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Social Bricolage: Theorizing Social Value Creation in Social Enterprises

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Current theorizations of bricolage in entrepreneurship studies require refinement and development to be used as a theoretical framework for social entrepreneurship. Our analysis traces bricolage's conceptual underpinnings from various disciplines, identifying its key constructs as *making do*, a *refusal to be constrained by limitations*, and *improvisation*. Although these characteristics appear to epitomize the process of creating social enterprises, our research identifies three further constructs associated with social entrepreneurship: *social value creation*, *stakeholder participation*, and *persuasion*. Using data from a qualitative study of eight U.K. social enterprises, we apply the bricolage concept to social entrepreneurial action and propose an extended theoretical framework of social bricolage.

Introduction

As the academic field of entrepreneurship has evolved and matured, it has benefited from the injection of ideas derived from a broad array of theoretical traditions and methodologies. The borrowing of approaches from other fields has helped to cultivate “the garden of entrepreneurial theories . . . from many different disciplines and perspectives” (Gartner, Bird, & Starr, 1992, p. 27). This has allowed entrepreneurship researchers to develop and refine understanding of the social processes involved in entrepreneurial action, and has led to novel and incremental advances in theory development. Focusing on the domain of social entrepreneurship, we seek to contribute to this task of theory extraction, generation, and extension by using the conceptual lens of bricolage.

Social entrepreneurship has become an increasingly significant domain of enquiry. Its emergence is closely aligned to changing perceptions about the role and function of markets whereby, particularly in the late twentieth century, it came to be seen as an important mechanism for supporting economic activity in areas deemed unprofitable by the private sector and neglected by the state. There is now an established body of work that has extended the economic discourses of entrepreneurship to include aspects of the social

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(Steyaert & Hjorth, 2006) and which refined and developed theoretical understandings of social entrepreneurship within the fields of entrepreneurship, management, and economics (Dees, 1998). Although entrepreneurship scholars have used the concept of bricolage to address reactions to resource scarcity (Baker & Nelson, 2005; Garud & Karnoe, 2003; Johannisson & Olaison, 2007), social entrepreneurship presents an opportunity to further refine the concept. It is therefore within this particular context of social entrepreneurial action that this article is theoretically and empirically positioned. We argue that a more nuanced conception of bricolage, one that is specifically adapted to the context of social enterprises, is required.

Social enterprises have emerged as significant organizational players in market economies. More market driven than traditional nonprofit ventures, and with the capacity to be financially self-sustaining, the term “social enterprise” has been coined by government and other stakeholders to denote socially driven businesses. They have attracted interest from scholars in a range of disciplines keen to explore, explain, and theorize the creation, management, and outcomes of this distinctive organizational form.

Social enterprises seek to attain a particular social objective or set of objectives through the sale of products and/or services, and in doing so aim to achieve financial sustainability independent of government and other donors. Social enterprises thus share the pursuit of revenue generation with organizations in the private sector as well as the achievement of social (and environmental) goals of nonprofit organizations. In doing so, they blur the boundaries between the private and nonprofit sectors (Dees, 1998). Dominant social enterprise activities include: trading; service delivery contracts; cross-sector partnerships; cultural arts, community development, education, and employment skills training; child-care provision; community safety schemes; low-cost transport; recycling; and infrastructure and subsidized housing (Pearce, 2003, pp. 31–59). Although they vary in size, scale, and purpose, in general they have in common four characteristics.

First, they pursue revenue generation strategies through trading. Organizations in the nonprofit sector have traditionally relied on donations and philanthropy for their income. However, toward the end of the twentieth century in Western society a new logic began to emerge that promoted independent revenue generation from trading. This was in part due to the gradual withdrawal of traditional sources of contributed income such as grants and donations, as well as increased expectations by governments, charitable foundations, and others, that organizations in the sector become more enterprising and financially sustainable (Di Domenico, Tracey, & Haugh, 2009). The advantages of revenue generation from trading are that it increases the autonomy and flexibility of the organization to adapt to and meet the needs of the constituencies they serve. Once released from the restrictive covenants of grants and donations, social enterprises have been encouraged to be innovative in the business models they implement (Austin, Stevenson, & Wei-Skillern, 2006). The generation of revenue from trading confers greater independence on the social enterprise in terms of its legal structure, strategies, and markets served.

Second, they aim to achieve social and environmental goals. Thus the purpose of the social enterprise extends beyond simply revenue generation or profit maximization to include producing goods and services in response to the needs of a community (Borgaza & Defourny, 2001). Their ethos of financing social purpose through commercial activity (Pearce, 2003; SEC, 2004) ensures that their social outcomes are integral to their economic performance (Peredo & Chrisman, 2006).

Third, as well as supplying products and delivering services to individuals and communities, they seek to generate additional benefits such as increased social capital and enhanced community cohesion. This is achieved through close and active stakeholder participation in the creation and management of the enterprise as well as its governance

structures and procedures. When done effectively, this ensures that social enterprises are both embedded in and remain accountable to the communities that they serve (Pearce, 2003). Therefore, at their core, social enterprises are businesses that are market driven with commercial interests and activities (Dart, 2004) used to effect social and community benefits.

