highlight the importance of both positive and negative affects; affects being defined as “the experience of feeling or emotion” (Hogg et al., 2010:646) in the process of identity work. Scholars researching the process of identity work have eluded to existence of affects of the individual (Alvesson and Willmott, 2002; Creed et al., 2010; Kreiner et al., 2006; Pratt et al., 2006). However, these scholars have not explicitly acknowledged these affects, categorised them into types and analysed their impact on the identity work process of the individual. They fail to connect the affects to the identity work process model. A key contribution of article 1 is an attempt to contextualise the different types and the relative importance of affect in a staged model of identity work.

Through research with creative entrepreneurs, I find that the founding phase of a venture is highly affectual and the type of affect, has an impact on the identity work of the entrepreneur. Scholars have noted that emotions felt by entrepreneurs change substantially as they found more ventures and become habitual entrepreneurs (Podoyntsny et al., 2012) and the impact of these emotions on their decision making and venture outcomes grow in importance as they develop a venture and/ or found subsequent ones. However, the impact of such emotions and changing affects as a trigger for identity work of nascent or first time entrepreneur has not been examined by scholars and is a gap addressed by this study. To examine the identity work process in detail, I take the dominant affect observed in each stage whether positive or negative, separately, rather than undertake analysis while considering the ambivalence of mixed affects impacting on the entrepreneur. This approach allows me examine distinct identity journeys undertaken by the entrepreneurs through the founding phase of their venture.

The article thus responds to the potential identified by entrepreneurship scholars to investigate emotions and the related cognition of entrepreneurs. Shepherd (2015) highlights that future research into emotions and affects of entrepreneurs has the opportunity to make an important contribution to exploring the role of entrepreneurial activity in generating emotions, and outlines the need to specifically focus on both negative and positive emotions in such studies.

Dirty Work

In examining dirty work in relation to entrepreneurship, I make three contributions. First, in relation to the dirty work literature I contribute to how dirty work is defined and examined by scholars. To add to the tripartite classification of dirty work and taint as physical, social or moral (Hughes, 1951; 1958), McMurray and Ward (2014: 23) introduced the category of emotional dirt. Emotional dirt is defined as “expressed feelings that threaten the solidarity, self-conception or preferred orders of a given individual or community” (McMurray and Ward 2014: 20). The

authors argue that to be considered as emotional dirt, the tasks must necessarily present as negatively experienced work. This type of dirty work has parallels to the taint felt by creative entrepreneurs in running their ventures while reconciling their creative and commercial identities.

Second, I find that the definition and focus of research into dirty work including emotional dirt primarily takes a societal view and the “dirt is a product of social construction” (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999:413). The fact that the ‘dirtiness’ of work can come from within the individual (in this case the creative entrepreneur) and can be experienced and felt by them has not been recognised in academic literature. I find that the sense of negativity associated with dirty work can be as much intrinsic as it is extrinsic to the entrepreneur. I propose that this internal orientation needs to be recognised in the definition and elaboration of the concept of dirty work.

Third, in resolving these identity conflicts or taint derived from dirty work I demonstrate how the entrepreneurs make sense of and normalise feelings of dirt associated with their work by taking one of two distinctive identity paths (*Altruistic* and *Commercially expedient*). I define these as *the routes taken by the overall identity of the individual to placate conflicting sub-identities*. The altruistic path focusses on the social value of the venture, while the commercially expedient path focusses on the commercial gains of the venture. This study contributes to current debates (Brown, 2015) in identity work based on the maintenance of positive identities and outlines the need to understand how identity work helps to negotiate stigmatised identities.

Critical incidents

In article 3, I analyse every-day incidents self-defined as critical by entrepreneurs as a trigger for their identity work. Here I find that the impact of the incident on identity work depends on the type of incident. I propose that there are three categories of incidents namely, *Functional*, *Relational* and *Aspirational*. When the impact of an incident on multiple identities is being

analysed, I find that a simple positive-negative categorisation of incidents that has occurred in the course of starting a venture is not effective., and a more multi-layered understanding of these incidents is needed. The entrepreneur experiencing the incident interprets its meaning through a process of sensemaking. In the study I find that there can be multiple outcomes of the sensemaking process associated with a single incident, and different meanings can be derived from it. An incident may act as positive reinforcement for one sub-identity while negating another. For example, acquiring a large order for products could be positive for the commercial sub-identity but negative for the creative sub-identity of the entrepreneur.

These findings also contribute to the gap in understanding of the impact of mundane and run-of-the-mill events in stimulating identity work of entrepreneurs (Brown, 2015; Cope and Watts, 2000). The literature in this area is currently dominated by studies that analyse the impact of large scale events that are predominantly negative in nature. For instance, business failure (Cope, 2011; Ucbasaran et al., 2010) and financing issues (Kaulio, 2003). Furthermore, this study addresses the need for more “in-depth research into how sensemaking connects to identities and identity work processes” (Brown, 2015).

Empirical contributions

Scholars argue that if entrepreneurship is fundamentally experiential, “we know surprisingly little about the nature of the experience” (Morris 2012:1). Individual level research into creative entrepreneurs and their experience of running a venture is a neglected area of research (Poettshacher, 2005; Leadbeater, 1999), as is research to understand the transition of practicing artists into entrepreneurs and the subsequent operation of their creative ventures (Rae, 2004; Caves, 2000).

This study makes significant empirical contributions to creative entrepreneurship in developing a richer understanding of the experience of individual entrepreneurs starting a venture in this

industry. More specifically, it makes contributions in developing an understanding of the creative entrepreneurs, their identity conflicts and identity work.

Through this study, and the cases relating to fifteen creative entrepreneurs, I elaborate on what it is like to be 'in the moment' when a creative venture is taking form. I identify the identity tensions and resulting identity journeys of the individual creative entrepreneurs, when going through experiences such as: buying tools and stock, setting up a new brand, receiving rejection from clients, or alienating one's family commitments as a venture becomes all-consuming). Scholars have acknowledged that these sorts of events represent the "fabric of the entrepreneurial experience" and while it is generally acknowledged that they occur, their significance has not been readily explored (Gartner, 1993) which is in essence one of the key contributions of this study in this empirical setting.

Industry figures show that the rapid growth of the sector relies on independent operators (Department of Culture Media and Sport, 2016) but scholars acknowledge that little is known about these independents (Leadbeater and Oakley, 1999). In discussing the identity work of creative entrepreneurs, and their triggers for such identity work in the initial stages of their ventures, this study contributes significantly to understanding the creative entrepreneur's experience, thereby contributing to the gap in understanding of "how they work, where they come from, what makes them tick, and what are their distinctive needs" (Leadbeater, 1999:12).

The study makes a significant contribution to the discussion of identity conflict of creative entrepreneurs which is yet to be examined in academic literature. For some artists the idea of commercialising talent is seen as "selling out" or "losing integrity" (Beckman, 2010) as money here is a dirty word (Bridgstock, 2013) and making money by catering to the market is seen as dirty work. The negativity associated with money in the creative industries has been discussed by scholars (Eikhof and Haunschild, 2006; Caves, 2000; DiMaggio, 1983), but no academic

attention has been paid to the internal identity tension faced by the creative entrepreneur in this matter. For instance, scholars have tried to understand how creative entrepreneurs deal with tensions such as the high level of risk and uncertainty associated with the creative industries (Dempster, 2006; 2009), but discussions around identity tension between the various sub-identities of creative entrepreneurs is yet to occur. This study elaborates on the specific identity tensions between the creative and commercial identities, how such tension is resolved and the identity paths taken by the individual entrepreneur. The detail provided about the identity paths of creative entrepreneurs is unique to this study. In doing this the study paves the way for unpicking what is unique about the identity work undertaken by creative entrepreneurs and attempts to highlight the importance of gaining a detailed understanding of their identity and entrepreneurial journey. In effect, investigations into the multiple identities and identity work of the creative entrepreneur is a unique contribution of this study.

Although the focus of this study is on the creative entrepreneur rather than their venture outcome, all three papers makes contributions in developing our understanding of how different occurrences in the entrepreneurial journey impact on identity which in turn impacts on their venture development and outcome. While the majority of participants continued to pursue their new ventures, three entrepreneurs that were involved in this study were in the process of reconsidering their decision to continue with their creative ventures – some of which could be attributed to their unresolved identity tensions. Although not a comprehensive list, an analysis of the identity journey of these cases have revealed some of the experiences and identity work that impact on venture outcome. Having outlined some of the empirical contributions I move on to delineate a few practical implications of the findings of this study in the next section.

Practical contributions

This study has practical implications for supporting learning of current and potential entrepreneurs about managing the initial problems faced in the founding stages. A better understanding of the identity challenges and an analysis of the evolving narrative of entrepreneurs in the creative sector can be an invaluable way of supporting their development and their understanding of the founding phase, and in turn their overall ventures.

The research underlines many challenges faced by creative entrepreneurs that led them to question their decisions to start a venture, and it was evident that they had little experience to deal with them at the time. An acknowledgment and understanding of the identity challenges that go hand-in-hand with the founding phase can help policymakers put in place support mechanisms at a micro-level that are fit for purpose in such scenarios. Interventions such as these can make a difference in how policy makers support the growth of the sector which is a priority outlined by the current government (Department of Culture Media and Sport, 2015).

Support for ventures in the founding phase needs to extend beyond the venture to the individual and requires a more long-term and personalised approach. Mentors and business support bodies play an invaluable part in providing that support (Raffo et al., 2000), and a better understanding of the identity journeys and evolving affects can help to tailor the provision offered. Also, a broader appreciation of events and incidents that are critical to the entrepreneur will inform the information provided. Such interventions will not only improve the effectiveness of these entrepreneurs but will help counter venture failure stemming from identity related struggles (Rigg and Dwyer, 2012) of the creative entrepreneur.

A more in-depth appreciation of the identity journey taken by creative entrepreneurs in the very initial stages of the venture can be invaluable to educators involved in training the next

generation of creative entrepreneurs. Insights into the identity journeys they will embark on, in addition to learning about theoretical business models, will ensure that a more rounded view of being a creative entrepreneur is presented to these students and potential entrepreneurs.

Future research directions

Through the thesis I find that in negotiating multiple identities, entrepreneurs appear to engage in a staged process of gaining identity coherence (equilibrium) and demonstrate specific micro-processes of identity work on their journey to such coherence. I invite fellow researchers to investigate the relationships between these identity routes, the resulting identity structures and decision making of entrepreneurs in relation to their venture outcome (i.e. continuation, decline or exit). Future research could explore extensions of my findings around micro-processes of identity work of entrepreneurs and their characteristics to other sectors and conditions.

My study focusses on entrepreneurs within a specific industry and I invite fellow scholars to undertake individual level empirical research in other sectors, such as with academic entrepreneurs. Here too individuals demonstrate plural identities and priorities which are not always aligned with each other (Franklin et al., 2001). Academic entrepreneurs demonstrate a scholarly identity which may conflict with their commercial identity as a business owner. Although some scholars have investigated identity conflict in this field (Brennen and McGowan, 2006; Franklin et al., 2001), the examination of dirty work, its application to this sector, and how dirty work is normalised could prove to be a rewarding avenue of further research. Equally, critical incidents and how they may impact on the salient sub-identities of academic entrepreneurs could also be explored.

Scholars have highlighted a bias in the study of disruptive events and episodes at the expense of more mundane forms of sensemaking implicated in routine activities (Sandberg and Tsoukas,

2015). When looking at a negative event, some of the outcomes may be positive. Through this study I make a case for studying negative and positive incidents in parallel, to gather insights from the overall experience of running a venture rather than obtaining a skewed view of the process. I invite researchers to look at positive and negative impacts of incidents connected to the venture to appreciate their differing impacts on multiple priorities under consideration. Additionally, I call for taking a more rounded approach to researching affect as a trigger or outcome of identity work by including positive and negative affect in identity work studies

The context of this study is the founding phase of the venture, where the entrepreneur has little prior experience and the majority of incidents and experiences are new to the entrepreneur. As the entrepreneurs gain more experience and confidence, incidents may hold different meaning for them. This study can be extended to research 're-sensemaking' of the same or similar experiences of entrepreneurs and incidents at a later stage of the venture, to see if they are interpreted or impact on their identity work differently. Equally, mundane events may become decreasingly important to the entrepreneur in subsequent stages of the venture as their identity as an entrepreneur is enhanced. Studying this may provide a fruitful area of research with implications for enhancing practice and entrepreneurial support.

Finally, I invite fellow scholars to undertake more individual level research into the creative industries with managers and entrepreneurs to build on the findings relating to their identity, affect and decision making presented in this study. This will grow academic knowledge about the sector beyond examinations of sector and sub-sector conditions and policy implications, which appears to be the current preoccupation of scholars in this field (Caves, 2000; Florida, 2002). As one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy in the UK (Department of Culture Media and Sport, 2016), more in-depth and varied academic research into the individuals that

form the building blocks of the sector will enhance the overall understanding of what makes the creative industries unique.

Concluding thoughts

The main purpose of this thesis was to unearth the complexities, micro-processes and triggers associated with identity work of entrepreneurs. More specifically I set out to gather a better understanding of the identity challenges and journeys undertaken by creative entrepreneurs. From these findings I surmise that identity work in light of multiple identities is a complex phenomenon. However, its understanding is invaluable in unravelling the puzzle of how entrepreneurs become entrepreneurs and over the founding phase, provide an evolving response to their question – *Who am I?*

Through this thesis my aim is twofold. On one hand I aim to energise and arouse curiosity of scholars to focus their research energies on investigating, at a micro-level, the rewarding and mystifying process of identity work. On the other hand, I aim to offer an insight into the creative industries and more specifically the curious and conflicted being – the creative entrepreneur: seen as an enigma or talented genius by some while their economic contributions are dismissed by others.

As an entrepreneur, undertaking this study has been a personal identity journey for me. Through the findings of this study I have reflected on the identity work I have undertaken during the founding phase of my own venture in the creative industries. Through the journey and experiences of the entrepreneurs participating in this study, I reflected on how I negotiated my multiple identities as a creative person, a researcher, and an entrepreneur and gained identity coherence over the course of the study. Delving into the identity work processes of fellow entrepreneurs provided validation to my own journey and helped me understand my own

identity work processes. This I believe has helped in making this thesis and the findings better informed and my venture stronger. I believe that the findings of this study can make a valuable contribution to scholars in the field of entrepreneurship, identity and the creative industries. I hope that the practical contributions of this work meet its potential of informing the practice of creative entrepreneurs making their identity transformation and growth even more rewarding.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abelson, R. P., Kinder, D. R., Peters, M. D., & Fiske, S. T. (1982). Affective and semantic components in political person perception. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 42(4), 619.
- Albert, S., & Whetten, D. A. (1985). Organizational identity. *Research in organizational behavior*.
- Alvesson, M., & Kärreman, D. (2000). Taking the linguistic turn in organizational research challenges, responses, consequences. *The journal of applied behavioral science*, 36(2), 136-158.
- Alvesson, M., & Willmott, H. (2002). Identity regulation as organizational control: Producing the appropriate individual. *Journal of management studies*, 39, 619-644
- Angelides, P. (2001). The development of an efficient technique for collecting and analyzing qualitative data: The analysis of critical incidents. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 14(3), 429-442.
- Ashforth, B. E., Kreiner, G. E., & Fugate, M. (2000). All in a day's work: Boundaries and micro role transitions. *Academy of Management review*, 25(3), 472-491.
- Ashforth, B. E., Kreiner, G. E., Clark, M. A., & Fugate, M. (2007). Normalizing dirty work: Managerial tactics for countering occupational taint. *Academy of Management Journal*, 50(1), 149-174.
- Ashforth, B. E., Rogers, K. M., Pratt, M. G., & Pradies, C. (2014). Ambivalence in organizations: A multilevel approach. *Organization Science*, 25(5), 1453-1478.
- Ashforth, B.E & Kreiner. G.E (1999). "How Can You Do It?" Dirty Work and the Challenge of Constructing a Positive Identity, *The Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 24, No. 3, pp. 413-434.
- Baker, T., & Nelson, R. E. (2005). Creating something from nothing: Resource construction through entrepreneurial bricolage. *Administrative science quarterly*, 50(3), 329-366.
- Bamberg, M. (2012). Why narrative? *Narrative Inquiry*, 22(1), 202-210.
- Baron, R. A. (1990). Environmentally Induced Positive Affect: Its Impact on Self-Efficacy, Task Performance, Negotiation, and Conflict. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 20(5), 368-384.
- Baron, R. A. (2008). The role of affect in the entrepreneurial process. *Academy of management Review*, 33(2), 328-340.
- Baron, R. A., & Tang, J. (2011). The role of entrepreneurs in firm-level innovation: Joint effects of positive affect, creativity, and environmental dynamism. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 26(1), 49-60.

- Baron, R. A., Franklin, R. J., & Hmieleski, K. M. (2013). Why Entrepreneurs Often Experience Low, Not High, Levels of Stress The Joint Effects of Selection and Psychological Capital. *Journal of Management*, 0149206313495411.
- Baum, J. R. (2002). Entrepreneurs' start-up cognitions and behaviours: Dreams, surprises, shortages, and fast zigzags. In *Babson College, Babson Kauffman Entrepreneurship Research Conference (BKERC)* (Vol. 2006).
- Bechky, B. A., & Okhuysen, G. A. (2011). Expecting the unexpected? How SWAT officers and film crews handle surprises. *Academy of Management Journal*, 54(2), 239-261.
- Beckman, G. D. (2010). Disciplining the arts: Teaching entrepreneurship in context. *RandL Education*.
- Blaney, P. H. (1986). Affect and memory: a review. *Psychological bulletin*, 99(2), 229.
- Boje, D. M. (2001). Narrative methods for organizational & communication research. Sage.
- Boudes, T., & Laroche, H. (2009). Taking off the heat: Narrative sensemaking in post-crisis inquiry reports. *Organization Studies*, 30(4), 377-396.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- Brennan, M. C., & McGowan, P. (2006). Academic entrepreneurship: an exploratory case study. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 12(3), 144-164.
- Brennan, M. C., Wall, A. P., & McGowan, P. (2005). Academic entrepreneurship: Assessing preferences in novice entrepreneurs. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 12(3), 307-322.
- Bresman, H. (2013). Changing routines: A process model of vicarious group learning in pharmaceutical R&D. *Academy of Management Journal*, 56(1), 35-61.
- Bridgstock, R. (2013). Not a dirty word: Arts entrepreneurship and higher education, *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, April/July 2013 vol. 12 no. 2-3 122-137
- Brown, A. D. (2006). A Narrative Approach to Collective Identities*. *Journal of Management Studies*, 43(4), 731-753.
- Brown, A. D. (2015). Identities and identity work in organizations. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 17(1), 20-40.
- Brown, A. D., Colville, I., & Pye, A. (2014). Making sense of sensemaking in organization studies. *Organization Studies*, 0170840614559259.
- Brown, A. D., Humphreys, M., & Gurney, P. M. (2005). Narrative, identity and change: a case study of Laskarina Holidays. *Journal of organizational change management*, 18(4), 312-326.
- Brown, A. D., Stacey, P., & Nandhakumar, J. (2008). Making sense of sensemaking narratives. *Human relations*, 61(8), 1035-1062.
- Bruner, J. (1991). The narrative construction of reality. *Critical inquiry*, 18(1), 1-21.