Finally, although social enterprises can be found in a range of contexts, they are most closely associated with communities characterized by limited access to resources (Peredo & Chrisman, 2006) and typically emerge as a response to the lack of facilities and services in those communities, both urban and rural. Resource constraints push the social enterprise into finding innovative ways of using existing resources and acquiring new resources in order to both achieve financial sustainability and generate social outcomes.

It is the distinctive nature of the resource constraints that social enterprises face which is of particular relevance for our study. While most entrepreneurs operate under conditions of resource scarcity, social entrepreneurs face a specific set of challenges because they purposely locate their activities in areas where markets function poorly. Thus, while commercial entrepreneurs seek markets with sufficient carrying capacity to support growth, social entrepreneurs actually seek markets characterized by a paucity of resources. This raises some intriguing issues about resource acquisition in the context of social enterprise and underpins the motivation for our research. More specifically, our study sought to address the following question: “*How do social enterprises acquire resources in resource-scarce environments?*” Using evidence derived from case studies of eight U.K.-based social enterprises, our paper augments current understanding of the processes involved in social enterprise creation. To explore the specific issue of resource acquisition, we draw on theories of bricolage (e.g., Lévi-Strauss, 1967) and seek to extend them by proposing a new model of social bricolage.

The structure of the paper is as follows. To begin we outline our theoretical framework, which is rooted in existing conceptualizations of bricolage. This is followed by a discussion of the methods used to collect and analyze the empirical data. The analysis then distills from the data evidence of the core principles of bricolage, as well as a set of processes that are distinctive to social entrepreneurship. The conclusion summarizes the theoretical tenets of what we propose as a new concept of social bricolage, and suggests areas for future research.

Conceptual Framework

Entrepreneurship and Resource Cooptation

The creation of an enterprise clearly requires resources, and entrepreneurs have been found to use a range of tools and strategies to garner resources to establish their ventures. Resources, resource limitations, and resourcefulness are therefore central concepts in the study of entrepreneurship. The literature highlights a number of ways in which entrepreneurs assemble resources in resource-poor environments. These include the use of networks and social resourcing, financial bootstrapping, strategies of effectuation, and bricolage. We consider these in turn.

There is an extensive body of work on entrepreneurial networks and their fundamental role in providing access to knowledge, information, and resources (Aldrich & Zimmer, 1986; Birley, 1985; Johannisson, 2000). While many of the resources that entrepreneurs acquire through networks are tangible—such as capital and physical assets—others are relational. For example, the literature on social resourcing (Starr & MacMillan, 1990) and social contracting (Peterson, 1995) emphasizes that social, as well as economic, exchange

is a significant element of resource acquisition, particularly under conditions of resource scarcity. These studies highlight how entrepreneurs use personal networks such as kinship ties and family mentors in order to access support, skills, and experience, thereby facilitating market penetration.

Financial bootstrapping acknowledges the important role that resources not owned or controlled by the entrepreneur often play in new venture creation (Harrison, Mason, & Girling, 2004). Sometimes used colloquially (Godin, 1998), it is essentially concerned with the sources from which entrepreneurs with limited funds access finance for their ventures (Bhidé, 1992; Greene, Brush, & Hart, 1999; Servon, 1999; van Auken, 2005). Bootstrapping techniques aim to avoid using finance raised from external investors such as venture capital, public equity, and debt financing (Ebben & Johnson, 2006; Willoughby, 2008). Winborg and Landstrom (2001) identify six specific bootstrapping methods, namely owner financing, minimizing monies owed to the firm, sharing equipment and/or staff with other firms, delaying payment of monies owed by the firm, minimizing inventory, and subsidy finance. Bootstrapping emphasizes finance acquisition during start-up and could be considered indicative of bricoleurial activity.

Another concept that sheds light on the process of entrepreneurial resource acquisition under conditions of resource scarcity is effectuation (Sarasvathy, 2001). Rooted theoretically in March and Olsen's (1975) work on organizational learning, the strategy of effectuation is an approach to decision making whereby an entrepreneur envisions a range of possible pathways for his or her firm rather than a definitive goal or objective and seeks to exploit environmental uncertainty by responding intuitively to situations as they arise rather than eliminating uncertainty through meticulous forward planning (Sarasvathy, 2004). Venkataraman and Sarasvathy (2001, p. 664) use the metaphor of a patchwork quilt to illustrate this phenomenon: "While each patch used in the quilt is a rather arbitrary piece of fabric, some belonging to the quilter and others brought to them at one time or another by friends, a good quilter manages to construct an aesthetically appealing and even meaningful pattern." While a strategy of effectuation carries with it a higher risk of entrepreneurial failure, it is also liable to be more efficient because entrepreneurs following it are able to change tack more easily in response to changing circumstances and to take advantage of new resources as they become available (Sarasvathy, 2001).