- Bruns, H. C. (2013). Working alone together: Coordination in collaboration across domains of expertise. *Academy of Management journal*, 56(1), 62-83.
- Bruyat, C., & Julien, P. A. (2001). Defining the field of research in entrepreneurship. *Journal of business venturing*, 16(2), 165-180.
- Butterfield, L. D., Borgen, W. A., Amundson, N. E., & Maglio, A. S. T. (2005). Fifty years of the critical incident technique: 1954-2004 and beyond. *Qualitative research*, 5(4), 475-497.
- Bygrave, W. D. (1989). The entrepreneurship paradigm (I): a philosophical look at its research methodologies. *Entrepreneurship Theory and practice*, 14(1), 7-26.
- Cardon, M. S., Foo, M. D., Shepherd, D., & Wiklund, J. (2012). Exploring the heart: entrepreneurial emotion is a hot topic. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 36(1), 1-10.
- Cardon, M. S., Stevens, C. E., & Potter, D. R. (2011). Misfortunes or mistakes?: Cultural sensemaking of entrepreneurial failure. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 26(1), 79-92.
- Carter, N. M., Gartner, W. B., & Reynolds, P. D. (1996). Exploring start-up event sequences. *Journal of business venturing*, 11(3), 151-166.
- Carter, N. M., Gartner, W. B., Shaver, K. G., & Gatewood, E. J. (2003). The career reasons of nascent entrepreneurs. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 18(1), 13-39.
- Cast, A. D. (2004). Well-being and the transition to parenthood: An identity theory approach. *Sociological Perspectives*, 47(1), 55-78.
- Caves, Richard E. (2000). *Creative Industries: Contracts between Art and Commerce*, Harvard Univ. Press.
- Chell, E. (2004). 5) Critical Incident Techniqua. Essential guide to qualitative methods in organizational research.
- Chell, E., & Baines, S. (2000). Networking, entrepreneurship and microbusiness behaviour. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 12(3), 195-215.
- Chell, E., & Pittaway, L. (1998). A study of entrepreneurship in the restaurant and café industry: exploratory work using the critical incident technique as a methodology: Prize-winning Paper from the IAHMS Conference at Sheffield Hallam University, England, November 1997 *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 17(1), 23-32.
- Conger, M., York, J. G., & Wry, T. (2012). *We do what we are: entrepreneurship as the expression of values and identity*. Working Paper. Retrieved on April 25th, 2014 from: http://kheti.epfl.ch/files/content/sites/mtei/files/shared/mtei_seminars/2012/Identity_EPFL_052312.pdf.
- Cope, J. (2003). Entrepreneurial learning and critical reflection discontinuous events as triggers for 'higher-level' learning. *Management learning*, 34(4), 429-450.
- Cope, J. (2011). Entrepreneurial learning from failure: An interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 26(6), 604-623.

- Cope, J., & Watts, G. (2000). Learning by doing-An exploration of experience, critical incidents and reflection in entrepreneurial learning. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 6(3), 104-124.
- Cope, J., Cave, F., & Eccles, S. (2004). Attitudes of venture capital investors towards entrepreneurs with previous business failure. *Venture Capital*, 6(2-3), 147-172.
- Creed, W. D., De Jordy, R., & Lok, J. (2010). Being the change: Resolving institutional contradiction through identity work. *Academy of management journal*, 53(6), 1336-1364.
- Cropanzano, R., James, K., & Konovsky, M. A. (1993). Dispositional affectivity as a predictor of work attitudes and job performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 14(6), 595-606.
- Curran, J., Jarvis, R., Blackburn, R. A., & Black, S. (1993). Networks and small firms: constructs, methodological strategies and some findings. *International Small Business Journal*, 11(2), 13-25.
- Currie, G. (1998). Realism of Character and the Value of Fiction. *Aesthetics and ethics: Essays at the intersection*, 161-81.
- Czarniawska-Joerges, B. (1998). A narrative approach to organizational studies. *Qualitative Research Methods Series*, 42.
- Dana, L. P., & Dana, T. E. (2005). Expanding the scope of methodologies used in entrepreneurship research. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business*, 2(1), 79-88.
- Davies, A., & Thomas, R. (2008). Dixon of Dock Green got shot! Policing identity work and organizational change. *Public administration*, 86(3), 627-642.
- Delmar, F., & Davidsson, P. (2000). Where do they come from? Prevalence and characteristics of nascent entrepreneurs. *Entrepreneurship & regional development*, 12(1), 1-23.
- Dempster, A. M. (2006). Managing uncertainty in creative industries: lessons from Jerry Springer the Opera. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, 15(3), 224-233.
- Dempster, A. M. (2009). An operational risk framework for the performing arts and creative industries. *Creative Industries Journal*, 1(2), 151-170.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). Qualitative research. *Denzin, NK y Lincoln YS*.
- Department of Culture Media and Sport (2001) *Department For Culture, Media and Sport - Annual Report 2001*. Retrieved 20 December 2015 from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-for-culture-media-and-sport-annual-report-2001>
- Department of Culture Media and Sport (2006) *Department for Culture, Media and Sport departmental annual report 2006*. Retrieved 20 December 2015 from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-for-culture-media-and-sport-departmental-annual-report-2006>

- Department of Culture Media and Sport (2013a) *Classifying and measuring the creative industries: consultation on proposed changes*. Retrieved 12 December, 2015, from <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/classifying-and-measuring-the-creative-industries-consultation-on-proposed-changes>
- Department of Culture Media and Sport (2013b) *Policy paper: 2010 to 2015 government policy: media and creative industries*. Retrieved 26 May 2016 from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-media-and-creative-industries>
- Department of Culture Media and Sport (2015) *Creative Industries Economic Estimates - January 2015*. Retrieved 20 December 2015 from <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/creative-industries-economic-estimates-january-2015>
- Department of Culture Media and Sport, Vaizey, E., MP (2016) *UK economic growth and Media and creative industries*. Retrieved 26 May 2016 from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/creative-industries-worth-almost-10-million-an-hour-to-economy>
- DiMaggio, P. (1983). Can Culture Survive the Marketplace? *Journal of Arts Management and Law*, Vol. 13, Iss. 1.
- Down, S., & Reveley, J. (2004). Generational encounters and the social formation of entrepreneurial identity: 'Young guns' and 'old farts'. *Organization*, 11(2), 233-250.
- Down, S., and Warren, L. (2008). Constructing narratives of enterprise: clichés and entrepreneurial self-identity. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior and Research*, 14(1), 4-23.
- Downing, S. (2005). The social construction of entrepreneurship: Narrative and dramatic processes in the coproduction of organizations and identities. *Entrepreneurship theory and Practice*, 29(2), 185-204.
- Dutton, J. E., Dukerich, J. M., & Harquail, C. V. (1994). Organizational images and member identification. *Administrative science quarterly*, 239-263.
- Economic and Social Research Council (2012) ESRC Framework for Research Ethics (FRE) 2010, Updated September 2012
- Edmondson, A. C., & McManus, S. E. (2007). Methodological fit in management field research. *Academy of management review*, 32(4), 1246-1264.
- Eikhof, D. R., and Haunschild, A. (2006). Lifestyle meets market: Bohemian entrepreneurs in creative industries. *Creativity and innovation management*, 15(3), 234-241.
- Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989). Building theories from case study research. *Academy of management review*, 14(4), 532-550.
- Eisenhardt, K. M. (1991). Better stories and better constructs: The case for rigor and comparative logic. *Academy of Management review*, 16(3), 620-627.

- Eisenhardt, K. M., and Graebner, M. E. (2007). Theory Building from Cases: Opportunities and Challenges. *Academy of Management Journal*, 50(1): 25-32.
- Erez, M., & Earley, P. C. (1993). Culture, self-identity, and work.
- Falck, O., Heblich, S., & Luedemann, E. (2012). Identity and entrepreneurship: do school peers shape entrepreneurial intentions?. *Small Business Economics*, 39(1), 39-59.
- Fauchart, E. & Gruber, M. (2011). Darwinians, Communitarians, and Missionaries: The Role of Founder Identity in Entrepreneurship, *Academy of Management Journal*, 54 (5): 935-957.
- Flanagan, J.C. (1954). The critical incident technique. *Psychological Bulletin*, 51(4): 327-358.
- Florida, R. (2002). The economic geography of talent. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 92(4), 743-755.
- Foo, M. D. (2011). Teams developing business ideas: how member characteristics and conflict affect member-rated team effectiveness. *Small Business Economics*, 36(1), 33-46.
- Foo, M. D., Sin, H. P., & Yiong, L. P. (2006). Effects of team inputs and intrateam processes on perceptions of team viability and member satisfaction in nascent ventures. *Strategic Management Journal*, 27(4), 389-399.
- Foo, M. D., Uy, M. A., & Baron, R. A. (2009). How do feelings influence effort? An empirical study of entrepreneurs' affect and venture effort. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 94(4), 1086.
- Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. Vintage.
- Fowler, S. M. & Blohm, J. M. (2004). An analysis of methods for intercultural training. In: D. Landis,
- Franklin, S. J., Wright, M., and Lockett, A. (2001). Academic and surrogate entrepreneurs in university spin-out companies. *The Journal of Technology Transfer*, 26(1-2), 127-141.
- Frese, M., & Gielnik, M. (2011). Entrepreneurial passion and effort: Testing a dynamic model in the new venture development process. In *Academy of Management Annual Conference, San Antonio, TX*.
- Gecas, V. (1982). The self-concept. *Annual review of sociology*, 1-33. Glaser 1978
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures: Selected essays* (Vol. 5019). Basic books.
- Gilbert, D. C., & Morris, L. (1995). The relative importance of hotels and airlines to the business traveller. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 7(6), 19-23.
- Gioia, D. A., & Mehra, A. (1996). Sensemaking in organizations. *Academy of Management. The Academy of Management Review*, 21(4), 1226.
- Gioia, D. A., Corley, K. G., & Hamilton, A. L. (2013). Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research notes on the Gioia methodology. *Organizational Research Methods*, 16(1), 15-31.

- Glaser B G and Stauss A L (1967), *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*, Chicago: Aldine.
- Grandy, G. (2008). Managing spoiled identities: dirty workers' struggles for a favourable sense of self. *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal*, 3(3), 176-198.
- Grandy, G., & Mavin, S. (2011). Occupational image, organizational image and identity in dirty work: Intersections of organizational efforts and media accounts. *Organization*,
- Gremler, D. D. (2004). The critical incident technique in service research. *Journal of service research*, 7(1), 65-89.
- Grove, S. J., & Fisk, R. P. (1997). The impact of other customers on service experiences: a critical incident examination of "getting along". *Journal of retailing*, 73(1), 63-85.
- Hackley, C & Kover (2007). The trouble with creatives: negotiating creative identity in advertising agencies. *International Journal of Advertising*, Vol 28, no.1, pp. 63--78
- Hahn, V. C., et al (2012). Happy and Proactive? The Role of Hedonic and Eudaimonic Well-Being in Business Owners' Personal Initiative. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 36: 97-114
- Hahn, V. C., Frese, M., Binnewies, C., & Schmitt, A. (2012). Happy and Proactive? The Role of Hedonic and Eudaimonic Well-Being in Business Owners' Personal Initiative. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 36(1), 97-114.
- Henderson, J., & Executive, B. (2007). Understanding rural entrepreneurs at the county level: data challenges. Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City–Omaha Branch.
- Hesmondhalgh, D. (2008). Cultural and creative industries.
- Hoang, H., & Gimeno, J. (2010). Becoming a founder: How founder role identity affects entrepreneurial transitions and persistence in founding. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 25(1), 41-53.
- Hoelter, J. W. (1985). A structural theory of personal consistency. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 118-129.
- Howard-Grenville, J., Metzger, M. L., & Meyer, A. D. (2013). Rekindling the flame: Processes of identity resurrection. *Academy of Management Journal*, 56(1), 113-136.
- Howkins, J. (2001). *The creative economy: How people make money from ideas*. Penguin UK.
- Howkins, J. (2011). *Creative Ecologies: Where thinking is a proper job*. Transaction Publishers.
- Huberman, A. M., & Miles, M. B. (1994). Data management and analysis methods.
- Hughes, E. C. (1951). Work and the self. In J. H. Rohrer and M. Sherif (Eds.), *Social psychology at the crossroads*: New York: Harper and Brothers. 313-323.
- Hughes, E. C. (1958). *Men and their work*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.
- Humphreys, M., and Brown, A. D. (2008). An analysis of corporate social responsibility at credit line: A narrative approach. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 80(3), 403-418.

- Ibarra, H. (1999). Provisional selves: Experimenting with image and identity in professional adaptation. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44(4), 764-791.
- Ibarra, H., & Barbulescu, R. (2010). Identity as narrative: Prevalence, effectiveness, and consequences of narrative identity work in macro work role transitions. *Academy of Management Review*, 35(1), 135-154.
- Jain, S., George, G., & Maltarich, M. (2009). Academics or entrepreneurs? Investigating role identity modification of university scientists involved in commercialization activity. *Research policy*, 38(6), 922-935.
- Johannisson, B., Landstrom, H., & Rosenberg, J. (1998). University training for entrepreneurship—an action frame of reference. *European Journal of Engineering Education*, 23(4), 477-496.
- Jones, R., Latham, J., and Betta, M. (2008). Narrative construction of the social entrepreneurial identity. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior and Research*, 14(5), 330-345.
- Kahn, R. L., & Cannell, C. F. (1957). The dynamics of interviewing; theory, technique, and cases.
- Kato, S., & Wiklund, J. (2011). Doing good to feel good – A theory of entrepreneurial action based hedonic psychology. *Frontiers of Entrepreneurship Research*, 31(4), 1.
- Kaulio, M. A. (2003). Initial conditions or process of development? Critical incidents in the early stages of new ventures. *R&D Management*, 33(2), 165-175.
- Keating, D. (2002). Versatility and flexibility: Attributes of the Critical Incident Technique in nursing research. *Nursing and Health Sciences*, 4, 33-39.
- Kikooma, J. F. (2011). Negotiating enterprising identities: African woman entrepreneur stories of challenge, perseverance and triumph. *China-USA Business Review*, 10(7), 573-586.
- Kjærgaard, A., Morsing, M., & Ravasi, D. (2011). Mediating identity: A study of media influence on organizational identity construction in a celebrity firm. *Journal of Management Studies*, 48(3), 514-543.
- Klein, G., Moon, B., & Hoffman, R. R. (2006). Making sense of sensemaking 2: A macrocognitive model. *Intelligent Systems, IEEE*, 21(5), 88-92.
- Korica, M., & Molloy, E. (2010). Making sense of professional identities: Stories of medical professionals and new technologies. *Human Relations*, 0018726710367441.
- Kreiner, G. E., Ashforth, B. E., & Sluss, D. M. (2006). Identity dynamics in occupational dirty work: Integrating social identity and system justification perspectives. *Organization science*, 17(5), 619-636.
- Kreiner, G. E., Hollensbe, E. C., & Sheep, M. L. (2006). Where is the “me” among the “we”? Identity work and the search for optimal balance. *Academy of Management Journal*, 49(5), 1031-1057.
- Langley, A. (1999). Strategies for theorizing from process data. *Academy of Management review*, 24(4), 691-710.

- Langley, A. N. N., Smallman, C., Tsoukas, H., & Van de Ven, A. H. (2013). Process studies of change in organization and management: unveiling temporality, activity, and flow. *Academy of Management Journal*, *56*(1), 1-13.
- Leadbeater, C., & Oakley, K. (1999). *The Independents: Britain's new cultural entrepreneurs*. Demos.
- Lincoln Y and Guba E (1985), *Naturalistic Inquiry*, Beverly Hills, CA: *Sage Publications Inc*.
- Luedicke, M. K., Thompson, C. J., & Giesler, M. (2010). Consumer identity work as moral protagonism: How myth and ideology animate a brand-mediated moral conflict. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *36*(6), 1016-1032.
- Lutgen-Sandvik, P., Tracy, S. J., & Alberts, J. K. (2007). Burned by Bullying in the American Workplace: Prevalence, Perception, Degree and Impact*. *Journal of Management Studies*, *44*(6), 837-862.
- Maitlis, S., & Christianson, M. (2014). Sensemaking in organizations: Taking stock and moving forward. *The Academy of Management Annals*, *8*(1), 57-125.
- Markus, H., & Nurius, P. (1986). Possible selves. *American psychologist*, *41*(9), 954.
- Markusen, A. (2006). Urban development and the politics of a creative class: evidence from a study of artists. *Environment and planning A*, *38*(10), 1921.
- Markusen, A., & Schrock, G. (2006). The artistic dividend: urban artistic specialisation and economic development implications. *Urban studies*, *43*(10), 1661-1686.
- Markusen, A., Gilmore, S., Johnson, A., Levi, T., & Martinez, A. (2006). Crossover: How artists build careers across commercial, nonprofit, and community work.
- Mavin, S., & Grandy, G. (2013). Doing gender well and differently in dirty work: the case of exotic dancing. *Gender, Work & Organization*, *20*(3), 232-251.
- Maykut, P. S., & Morehouse, R. E. (1994). *Beginning qualitative research: A philosophic and practical guide* (Vol. 6). Psychology Press.
- McAdams, D. (2001). "The psychology of life stories." *Review of General Psychology* *5*(2), 100-122.
- McAdams, D. P. (2011). Narrative identity. In *Handbook of identity theory and research* (pp. 99-115). Springer New York.
- McAdams, D. P., Anyidoho, N. A., Brown, C., Huang, Y. T., Kaplan, B., & Machado, M. A. (2004). Traits and stories: Links between dispositional and narrative features of personality. *Journal of personality*, *72*(4), 761-784.
- McMullen, J. S., & Shepherd, D. A. (2006). Entrepreneurial action and the role of uncertainty in the theory of the entrepreneur. *Academy of Management review*, *31*(1), 132-152.
- McMurray, R., & Ward, J. (2014). 'Why would you want to do that?': Defining emotional dirty work. *human relations*, *67*(9), 1123-1143.