These approaches go some way toward an appreciation of the social dimension of entrepreneurship and the more personal, intangible, and opportunistic mechanisms used by entrepreneurs to acquire resources and build competitive advantage. However, they are arguably limited by the fact that they have been designed specifically to explain the challenges associated with the creation of a commercial venture. While we acknowledge that these literatures do have the potential to shed light on social enterprise dynamics, we feel that the concept of bricolage is most appropriate in this respect. While, as noted below, bricolage has been used to consider commercial entrepreneurship, its application to other social and economic domains suggests that it is a flexible approach that may be especially suited to the study of an organizational form designed to create both social *and* commercial value under conditions of resource scarcity.

Bricolage and Resources

Lévi-Strauss (1967, p. 17) introduced the original concept of intellectual bricolage to refer to the process of "making do with what is at hand." He used the bricolage metaphor to contrast two parallel world views, the mythical and the scientific, as distinct but equal modes of thought. Unlike the scientist, the individual bricoleur acquires, compiles, and stores materials for future use. The awareness of their eventual application remains

unformed in the early stages of resource acquisition, creating flexibility for their later deployment for whatever purpose is at hand. The tools not only shape their end purpose, but the purpose is also shaped by the resources available. The nature of resources and resultant project(s) are thus unrestricted *a priori* and are only made apparent through the bricolage process.

As a theoretical concept, bricolage has been applied to a range of disciplines and contexts. Theorizations have elucidated the conceptual components of *making do* as using resources at hand for new purposes. These have been interpreted in various ways: In cultural anthropology they involve the development of new ideologies and ways of thinking by adopting elements of existing myths and social world views (e.g., Chao, 1999); in jurisprudence they involve the construction of new laws from fragments of existing ones (e.g., Hull, 1991); in education they involve drawing upon existing skills and competencies in dealing with challenging learners (e.g., Hatton, 1989); and in genetics there is a particularly prominent field of evolutionary bricolage (e.g., Duboule & Wilkins, 1998). In their sociological study of erosion of categorical boundaries, Rao, Monin, and Durand (2005) explore bricolage as hybridization, using the blending of elements between classical and nouvelle cuisine styles within French gastronomy to illustrate the process.

The closely aligned terms of “political bricolage” and “institutional bricolage” are both used, sometimes interchangeably to refer to the process of *making do*, by applying the elements of prior and existing institutions for the creation of new institutions (e.g., Lanzara, 1998; Stark, 1996). In this way the categories and frames of reference in use are subject to a continuous process of social reproduction through applying “bric-a-brac remains” (Douglas, 1986, p. 67) of previous debates and assertions for the next issue at hand. Individuals act as bricoleurs by improvising, borrowing, and experimenting with new or tinkering with existing elements. This notion of institutional bricolage has subsequently been applied to development case studies (e.g., Cleaver, 2000, 2002) to denote a process whereby institutions are constructed through borrowing practices and styles of thought that are already part of existing institutions.

The characteristic of *making do* is frequently found in accounts of social entrepreneurship (Zahra, Gedajlovich, Neubaum, & Shulman, 2009). For example, the business model of the *Furniture Resource Centre* (Liverpool, England) is based on the collection, refurbishment, and resale of domestic furniture that is no longer needed by its owners, as is the business model of *Greenworks* (London, England), which specializes in recycling office furniture. The furniture is donated to these organizations, which then make do with them to create a strategy of selling the products to individuals, communities, or organizations.

Bricolage has been used to denote resourcefulness and adaptability within an existing context. The bricoleur is said to be ready to deploy whatever strategies are required under various circumstances, such as new organizational combinations, in response to unpredicted activity (Ciborra, 1996) and disasters (Johannisson & Olaison, 2007). The process of bricolage thus denotes a dynamic assembly of ongoing transformations and reconfigurations (Lanzara & Patriotta, 2001). In the entrepreneurship literature, bricolage has been used to analyze entrepreneurship in resource-poor environments (e.g., Baker & Nelson, 2005; Garud & Karnoe, 2003). Baker and Nelson (p. 333) investigated the process of “making do by applying combinations of the resources at hand to new problems and opportunities.” They proposed that entrepreneurial bricolage occurs when entrepreneurs in resource-poor environments recombine elements at hand for new purposes and in doing so exploit contributions unutilized by other firms (Baker & Nelson; Garud & Karnoe). Their analysis extended the concept beyond *making do* to include *refusal to enact limitations* whereby “actors consciously and consistently tested conventional limitations”

(Baker & Nelson, p. 335). Rather than enactment *per se* (Weick, 1995), Baker and Nelson specifically emphasized an entrepreneurial refusal to be constrained by resource limitations imposed by institutional and/or political settings. Thus, rather than refusing to enact, actors *resist* environmental constraints imposed upon them.

Other studies (Garud & Karnoe, 2003; Spencer, Murtha, & Lenway, 2005) have contrasted bricolage approaches with breakthrough strategies in technology entrepreneurship. Breakthrough strategies attempt to generate dramatic outcomes that exceed rivals' efforts but lack bricolage's adaptiveness and actors' resourcefulness in deploying more modest resources to progressively pursue their ends. Thus, the principle of *refusal to enact (or be constrained by) limitations* is a recurring theme in the entrepreneurship literature. In terms of social entrepreneurship, the failure of the private sector and government agencies to supply products and deliver services to communities is the institutional void into which social enterprises have stepped (Mair, Marti, & Ganly, 2007). The financial limitations of inadequate market returns or the governance gap resulting in an inability to define and deliver appropriate services is overcome by innovative strategies adopted by social enterprises to satisfy unmet demand. For example, *Sunderland Homecare Associates* (Sunderland, England) has built on its close relationships with, and deep knowledge of, clients' needs to create a social enterprise that provides domestic care services to clients across the north of England. The limitations of the market are overcome by a business model that is based on contracts with local government agencies to deliver services, and their close relationships with carers and their clients is used to accurately define and deliver the services required by individual clients.