- Miller, D., Breton-Miller, L., & Lester, R. H. (2011). Family and lone founder ownership and strategic behaviour: Social context, identity, and institutional logics. *Journal of Management Studies*, 48(1), 1-25.
- Mitchell, R. K., Busenitz, L. W., Bird, B., Marie Gaglio, C., McMullen, J. S., Morse, E. A., & Smith, J. B. (2007). The central question in entrepreneurial cognition research 2007. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 31(1), 1-27.
- Morris M. H. (2015). Entrepreneurship as Experience. *Wiley Encyclopaedia of Management*, 3(1-6).
- Morris, M. H., Davis, D. L., & Allen, J. W. (1994). Fostering corporate entrepreneurship: Cross-cultural comparisons of the importance of individualism versus collectivism. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 65-89.
- Morris, M. H., Kuratko, D. F., Schindehutte, M., & Spivack, A. J. (2012). Framing the entrepreneurial experience. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 36(1), 11-40.
- Murnieks, C. Y., Mosakowski, E., & Cardon, M. S. (2014). Pathways of Passion Identity Centrality, Passion, and Behavior Among Entrepreneurs. *Journal of Management*, 40(6), 1583-1606.
- Murnieks, C., & Mosakowski, E. (2007). Who am i? looking inside the 'entrepreneurial identity'.
- Navis, C., & Glynn, M. A. (2010). How new market categories emerge: Temporal dynamics of legitimacy, identity, and entrepreneurship in satellite radio, 1990–2005. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 55(3), 439-471.
- Navis, C., & Glynn, M. A. (2011). Legitimate distinctiveness and the entrepreneurial identity: Influence on investor judgments of new venture plausibility. *Academy of Management Review*, 36(3), 479-499.
- Neuhaus, P. (1996). Critical incidents in internal customer-supplier relationships: results of an empirical study. *Advances in Services Marketing and Management*, 5, 283-313.
- Nielsen, S. L., & Lassen, A. H. (2012). Identity in entrepreneurship effectuation theory: a supplementary framework. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 8(3), 373-389.
- Oliver, D., & Roos, J. (2003). Dealing with the unexpected: Critical incidents in the LEGO Mindstorms team. *Human relations*, 56(9), 1057-1082.
- Ollila, S., Williams Middleton, K., & Donnellon, A. (2012). Entrepreneurial Identity Construction-what does existing literature tell us?. In *Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship Annual Conference, Dublin Ireland*.
- O'Neil, I., & Ucbasaran, D. (2015). Balancing “What Matters to Me” & “What Matters to Them” in Entrepreneurs' Legitimation Efforts. In *Academy of Management Proceedings* (Vol. 2015, No. 1, p. 16476). Academy of Management.

- Paltridge, B. (2002). Thesis and dissertation writing: an examination of published advice and actual practice. *English for Specific Purposes*, 21(2), 125-143.
- Patriotta, G., & Spedale, S. (2009). Making sense through face: Identity and social interaction in a consultancy task force. *Organization Studies*.
- Pentland, B. T. (1999). Building process theory with narrative: From description to explanation. *Academy of management Review*, 24(4), 711-724.
- Petriglieri, J. L. (2011). Under threat: Responses to and the consequences of threats to individuals' identities. *Academy of Management Review*, 36(4), 641-662.
- Pettigrew, A. M. (1990). Longitudinal field research on change: Theory and practice. *Organization science*, 1(3), 267-292.
- Phillips, N., Tracey, P., & Karra, N. (2013). Building entrepreneurial tie portfolios through strategic homophily: The role of narrative identity work in venture creation and early growth. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 28(1), 134-150.
- Pittaway, L. A., & Chell, E. (1999). A study of entrepreneurship in the restaurant and cafe industry: exploratory work using the critical incident technique as a methodology.
- Podoyntsyna, K., Van der Bij, H., & Song, M. (2012). The role of mixed emotions in the risk perception of novice and serial entrepreneurs. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 36(1), 115-140.
- Poettschacher, E. (2005). Strategic creativity: How values, beliefs and assumptions drive entrepreneurs in the creative industries. *The International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, 6(3), 177-183.
- Powell, E. E., & Baker, T. (2014). It's what you make of it: founder identity and enacting strategic responses to adversity. *Academy of Management Journal*, 57(5), 1406-1433.
- Pratt, M. G., & Foreman, P. O. (2000). Classifying managerial responses to multiple organizational identities. *Academy of Management Review*, 25(1), 18-42.
- Pratt, M. G., Rockmann, K. W., & Kaufmann, J. B. (2006). Constructing professional identity: The role of work and identity learning cycles in the customization of identity among medical residents. *Academy of management journal*, 49(2), 235-262.
- Putnam, Hilary. (1983) "Realism and Reason. *Philosophical Papers Vol.*" (1983).
- Rae, D. (2000). Understanding entrepreneurial learning: a question of how?. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 6(3), 145-159.
- Rae, D. (2004). Entrepreneurial learning: a practical model from the creative industries. *Education+ training*, 46(8/9), 492-500.
- Raffo, C., O'Connor, J., Lovatt, A., & Banks, M. (2000). Attitudes to formal business training and learning amongst entrepreneurs in the cultural industries: situated business learning through 'doing with others'. *Journal of Education and Work*, 13(2), 215-230.

- Rigg, C., & O'Dwyer, B. (2012). Becoming an entrepreneur: researching the role of mentors in identity construction. *Education+ Training, 54*(4), 319-329.
- Rindova, V., Barry, D., and Ketchen, D. J. (2009). Entrepreneurship as emancipation. *Academy of Management Review, 34*(3), 477-491.
- Roos, I. (2002). Methods of Investigating Critical Incidents A Comparative Review. *Journal of Service Research, 4*(3), 193-204.
- Sandberg, J., & Tsoukas, H. (2015). Making sense of the sensemaking perspective: Its constituents, limitations, and opportunities for further development. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 36*(S1), S6-S32.
- Sarasvathy, S. D. (2009). *Effectuation: Elements of entrepreneurial expertise*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Sarasvathy, S. D., & Dew, N. (2005). New market creation through transformation. *Journal of Evolutionary Economics, 15*(5), 533-565.
- Schein (1978). *Career Dynamics: Matching Individual and Organizational Needs*. Reading, NA: Addison-Wesley
- Schindehutte, M., Morris, M., & Allen, J. (2006). Beyond achievement: Entrepreneurship as extreme experience. *Small Business Economics, 27*(4-5), 349-368.
- Schumpeter, Joseph A. (1934). *The Theory of Economic Development*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press (originally published in 1912)
- Sexton, D. L., & Bowman, N. (1986). The entrepreneur: A capable executive and more. *Journal of business venturing, 1*(1), 129-140.
- Shaver, P., Schwartz, J., Kirson, D., & O'connor, C. (1987). Emotion knowledge: further exploration of a prototype approach. *Journal of personality and social psychology, 52*(6), 1061.
- Shepherd, D. A. (2003). Learning from business failure: Propositions of grief recovery for the self-employed. *Academy of management Review, 28*(2), 318-328.
- Shepherd, D. A. (2015). Party On! A call for entrepreneurship research that is more interactive, activity based, cognitively hot, compassionate, and prosocial. *Journal of Business Venturing, 30*(4), 489-507.
- Shepherd, D. A., & Kuratko, D. F. (2009). The death of an innovative project: How grief recovery enhances learning. *Business Horizons, 52* (5), 451-458.
- Shepherd, D., & Haynie, J. M. (2009). Family business, identity conflict, and an expedited entrepreneurial process: A process of resolving identity conflict. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 33*(6), 1245-1264.
- Smith, I. H., & Woodworth, W. P. (2012). Developing social entrepreneurs and social innovators: a social identity and self-efficacy approach. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 11*(3), 390-407.

- Snell, R. (1992). Experiential learning at work: why can't it be painless?. *Personnel Review*, 21(4), 12-26.
- Snow, D. A., & Anderson, L. (1987). Identity work among the homeless: The verbal construction and avowal of personal identities. *American Journal of Sociology*, 1336-1371.
- Spencer-Oatey, H. (2002). Managing rapport in talk: using rapport sensitive incidents to explore the motivational concerns underlying politeness. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 34: 529-545.
- Spencer-Oatey, H. (2013). Critical incidents. A compilation of quotations for the intercultural field. *GlobalPAD Core Concepts*. Available at GlobalPAD Open House <http://go.warwick.ac.uk/globalpadintercultural>.
- Squire, C. (2008). Experience-centred and culturally-oriented approaches to narrative.
- Stauss, B. (1993). Using the critical incident technique in measuring and managing service quality. *The service quality handbook*, 408-427.
- Stets, J. E., & Burke, P. J. (2000). Identity theory and social identity theory. *Social psychology quarterly*, 224-237.
- Steyaert, C. (2007). Of course that is not the whole (toy) story: Entrepreneurship and the cat's cradle. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 22(5), 733-751.
- Stokes, D. (2000). Entrepreneurial marketing: a conceptualisation from qualitative research. *Qualitative market research: an international journal*, 3(1), 47-54.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). Basic of qualitative research. Basic of qualitative research.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). Basics of qualitative research: Procedures and techniques for developing grounded theory.ed: Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Stryker, S., & Burke, P. J. (2000). The past, present, and future of an identity theory. *Social psychology quarterly*, 284-297.
- Stryker, S., & Statham, A. (1985). Symbolic interaction and role theory.
- Sveningsson, S., & Alvesson, M. (2003). Managing managerial identities: Organizational fragmentation, discourse and identity struggle. *Human relations*, 56(10), 1163-1193.
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. *The social psychology of intergroup relations*, 33(47), 74.
- Thomas, A. S., & Mueller, S. L. (2000). A case for comparative entrepreneurship: Assessing the relevance of culture. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 287-301.
- Thornborrow, T., & Brown, A. D. (2009). being regimented': Aspiration, discipline and identity work in the british parachute regiment. *Organization Studies*, 30(4), 355-376.
- Throop, C. J. (2003), Minding experience: An exploration of the concept of "experience" in the early French anthropology of Durkheim, Lévy-Bruhl, and Lévi-Strauss. *J. Hist. Behav. Sci.*, 39: 365–382. doi: 10.1002/jhbs.10131

- Throop, C. J. (2003). Articulating experience. *Anthropological Theory*, 3(2), 219-241.
- Toyoki, S., and Brown, A. D. (2013). Stigma, identity and power: Managing stigmatized identities through discourse. *Human Relations*, 0018726713503024.
- Tripp, D. (1993). *Critical Incidents in Teaching. Developing Professional Judgement*. London: Routledge.
- Ucbasaran, D., Westhead, P., & Wright, M. (2009). The extent and nature of opportunity identification by experienced entrepreneurs. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 24(2), 99-115.
- Ucbasaran, D., Westhead, P., Wright, M., & Flores, M. (2010). The nature of entrepreneurial experience, business failure and comparative optimism. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 25(6), 541-555.
- Van de Ven, A. H. (2007). *Engaged scholarship: a guide for organizational and social research: a guide for organizational and social research*. Oxford University Press.
- Van Maanen, J. (1988). Tales of the field. *On writing ethnography*, Chicago.
- Van Maanen, J. (1995). Crossroads Style as Theory. *Organization science*, 6(1), 133-143.
- Walsh, I. J., & Bartunek, J. M. (2011). Cheating the fates: Organizational foundings in the wake of demise. *Academy of Management Journal*, 54(5), 1017-1044.
- Warren, L. (2004). Negotiating entrepreneurial identity-Communities of practice and changing discourses. *The International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, 5(1), 25-35.
- Watson, T. J. (2009). Narrative, life story and manager identity: A case study in autobiographical identity work. *Human relations*, 62(3), 425-452.
- Weick, K. E. (1995). *Sensemaking in organizations* (Vol. 3). Sage.
- Weiss, H. M., & Cropanzano, R. (1996). Affective events theory: A theoretical discussion of the structure, causes and consequences of affective experiences at work.
- Wenger, E. (1999). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge university press.
- Wicks, D. and Grandy, G. (2007) What Cultures Exist in the Tattooing Collectivity? Ambiguity, Membership and Participation, *Culture and Organization*, 13:4, 349-363,
- Wodak, R. (2003), "Discourses of silence: anti-semitic discourse in post-war Austria", in Thiesmeyer, L. (Ed.), *Discourse and Silencing*, John Benjamins, Amsterdam, pp. 179-209.
- Wry, T., Lounsbury, M., & Glynn, M. A. (2011). Legitimizing nascent collective identities: Coordinating cultural entrepreneurship. *Organization Science*, 22(2), 449-463.
- Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case studies research: design and methods*. Thousand Oaks, Sage.
- Yin, R. K. (2010). *Qualitative research from start to finish*. Guilford Press.
- Yin, R. K. (2013). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Sage publications.

APPENDIX I: CASE STUDY PARTICIPANTS & CASE SUMMARIES

Throughout, I have changed names and other such information about participants and their ventures to maintain confidentiality.

Case study participants and involvement in each article

Case	Founder	Venture	Article 1	Article 2	Article 3
1	Adam	Acting Agency	✓	✓	✓
2	Beth	Performing Arts Event Management	✓	✓	✓
3	Clarke	Furniture Making	✓	✓	
4	Daniel	Dance Education & Performance	✓	✓	✓
5	Jack	Photography and Design Agency	✓	✓	✓
6	Francis	Music Composition and Production	✓	✓	✓
7	Gemma	Textile Design	✓	✓	✓
8	Hilda	Dance Education	✓	✓	✓
9	Isaac	Music Production	✓	✓	✓
10	Eleanor	Commercial Art Gallery and Café	✓	✓	
11	Anna	Art Gallery and Consultancy	✓		
12	Linda	Craft Workshops	✓		✓
13	Zoe	Cultural Consultancy	✓		
14	Helen	Art Gallery and Art materials shop	✓		
15	Kate	Fashion Design	✓		✓

Adam

Adam is an experienced actor and did not consciously decide to start an acting agency, but somehow fell into it. He is a reluctant entrepreneur. In addition to running this agency he has a few other jobs that help him pay the bills. If the agency works well, he hopes to concentrate on this full time.

As an experienced actor he understands this sector well. He is assisted by his wife as company secretary and accountant. He feels his skills are well suited to running an agency, and has found this journey challenging but also fulfilling. His confidence has grown over the last few months and he has learnt a lot already about what is required to make a success of this venture. He identifies areas of discomfort and stress associated with running an agency. He enjoys working with children and delivers acting classes. He also takes pride in acting as a mentor to the actors on his books

By year two, Adam's plans to expand the business to a different region are on hold, although the agency is growing in size and is the largest in the region. He is finding marketing easier and is getting repeat business. Social media has had a very good impact in his marketing efforts.

Adam is balancing the running of his business and appears to be more confident that the business will survive and grow. He now has more acceptance from other actors as an agent and this has been a real boost. He is still tries to practices as an actor and director when opportunities arise although this is not as often as he would like.

Beth

Before setting up her performing arts event management company, Beth had been a musician and an art therapist for many years. She runs the company along with four other people, who came together to address a gap in the market of having a small scale venue in the area. The company has grown organically and various people in the entrepreneurial team take on different roles. Beth sees herself as an artist and a facilitator; she very strongly does not relate to the “dry” side of running a business and leaves it to her colleagues. Her community spirit is high and she believes in doing something that chimes with her values and interest. She believes in building positive relationships with people and doing things that hold some deeper meaning for her.

By the second interview, Beth is slightly worried about the pace at which things are progressing and the impact this is having on her life and finances. She is taking a more external facing role for the company and is more confident doing that, although her preference is still to be the artistic lead in the company. She is now leading on devising strategy and meeting with funders for the business.

Beth is, however, positive about the business and feels it has great potential, but is slightly tired of having to work through the council officers and paperwork required to grow this business. She has had to deal with negative press and this has upset her. Beth wants to make a difference and work towards making this a business she is proud of. She is not very happy to see herself as an entrepreneur but definitely identifies with being a creative.

Clarke

Clarke has worked as a technician for a long time for many cultural organisations. He is at a stage in his life where he feels able to take responsibility for a space and trading as a creative maker. He prefers to do this over being treated as a technician by other makers and businesses.

Clarke has identified a gap in the market and opportunity in his colleague leaving the country. He is cautious and nervous about the business risks and responsibility. Clarke is currently director and co-owner of a collective studio space in the city which he has co-owned for the last four years. He is very resourceful and has managed to gather materials and acquire a space at low cost for his new venture. He has just started making his first few pieces of designer furniture and he is yet to market them and set up a website.

By the second interview, Clarke feels the risks are paying off and he is more confident in his business. He is getting more work and his projects are bigger and more significant than he expected, which he is very happy about. He is very aware of the negative impact this business is having on his social life and relationships but he is actively managing this. He is very busy delivering and has not had much time to develop his marketing and web presence. His furniture making and creative work is also on the back burner. He is happy dealing with larger figures and more money than he has previously.

He appears to have given up on being an artist but still feels that he is a creative and a more confident business owner now. He is planning a third venture which will have a more creative focus than his last two ventures.

Daniel

Daniel started his dance education and performance with an aim of providing creative interventions to help young people that are not in education or are not achieving at school. Daniel is part of an entrepreneurial team and his business partner manages the business while Daniel is in charge of delivery of services and managing other personnel that work with him.

Daniel was creative as a child and was attracted to the arts. He started off carving out a career in marketing and advertising, however felt that he would-be more fulfilled as a performer and was encouraged to try out dance by his school. Daniel is in the process of defining what the core products and services are and how they interact with his own creative practice as a dancer and a choreographer. Every intervention that Daniel devises is bespoke, so he is struggling with the future prospect and scalability of his business model.

Daniel sees his business partner as the “bullet” behind the business while he is more of an implementer of the creative side. He struggles with the operations, finances and contracting and perceives himself to be a “disorganised, artistic type”. He leaves these details to his business partner while he focuses on delivery. Daniel feels that his role is of the salesman as he has the “gift of the gab” He does this work because he is passionate about making a difference in the life of young people.

By the final interview Daniel is a lot more settled in his business and how it is progressing. He is, however, unhappy about the time he has available to grow artistically and starts a new artistic company. He enjoys and takes pride in his role as a mentor and role model for young people.

Jack

Jack graduated in 2012 and while at university was part of a business enterprise scheme. His photography and design business started in response to a gap in the market in 3D photography. He feels that he set up his business in a hurry and on reflection does not appear to be comfortable about its name, scale, products or operations. He aims to start a new business soon.

Jack trained in theatre and feels that his artistic training has helped him a lot in his business. He is ambitious and sees himself being a business owner in the long run. He wants be taken seriously as a business owner and for that reason feels that he needs to relocate to London as most big businesses are based there. Jack is comfortable in his identity as a business owner and sees this as the best career option for him.

By the second interview Jack is exploring the possibility of starting another venture with a group of likeminded people. He appears to be confident and happy with this and plans to be a serial entrepreneur. He hopes to close his old business as he did not feel this was a scalable model. He feels that the last few months have taught him a lot about businesses and about himself, his strengths and weaknesses.