The constructs of *making do* and *refusal to be constrained by limitations* imply a close relationship in practice to *improvisation*. Miner, Bassoff, and Moorman (2001, p. 333), for instance, investigate organizational improvisation and comment that such extemporaneous activity offers a promising lens for investigating processes whereby actors are engaged in "making do with materials at hand." Weick's (1993a) study of the Mann Gulch fire disaster in Montana in 1949 links bricolage irrevocably with improvisation. He draws on Lévi-Strauss (1967) and also Harper (1987) to show that improvisation as part of bricolage can result in organizational resilience. Thus, actors reconfigure themselves as bricoleurs: people "able to create order out of whatever materials were at hand" in order to swiftly replace "a traditional order with an improvised order" (Weick, pp. 639–640).

Bricoleurs remain creative under pressure . . . and they proceed with whatever materials are at hand. Knowing these materials intimately, they are then able, usually in the company of other similarly skilled people, to form the materials or insights into novel combinations. (Weick, pp. 639–640)

Baker, Miner, and Eesley (2003, p. 256) similarly highlight the concept of *improvisation* when they state that bricolage is "a construct frequently used to describe the resource set invoked by improvisation." Miettinen and Virkkunen (2005, p. 451) refer to bricoleurs as "tinkerers . . . improvising, imagining, playing and searching for new, unexpected cultural resources." However, the treatment of bricolage and improvisation and their relationship to one another varies. Due in part to the fact that improvisation has received a greater amount of scholarly attention than bricolage in organization studies to date, some use the terms interchangeably or tend to characterize bricolage as a feature of organizational improvisation (Ciborra & Lanzara, 1990; Cunha, 2004; Garud & Karnoe, 2003; Kamoche, Cunha, & Cunha, 2003; Weick, 1993b), whereas others argue that improvisers often engage in bricolage but claim that this may occur separately as a precursor to improvisation (Baker & Nelson, 2005; Baker et al., 2003; Miner et al., 2001).

The characteristic of *improvisation*, broadly construed across resources and strategies, is also a common theme in the social entrepreneurship literature. In many communities, the availability of an unused and no longer needed capital asset is the starting point for community mobilization to create a social enterprise. For example, in England the origins of the *Goodwin Development Trust* and *Ibstock Community Enterprises* can both be traced back to the acquisition by community groups of a vacant terraced house in the city of Hull and the village of Ibstock, respectively, and the *Luton Innovation Centre* to a former hat factory in the city. These social enterprises have each improvised the assets to create office space for rental as part of their business model.

The notion of the social (in terms of noneconomic means and ends) is central to bricolage within a social entrepreneurship frame of reference: The relationships between individuals, their interactions, and networks are key facets of the “social” dimension of entrepreneurship (Johannisson, 2000) and are indeed an endemic feature of the bricoleurial toolkit. Interesting links in this vein are implied by Johannisson and Olaison (2007), who use the term “social bricolage” (Johannisson & Olaison, p. 55) to infer social networking activity and spontaneous collective action as part of an emergency rapid response. We extend their thinking to examine the creation and development of social enterprises.

In summary, the concept of bricolage is characterized by the constructs of *making do*, *refusal to enact (or be constrained by) limitations*, and *improvisation*. Few studies to date have adopted this theoretical lens to study social entrepreneurship (Johannisson & Olaison, 2007; Zahra et al., 2009). Our research therefore extends a small but important body of work that examines the micro-processes of social enterprise creation (Mair et al., 2007). Our empirical analysis will point to the fact that although the main constructs of bricolage are indeed applicable to and characteristic of social entrepreneurship, three further constructs are also integral to this process. Through our case study analysis we will suggest that these three further constructs, when combined with those constructs identified in the existing literature on bricolage, combine to produce a new model of *social bricolage*.

Methodology

Approach and Data Collection

The empirical research adopted a qualitative methodology and employed a multiple, embedded case study design (Eisenhardt, 1989). Table 1 provides a brief description of the eight social enterprises from which we gathered data from informants. The participating organizations were selected to represent different geographical locations within the U.K. and a range of social enterprise contexts derived from Pearce (2003, pp. 31–59). A diverse and heterogeneous group of organizations was selected to enable theoretical diversity and allow for extrapolation and saturation both within and across cases. The cases include social enterprises in urban (Cases #2, #4, #6, #7) and more rural locations (Cases #1, #3, #5, #8); and engaging in the following activities: trading (Cases #1–8); service delivery contracts and cross-sector partnerships (Cases #3, #4, #5, #7, #8); cultural arts, community development, education, and employment skills training (Cases #1, #2, #3, #4, #6, #7); child-care provision (Case #4); community safety (Cases #1, #3, #4); low-cost transport (Case #4); recycling (Case #6); and infrastructure and subsidized housing (Cases #1, #3, #4, #5, #8). The purposive sample was used to identify common behavior patterns among units of analysis that face diverse resource conditions and constraints, thus allowing for greater claims to theoretical extraction than with a more