By the final interview Jack has abandoned plans for the second business and is expanding his original business. He is more reflective and happy with where his venture is headed. He is slightly bored of the non-creative aspects of the business and is seeking more creative outlets for his energies.

Francis

Francis is co-owner of a music composition and production company, which he started with his friend from university after his masters in music. Francis played many musical instruments as child, and at university he specialised in music. He started the business to fill a gap in the market for a professional approach to music composition for moving media. Francis likes creating new things and always felt that at some point in his life he would start a business. He believes that the structure of having a business helps him create music more successfully. When they started the business, they faced a lot of negativity from the music community.

Francis feels that he is a people person and deals with the marketing and branding of the business and leads on getting new customers on board. For Francis the image and brand of the company is important; he feels that giving it a professional look and feel differentiates them from others in the sector and helps the clients take them more seriously.

By the second interview, his venture is winning more high profile business. In addition to running the business, Francis has currently started teaching music production. This is helping him with cash flow for the business. They believe that the quality of their work and the acceptance from clients has improved. He feels that perseverance is one of the main things that guarantees success, and in business things don't always happen the way you planned it or to your timescales.

By the final interview Francis has started and is leading a new gaming company. He does not create music for his business anymore as he did not find it satisfying. He is enjoying his role as an entrepreneur and team leader for the new game his company is working on. He has decided to join a band and is enjoying playing music non-commercially and composing for his band.

Gemma

Gemma has a background in a scientific sector, in which she has worked for many years. A few years ago she decided to change her career and enrolled herself into a Masters course in Textile Design, specialising in knitting. She had never knit before and felt that she may not fit into this new environment. When she started her business, she had to face negativity from people around her who questioned this change. This included her partner and close friends. In the very initial phase she is coming to terms with how to describe her work and herself in her new role. This is compounded by the fact that this is her third career transition.

This business is borne out of her wanting to have a creative business and life, which is very different from her current life. Before she could start a venture, having a qualification in that field was important to her, and doing the MA also gave her a real sense of achievement.

Gemma is uncomfortable with pricing and approaching people to sell her designs. Through her website she has found a voice and it is getting her more comfortable in her new role. She is gaining confidence through the exposure and interaction with the community of makers and knitters. Looking professional and getting a quality product and service is very important to Her. She is finding that the biggest challenge for her is holding her nerve while no money is coming in at the start-up stage.

By the second interview Gemma seems a lot more settled and comfortable in her role as a business owner, and is surprised yet encouraged by her acceptance into this role from her peers and

customers. She is busier and appears to be more comfortable and overall happier and more settled in the venture. She finds being an artist is very different to being a scientist, which are the two roles that she has fulfilled in her career; she compares the two often in her discourse.

By the final interview Gemma is very comfortable in her various roles within the business. She is doing a lot more workshops and enjoys her role as a teacher. She has enrolled into art classes to feed her creative energies.

Hilda

Hilda is passionate about dance and doing something meaningful with her life. She has been teaching dance informally since she graduated, and registered her business as a company in 2013. She identifies herself as a dance teacher and seems uncomfortable about being seen as an entrepreneur or a business owner.

Since starting the business she has noticed many changes in her attitude and how she deals with situations, the main one being that she is less trusting of people. She is currently working with a mentor who she is also having trouble trusting with details of her business.

Hilda is passionate about the value of dance to disadvantaged groups and people with limited ability. Her social aspirations are very high and she finds it difficult to marry this up with the commercial needs of the business. She has some growth plans for the business, but appears unwilling or apprehensive about this company growing too big for her to handle. She finds it difficult to ask for help and apply for funding as she believes in earning rather than being given money/funded for growing the business.

By the second interview Hilda appears relaxed and in control of her venture. Registering her first trademark has had a huge impact on how she sees her business. She is reflective and more focussed on the future. Her relationship with her staff has changed for the better and she is slowly coming to terms with being an entrepreneur. She is still very much a dancer and creative first, and a business person second.

Isaac

Isaac is a musician who has travelled extensively and collaborated on a wide range of projects while on his travels. He is a musician first, who is learning the ropes of running his own business. He does not identify with the entrepreneurial attitude or persona and feels that it is something that he is getting used to. He has learnt a lot on his journey so far in areas such as his market perception, working with clients and pricing his work

His decision to start the business is based on the belief that he would find it difficult to work for someone else. He is also conscious of his status and financial security. However, he has prescribed an upper limit to how big he would like his business to expand be; he wants his venture to be contained and manageable so as to not interfere with his artistic ambitions.

In the second year, Isaac is focussing on marketing and presenting himself professionally. He has spent a lot more time in networking and meeting more people. He is moving location and his studio. Business was progressing well but he is currently going through a dip. There are many changes in his personal life and in terms of other work, he is also doing more teaching and

workshops. Both of these aspects appear to be having an impact on the pace at which his business is growing.

By the final interview Isaac has taken a step back from the business and is not actively marketing his services. He is teaching music to children and is finding this role more fulfilling. He continues to compose music for a few of his established clients.

Eleanor

Eleanor is an arts graduate and an established artist. She started an initiative with colleagues in London which was very successful but has now been disbanded. She moved back to her home town and realised that there are many opportunities around art galleries and bringing buyers and sellers together. She wants to address a gap in the market of having more cultural activity in her home town. Eleanor sees herself as an artist and not a business person. In fact, she is nervous about the risks associated with setting up this business. She would also like some monetary return so that she can have an income. She is unsure about how the new business will pan out and what kind of returns it might give her.

By the second interview, Eleanor appears much more confident in how she presents herself and sees herself as a business owner. She is not clear on the direction her business is taking but is exploring many options. She is working with other entrepreneurs in the local area and capitalising on opportunities being offered by her networks. She is doing some teaching and is developing a new business with her partner. The initial business idea has taken a step back and has not progressed as quickly as she imagined it would. She is still worried about having an income and wants to feel more financially secure than she does right now.

By the final interview Eleanor has a few more concrete plans and is growing her business in collaboration with other artists in the area. She is also teaching art in her local college which she is finding very fulfilling. She misses having time to practice her art.

Anna

Anna runs a small selling gallery, which she started in 2012. In 2013 she decided to add a consultancy function to her operations. Anna has concrete plans for where she wants to take the business, however there are many unknowns in the coming months and she is unsure of how things are going to work out. Despite this, she is positive that she will be able to overcome most challenges that come her way.

Anna was creative as a child and took art from a young age. At university she studied fine art specializing in sculpture. Anna became interested in entrepreneurship at school and was part of a Young Enterprise Scheme. Anna has high altruistic aims, making a difference to the life of the people around her is important to her. Although she enjoyed being an artist she was motivated to be self-employed and make a living through having her own venture for a young age.

Anna believes that to be a successful business owner you have to be self-critical and analytical at every step. Running the venture has helped her gain more confidence in herself as a person and as an artist. Anna is a very positive person with a can do attitude which has helped her a lot in this phase of her business. She is hard working and ambitious which helps her deal with the challenges that have come her way.

In the second year Anna's business goes through major changes as she loses the space for her gallery. She focusses her business more on the consultancy work with a view to relocating the gallery business and if feasible, getting a new space. She is still employed, but has changed her day job to something that was more relevant and fulfilling and feeds into her running the business.

Running the business has made her reflective and analytical about herself and her life in general. Anna usually introduces herself as an artist and she clearly identifies herself with this role; a large part of this is because she does not identify with accepted exemplars of entrepreneurship (e.g. Richard Branson). Anna hopes to start another venture in the future but for now is concentrating on gathering resources and skills to help her achieve that aim.

Linda

Linda set up her business to further her ambitions of creating art with children and adults in a community setting. She runs craft workshops in leisure centres or hired spaces, and from first starting has a regular programme of workshops.

Linda is also a part time music teacher and a trained musician. She has previously studied to be a priest and has had a number of career changes in the last few years. She has always been interested in art but was discouraged as a child to pursue it. She feels that her family had an impact on her various job choices. Linda mentions a deeper connection between what she produces and who she is and what she believes in. She is happy with her business growing to a certain level, but is not keen to make it too big. She feels that she is not very ambitious.

By the second interview, Linda has changed her location, moved house and taken up a full time job as a music teacher. This is mainly a financial decision for her; she has put the business on hold and hopes to go back to it in the near future. She is much happier and less worried about money.

She feels that this job is demanding but much less stressful than running a business. This new job is not leaving her with much time to create any art either, which she is less happy about. She appears to have resigned to the idea that running a business at this point in her life is not feasible for her.

Zoe

Zoe set up a consultancy business a few years ago, but has relaunched it to move into the arts and cultural industry with her consultancy services. She is finding the rules that apply to this industry very different and challenging. She is currently undertaking R&D for a business idea which involves setting up a company that hires out contemporary art. She is in the process of scoping this work and did not appear to be very excited at what she has found so far. She appears more involved with finding and getting established in a new market for her consultancy services. She has currently undertaken a couple of projects in the arts and cultural sector. Zoe is an artist by training but is logical and structured in her approach to her work.

By the second interview, Zoe appears to have made some headway into achieving her aim to be a bridge between the arts and the business world. In this respect, she sees her role as a translator

between these two worlds. Zoe is excited about the new projects on the horizon and has achieved more acceptance in the arts world where she previously felt like an outsider.

Zoe feels she has learnt a lot and broadened her horizons in terms of what she wants to do in the cultural industry. She is also feeling more financially secure and has plans for growing her consultancy function. Zoe appears more confident that this career change was a good idea.