Table 1

Social Enterprise Characteristics

Case	Principal activities
1	An independent social enterprise based in South Wales. Generating income through enterprise, it uses its revenues to provide community services and facilities.
2	A social enterprise providing community training, education signposting, and employment intervention programs in Northern Ireland.
3	A social enterprise and registered charity. Delivers services and facilitates existing providers to meet community development needs in the East of England. Key activities: youth work, rural economic development, skills training, supporting migrant communities.
4	A social enterprise in the North East of England responsible for administering projects that meet the specific needs of the community such as child care, a community wardens scheme, community transport services, and assistance with job placements.
5	A social enterprise and registered limited company with charitable objectives located in South East England. Provides projects and services in order to secure and oversee the use of resources in the regeneration of the local area and district.
6	A social enterprise located in a large town to the North of London. Acquires disused computers from companies. Carries out the appropriate refurbishment and modifies them to be sold at reduced cost to charities and people on low incomes. Also exports computers to developing countries. Employs many low-income and long-term unemployed.
7	Social, community-led enterprise serving a particular housing estate in a large town to the North of London. Delivers government funded programs (e.g., New Deal for Communities) to improve employment and businesses in the area.
8	A social enterprise in the North of England delivering regeneration programs to disadvantaged wards of the local district. Provides services that include a focus on developing the local infrastructure and housing provision.

homogenous sample (see Table 1). The tendency for social enterprises to be situated within environments that are *de facto* resource poor justifies an investigation of social entrepreneurial actions orchestrated to counter these constraints and create social value.

A series of semi-structured interviews was conducted with informants from each social enterprise. The first interview at each enterprise was with either the chief executive or a senior manager, and this was followed by further interviews with other informants identified as important by the first interviewee. This approach gave access to multiple informants from each participating enterprise. All interviews were tape-recorded and later transcribed *verbatim*, and we have used extracts from the texts from 16 informants to develop our framework of social bricolage. To respect the anonymity of our informants, the names and businesses have been allocated a code. Hence, when we refer to primary data, we use a cross-reference index of the social enterprise as identified in Table 1. In addition to the interviews, site visits, observations, and documentary evidence have been used to add depth to the case studies.

Analysis

Data analysis included individual case study analysis and cross-case comparison and was carried out using Atlas.ti, a qualitative analysis software package for data management, coding, and retrieval. The operating principle of Atlas.ti is based on the technique of thematic analysis. In line with established procedures for inductive theory building (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994), we worked recursively between the data from each case study and the existing literature (Eisenhardt, 1989), and then between the data and analysis from the eight case studies. To begin, a list of conceptual categories (applied as thematic codes) was identified in the literature relating to bricolage, and this

was used to create an initial thematic template. The template was then used to sort the data gathered in the first round of primary data collection from the field. For each case study, the initial template was used and then extended to include any new themes found in the specific case. The purpose of this was to conceptually categorize the text for each case study. This was followed by cross-case comparison during which the themes from each case study were compared and elaborated. Following repeated interrogation of the literature and primary data, text extracts from across the range of informants were isolated and recurrent patterns in the data grouped into conceptual categories (see Table 2). Thus, the interview data were subject to data reduction and interpretation by means of thematic coding, and both within-case and cross-case comparison. We then extracted the new conceptual dimensions that emerged from this process to develop the framework of social bricolage.

The inductive coding strategy using Atlas.ti uncovered the categories of social bricolage. Our analysis also supports and provides more detail about the existing constructs of bricolage. Table 3 demonstrates the analysis and coding strategy used, the different categories yielded by the data, and the relations between concept dimensions. These are divided into overarching “meta” codes/construct dimensions and subcodes/themes elicited from interrogation of the data. Concept dimensions, both those derived from the literature and those emerging from the empirical data, are conceptually linked. Unpacking and then linking the subelements in this way shows how social bricolage is constituted in practice. Moreover, the conceptual links identified show the value of the method in drawing together the full palette of activities and strategies for dealing with resource scarcity employed by the social enterprises. The next two sections of the paper delve further into construct relations through explication of our empirical findings.

Bricolage and Social Entrepreneurship

As might be expected from a qualitative study, the empirical data consist of extracts of text from interviews with informants. Given the constraints of space, we are parsimonious with our use of data in the discussion. However, we present additional data in Table 2 to illustrate the processes of data extraction, cross-case comparison, and synthesis. This, combined with Table 3, shows how the emergent and inductive analysis was informed by the multidisciplinary literatures on bricolage and extended by the empirical data.

Making Do

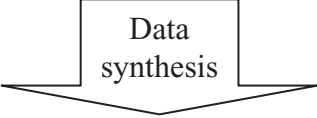
The first construct of bricolage was identified as *making do* (Lévi-Strauss, 1967). This refers to a process whereby bricoleurs acquire resources and recombine them in novel ways to solve problems and respond to opportunities. This carryover or recombination of resources is akin to Penrose’s (1995) notion of the services or new uses that the resources can render as determined by the new functions to which they are put. The characteristic of *making do* was observed in all eight cases for the purpose of social value creation (see Table 2). This process involves three main approaches to resource acquisition and construction: (1) creating something from nothing, such as creating a new market or providing a new service where none existed beforehand; (2) using discarded, disused, or unwanted resources for new purposes; and (3) using hidden or untapped local resources that other organizations fail to recognize, value, or use adequately.

Table 2

Data Synthesis Table Used to Develop Conceptual Framework and Constituent Dimensions

Case evidence of social value creation in resource-poor environments

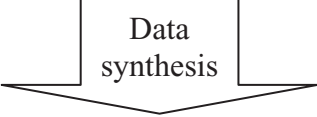
Acquisition of derelict chapel and conversion into community center (#1). Acquisition of disused fire station building and conversion into community center (#5). Acquisition of building through community advocacy as impetus for establishing enterprise (#7). Acquisition of former public baths in bad state of repair facing closure and conversion into youth center and community facility (#8). “Inventing” or creating resources: providing products or services that would otherwise be unavailable because of poverty or lack of provision, e.g., community services such as a network of community wardens to a deprived housing estate (#4); job training and access services for migrant communities in local area (#3); tapping of “neglected” skills resources by local long-term unemployed (#2). Recycling of discarded computers from corporations and refurbishing them for community use (#6).



Data
synthesis

Making do with limited resources available and creating something from nothing to produce social value

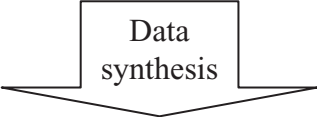
Running multiple projects and services addressing various needs of the community whilst securing funds from trading and targeting resources in several directions in order to generate new sustainable revenue streams due to greater restrictions on contributed income—typically via asset-based development (#1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6, #7, #8). Involving stakeholders in project work (#7, #8). Allowing and encouraging the use of amateur skills that would otherwise go unapplied (#1). Use of the low-skilled/ long-term unemployed to provide youth training on the front line of the business (#2). Community support harnessed during process of securing planning permission for wind farm site (#1).



Data
synthesis

Refusal to be constrained by limitations imposed by pervading environmental constraints in pursuit of social value creation and involving stakeholders in social enterprise creation and governance

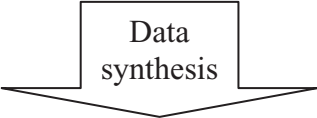
Adapting and responding to the particular needs of the community due to purposeful location of business and services in deprived and under-resourced communities such as housing estates and areas with high scores of relative deprivation. Involving members of the local community in decision making and organizational governance (#1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6, #7, #8). Altering existing organizational norms by adapting structures and improvising as the environment and social needs of the form dictate—e.g., adapting governance structures to generate new contacts and links with key players or those with valuable resource expertise (#1, #2, #4, #5).



Data
synthesis

Improvisation to enable active pursuit of social value

Assertion of organizational rationale and persuasion of others of the “business case” for socially oriented activity in order to leverage social legitimacy for organizational advantage—process facilitated by embedded agency and community engagement (#1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6, #7, 8), e.g., persuasion of town council to submit joint funding bid (#5); engendering media links in order to disseminate organizational purpose to a wide audience and generate high profile positive PR (#1, #2, #3, #4, #6); obtaining consent of an initially unreceptive local land owner to use his land for the site of a wind farm development (#1). Lobbying and advocacy as tools for achieving community consensus and for persuasion of local authority of community needs leading to creation of social enterprise (#7).



Data
synthesis

Persuasion of other significant stakeholders to leverage acquisition of new resources and support to create social value

Table 3

Relations Between Concept Dimensions as Evidenced by Data and Coding Analysis Strategy Employed (Atlas.ti)

Literature-derived meta codes/construct dimensions evidenced by empirical data	Making do	A refusal to be constrained by limitations	Improvisation
Subcodes/ themes evidenced from data interrogation illustrating concept elements and links in practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Creating something from nothing (e.g., new market or service where none existed beforehand) b. Using discarded, disused, or unwanted resources for new purposes c. Using hidden or untapped local resources that other organizations fail to recognize, value, or use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Trying out solutions to counteract limitations imposed by institutional/ political settings b. Subverting limitations imposed by available resource environments in their ability to create social value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Adapting standard ways of working and creative thinking to counteract environmental limitations—links with a refusal to be constrained by limitations b. Initiating a range of projects and constantly responding to opportunities c. Embedded agency and community engagement
Empirical data-derived meta codes/construct dimensions	Creation of social value	Stakeholder participation	Persuasion
Subcodes/themes evidenced from data interrogation illustrating concept elements and links in practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Altering existing arrangements as necessary b. Improving and adapting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Social networking activity b. Adaptation of governance structures c. Access to expertise/new contacts d. Persuading stakeholders to leverage resources for the enterprise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Influence derived from social legitimacy b. Political activity to control local agendas c. Acquisition of new resources from stakeholders
Integrated and adapted meta codes/construct dimensions developed from analysis as basis for proposed conceptual framework (i.e., <i>social bricolage</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making do with limited resources available and creating something from nothing for a social end Creation of social value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refusal to be constrained by limitations imposed by pervading environmental constraints in pursuit of social goal Stakeholder participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvisation to enable active pursuit of social purpose Persuasion of other significant actors to leverage acquisition of new resources and support