Helen

Helen has had major career changes in her life, from working for the Police to running a cake business, working for a theatre and then a gallery. She has always been encouraged to follow her artistic expressions and is passionate about the work she does. She is comfortable running her own business and undertaking the associated risks and responsibilities. Helen is opening a new art shop next to a gallery which is free to the public and is excited about the possibilities for the future.

By the second interview, Helen has gone through a difficult time on a personal level but appears a lot happier. She is excited about the new shop and how well it is doing well. She is investing more in the web presence and marketing, which is symptomatic of her growing confidence in her business.

By the final interview Helen is feeling the responsibility of being an employer for the first time. Helen sees herself as an artist but feels that she is a keen business person. Depending on how this venture progresses she feels that she will keep starting new ventures at various points in her life.

Kate

Kate is a confident and experienced fashion designer with many years of experience working for large brands. She set up her business in 2012, just before she had her first child. She had a lot of support from friends and other entrepreneurs before she set up this business, so is fairly in touch with the realities of running a fashion design business. Kate is initially divided in her role as mother and as a business owner, and has decided to prioritise being the former than the latter in the short term.

Kate appears to be very clear in her mind about where this business needs to go and what needs to happen next. She is knowledgeable about the market and passionate about what she does, and has a very keen eye for detail and current trends. She has taken a conscious decision to take things slow at the present moment.

At the second interview, Kate still appears conflicted in her role as mother and as a new business owner. She has her first collection and a look book (catalogue), which she is hugely proud of. She believes that she has to do a lot more to get visibility and market herself better. The website and marketing has moved on in this period. Conversations about conflicting roles and which ones takes priority in her life are uncomfortable for her, however she identifies herself as a designer first and a business owner second.

By the second interview, Kate has decided to take a step back from the business to concentrate on her role as a mother and is still doing design consultancy for other companies. She hopes to go back to the business and market her products and services more effectively in the near future.

APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Participant Consent Form

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore the changes in identity of individuals involved in setting up a creative or cultural business. In order to participate in this study, you will have expressed an interest to participate and be available for the duration of the process.

Procedures

Through the duration of the study you will be interviewed at a convenient location by Vishalakshi Roy. The interview will consist of questions on areas such as your business and artistic practice, your thoughts on being a business owner and your aspirations for the business. It is anticipated that three such interviews will be carried out over two years. Each interview will last for about one hour and will be audio recorded for transcription.

Risk

The risk associated with participating in this program is minimal. If questions in the interview cause you discomfort, you can speak to the coordinator of this project, Vishalakshi Roy.

Benefits

Benefits include 1) an oral record of the start-up phase of your business 2) printed transcripts from the interview and 3) contributing to knowledge in the field.

Alternative

Your alternative is not to participate in this study.

Costs

None. There is no registration fee or participation fee.

Privacy

Every effort will be made by the researcher to keep all information collected in this study private. Only first names will be used during the interviews. Only the researchers and transcribers will have access to the audio files from the interview. The audio files will be stored by 5 years and then destroyed. If there is any information obtained in connection with this study that can be identified with you, it will only be disclosed with your permission. The findings of this study will be used for the completion of the thesis, and may contribute to articles that are published in peer reviewed journals and conference papers.

Subject rights

You understand that taking part in this research is completely voluntary. You may refuse to answer any questions or withdraw your consent to take part in any part of the study at any time. Your decision whether or not to participate will not prejudice your future relations with the researcher or the university.

Questions

If you have any questions contact Vishalakshi Roy on e: phd11vr@mail.wbs.ac.uk

Conclusion

By signing below you agree that:

- You have read this form or someone has read it to you.
- You have been told the reasons for this study.
- Each item has been explained to you.
- You agree to follow the procedure that is outlined above.
- All of your questions have been answered.
- You are taking part in this study freely

I have read this consent form and understand all of the above.

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Witness

Date

Wave 1 interview guide

Introduction

Thank you taking time out to speak to me. This interview will take approximately one hour. The interviews are being done for research purposes but will potentially be used in academic publications. Would you like your comments to remain anonymous?

Do you mind if I use an audio recorder during this interview? The recording will be used solely for transcription and to ensure that your responses are recorded accurately.

Do you have any questions for me before we begin? Are you happy for us to begin?

Questions

Warm up and background - Past

- Please tell me about yourself and your background
- Please describe your employment history
- Please tell me a bit more about your venture. How did it come about? What were your motivations to start it?
- Did you always intend to start a business? When did you decide and how?

About the venture – Present situation

- How do you usually introduce yourself to a new client? To your neighbours?
- Have you noticed any changes in yourself (your attitudes, how you deal with situations) since starting the venture? What are they?
- What have been the highlights of the venture so far?
- Tell me about any significant events since starting your venture?
- In relation to this venture is there anything that you have been uncomfortable about?
- If a friend of yours was starting a new venture, what kind of person would they need to be to ensure its success? What would your recommendations be?

Aspirations - future

- Please tell me about your ambitions for this venture? In one year's time? In five years' time?
- What kind of significant events/challenges do you see coming up in the next six months?
- How do you think you might prepare for those? e.g. skill up, toughen up, network, develop contacts

Summary and close

- Would you give me a few characteristic qualities of what you would consider to be a typical entrepreneur? How would you compare yourself to those qualities?
- Do you consider yourself to be an entrepreneur? Why?
- Would you give me a few characteristic qualities of what you would consider to be a typical artist? How would you compare yourself to those qualities?
- Do you consider yourself to be a creative/an artist? Why?
- Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your experience of starting this venture?

Close and thank

That brings us to the end of the interview. I will now transcribe and analyse the data I have gathered today I plan to get back in touch with you soon to organize to ask some follow up questions. Are you happy for me to do that? Thank you again for your time.

Wave 2 interview guide

Introduction

Thank you taking time out to speak to me again. This interview will take approximately one hour. As you are aware, the interviews are being done for research purposes but will potentially be used in academic publications. Would you like your comments to remain anonymous? Do you mind if I use an audio recorder during this interview? Do you have any questions for me before we begin?

Questions

Catching up since the last interview

- Tell me about how things have been since we last met. Please elaborate on any specific incidents, achievements, situations that arose etc.
 - (If required prompt with) Your plans for this period were to (*refer to last interview*) how did things go in relation to those areas/activities you had planned?
- What are the key things you have done (in relation to incidents you have described)? Why did you chose to take that course of action? What did it mean to you?
- Can you tell me of a time when you have had to play up/down the fact that you are an entrepreneur / business owner?
- Are there ways in which running a business has weakened/strengthened your identity as a creative person? Describe

Roles and changes in behaviour

Thinking about the venture, please complete the following sentences.

- At this point in my life some of the roles I play are....
- Of these roles I feel most comfortable with my role as... and not as comfortable in my role as...
- I find myself increasingly uncomfortable/in conflict with my role as ... and ...
- And I usually resolve this by....
- Since starting this venture I have noticed changes in the way I ...
- Earlier I would have..... but now I
- So some of the ways in which this business has changed me are...

Testing assumptions

- What impact has this venture/starting a business had on your happiness and wellbeing as an individual?
 - prompts: describe why you started it and continue with it, any impact on physical and mental health, impact on satisfaction, pride
- What impact has this venture/starting a business had on how you deal with money?
 - prompts: how comfortable, any changes in attitude, changes in importance, perception of peers, dirty word

Summary and close

- Please tell me about your ambitions for this venture? In one year's time? In five year's time?
- What kind of significant events/challenges do you see coming up in the next six months?
- When we spoke for the first time you gave me a few characteristic qualities of an entrepreneur and a creative/artist. Is there anything else you would like to add to that list or change? Why? (*Refer to last interview*)

Close and thank

That brings us to the end of the interview. I will now transcribe and analyse the data I have gathered today I will be in touch with you soon to organize another interview. Thank you again for your time.

Wave 2 flash cards

1. At this point in my life some of the roles I play are....
2. Of these roles I feel most comfortable with my role as... and not as comfortable in my role as...
3. I find myself increasingly uncomfortable/in conflict with my role as ... and ...
4. And I usually resolve this by....
5. Since starting this venture I have noticed changes in the way I ...
6. Earlier I would have... but now I ...
7. So some of the ways in which this business has changed me are...

Wave 3 interview guide

Introduction

Thank you taking time out to speak to me again. This interview will take approximately one hour. As you are aware, the interviews are being done for research purposes but will potentially be used in academic publications.

Questions

Catching up since the last interview

- Tell me about how things have been since we last met. What are the key changes?
- What has been the biggest change in how you feel about the venture about you as a business owner/entrepreneur

Roles and changes in behaviour

- How are you seen by your peers now, what are the key roles? (*Probe for stories*)
- How do you see yourself, are there changes and what has prompted them? (*Probe for stories*)

Testing assumptions

- Comment on level of happiness and wellbeing now as compared to when you started the venture? How have you managed to make changes?
 - prompts: describe why you started it and continue with it, any impact on physical and mental health, impact on satisfaction, pride
- Describe your experience of charging for or valuing your work? Has that changed?
 - prompts: how comfortable, any changes in attitude, changes in importance, perception of peers, dirty word

Summary and close

- Please tell me about your ambitions for this venture?
- When we spoke for the first time you gave me a few characteristic qualities of an entrepreneur and a creative/artist. Is there anything else you would like to add to that list or change? Why?

Close and thank

That brings us to the end of the interview. Thank you again for your time.