An example of bricolage as *making do* by providing a new service where none existed beforehand was given by the chief executive of Case #4. He described how the enterprise had grown from a local resource base as a response to the lack of amenities and facilities in a deprived housing estate with severe social problems including high unemployment, poor housing, and high levels of crime. The social enterprise was initially established as part of a small-scale community center with the aim of offering skills training and improving employment opportunities for local people, and making available social amenities such as a public house and a network of community wardens to promote safety on the estate. The success of these initiatives resulted in a rapid process of enterprise growth and generated further demand for services that were subsequently delivered across a larger geographical area. This process of creating something from nothing was emphasized:

You know we're a service provider for the community, providing a city-wide service that *we* [interviewee emphasis] invented. It wasn't there before and that's hugely

significant. And so on that basis I think what it starts to open up is a host of other opportunities for us (Chief Executive, Case #4).

A second aspect of *making do* is the reuse of unwanted materials discarded by others when their practical use is perceived to have expired. This activity involved the recombination or manipulation of resources sought, donated, or happened upon. For example, the entire business model for Case #6, a social enterprise founded in 1995, was based on the recycling of discarded and disused computers from corporations and refurbishing them for community use. The chief executive described the way this evolved from a local community initiative established to enhance employment skills through computer literacy. Thus, social value creation was not determined *a priori* but was largely shaped by the resources that were available:

Initially we wanted to train would-be women returnees in computer skills. We had a very stark choice, which was that if we wanted 12 computers, which we did, we needed to arrange the finance for 12 computers, and in those days that was a fair amount of money . . . I didn't see the point, quite honestly, of trying to raise all that money when somebody surely would give me 12 computers for free. . . . So I persevered, and eventually (a major accountancy organization) came back to me and said that they had some computers, and how many did I want, so that was my first moment of entrepreneurial genius . . . I think we probably ended up with far more than 1000 . . . it was quite easy . . . so we started looking at ways of actually making it into a company (Chief Executive, Case #6).

The use of hidden or untapped local resources unused by other organizations is a third activity associated with *making do*. The way the informant conceived the initial idea of establishing a sustainable wind energy project is described in relation to Case #1, thereby demonstrating the impromptu nature by which he engaged in decision making, a feature of the bricoleurial mind set:

It really was one of those sitting in the pub type conversations and somehow out of that came the idea, well actually the natural environment is an asset isn't it, particularly wind . . . so that started the idea for the wind farm project (Chief Executive, Case #1).

In sum, we believe that the evidence we have presented clearly supports the enactment of strategies consistent with *making do* in the social enterprises that we studied. We suggest that for social enterprises seeking to create social value in the context of resource scarcity, these strategies are quite typical.

Refusal to Enact or Be Constrained by Limitations

The second construct of bricolage identified by Baker and Nelson (2005) is a *refusal to enact limitations*. This refers to efforts to test and/or counteract existing or conventional limitations imposed by institutional or political settings and the available resource environment (see Table 2). Based on our analysis, we have recharacterized this as a *refusal to be constrained by limitations*. Our data revealed this to be an important aspect of the behavior of the social enterprises that we studied; we found specific examples of respondents consciously and consistently counteracting conventional limitations imposed by their environments and developing solutions to subvert these limitations in order to create social value.

The counteracting of limitations imposed by the environment was illustrated by the fact that many informants were creative in their response to increasing pressures to generate new revenue streams due to reductions in contributed income, such as the end of the existing round of sources of European Union (EU) funding or cuts in government funding. This feature of the environment affected all the social enterprises in our study and had led informants to identify local resources at hand that could be converted into assets. All the informants discussed at least one strategy to counteract this limitation. Responses tended to concentrate on asset-based development, whereby property and other capital assets are acquired or constructed in order to secure a stable and regular income stream from rent paid to the social enterprise. As well as illustrating their ability to make do with resources at hand for new purposes, this strategy demonstrates their adaptability to changes occurring in the macro, regulatory environment and a refusal to be irrevocably constrained by these limitations:

I think [being a social enterprise] has got a different set of problems. Trying to achieve social compliance with goals at the same time, which everyone holds up as the Holy Grail, or peaches and cream, is not that easy to pull off unless you're very big and have a lot of assets. I don't think it matters what we're called. It's what we're trying to do that's important (Director, Case #3).

The following anecdote from the chief executive of Case #1 provides further evidence of this response to reduced availability of funding. Faced with the prospect of a major reduction in EU grant funding, their main income source, the executive team decided to use a former religious building (a chapel) as an asset base to compensate for the lost income. The chapel was owned by the local authority, who wanted to demolish it to make way for a new road. However, before doing so, they were constitutionally required to ascertain whether any public use remained for the building by the local community. A strong case for retention was made by the social enterprise, and ownership of the chapel was then acquired. The building now provides space for arts and drama workshops for the local community and generates significant income for the enterprise:

We were really into this idea of asset-based development, owning assets that would generate an income . . . we'd bought a derelict chapel and converted it into a community facility and we did have tenants in there who provided a level of income. We had other aspirations to develop more buildings but I think we would just think transcendently, really, about other assets (Chief Executive, Case #1).

Another way in which social enterprises challenge the limitations imposed by resource-constrained environments that inhibit their ability to create social value is by subverting existing structures. The main example of subversion that we encountered involved social enterprises setting up a legally distinct for-profit trading venture to generate additional revenue streams and diverting funds from this venture into socially oriented activities. Such for-profit ventures are often located in relatively affluent areas that are more able to sustain market-based activity and where resource constraints are less pressing. For example, one of the social enterprises we studied (Case #2) owns and controls commercial retail outlets that are managed as social franchises in association with a large corporate retailer. Profit is generated through retail trading outlets, which in turn use positive discrimination to recruit and employ low-skilled and long-term unemployed local people. In this way, the profit-making ventures either directly provided employment for or cross-subsidized social activities to counter the limitations of resource-poor environments.

People talk about the so-called debate between the social and the economic. We're living it, and it's a continual debate and a continual challenge. It's about managing it and making decisions (Chief Executive, Case #2).

In our data we identified a broadly shared strategic response to traditional structures and limitations. Two expressions of this were particularly evident, namely trying out solutions to counteract limitations imposed by institutional and political settings and subverting the limitations imposed by available resource environments on their ability to create social value. Thus, while their aim was to counter the limitations imposed upon them, the social enterprises in our study were nevertheless acutely aware of their social obligations and the consequent constraints they face. While active, resource seeking, and in many ways entrepreneurial, they are at the same time pragmatic in the way they conduct business.

Improvisation

The third construct of bricolage, *improvisation*, is associated with adapting standard ways of working and creative thinking in order to counteract environmental limitations (Miner et al., 2001; Weick, 1993b). The need to improvise by initiating a range of projects and constantly responding to potential opportunities was frequently mentioned by informants. It can be considered as part of the social entrepreneur's toolkit through which a best-fit approach is shaped within the constraints of limited resources. We provide evidence for this activity and show how it is used as a mechanism to generate social value in impoverished environments (see Table 2).

Repeated testimonies and observations point toward the use of improvisation in the social entrepreneur's response to resource scarcity. Specific tactics are used to make the social enterprise more resilient, and foster useful networks. Various terms used by participants to refer to their enterprises allude to this process. For example, the chief executive of Case #3 described the way he acted as "a bit of a chameleon" by appealing "to the relevant audience at the relevant time" in order to engender support and access finance. Adopting strategies that involved "trying things out" to generate social value or responding in a way that benefited community needs was emphasized as important by all informants, even when such methods were not necessarily the most financially efficient. Informants also reported that they were willing to try out different solutions to social issues, even where they involved greater risks of failure than alternative but less community-driven strategies. This indicates the prioritization of social value creation over revenue generation and the adoption and shaping of bricoleurial strategies in ways that are best suited to the particular circumstances of the social enterprise and its context.

For example, an important priority for all informants entailed involving members of the local community in decision making and governance of the social enterprise. This created social value by fostering community engagement through active participation and dialogue. However, finding an appropriate composition of board members was often challenging. This process was managed through trial and error and adaptation rather than by devising prescriptive *a priori* characteristics for determining the selection of board members:

Well you could say "what is he doing, he's retired, what does he know, he used to work in a shop." I mean it's terrible really. They're given no credence at all. And that's irritating because I have the utmost respect for people who have put in a fantastic amount of effort. . . . We're very willing to just take any sort of, not even risks really, try anything . . . There are nicer places to live than this. If we're going to make this a nice place to live, let's try something out. Why don't we just give it a go? It's not

going to cost much. Let's just try it. It might work. We won't pay them anything. We'll just get them to come along. If they make mad decisions, and try and run off with the money, well, we'll get rid of them again. But just give it a try (Chief Executive, Case #8).

The process involved sustained perseverance in order to achieve the enterprise's social mission. The same informant went on to explain that:

You get half a dozen people who turn up for a board, they haven't got a PA, they haven't got anybody organizing their notes. We turn up with a pile of papers like that (indicates a large pile of papers lying on the desk) "please read that." I mean it's very difficult. People need support. It takes time for them to get into that. What you need to do is gear your organization up to support them (Chief Executive, Case #8).

This section has presented field data to illustrate how the concept of bricolage relates to the creation and management of social enterprises. Specifically, the empirical evidence provides support for the three constructs of *making do*, a *refusal to be constrained by limitations*, and *improvisation*. In addition to these constructs, through our coding we found empirical evidence of three further processes, namely *social value creation*, *stakeholder participation*, and *persuasion*. We consider these processes in the next section.

Social Bricolage

Social Value Creation

The aim of creating social value is a defining characteristic of social enterprises (Dees, 1998; Dees & Anderson, 2003; Peredo & McLean, 2006; Zahra et al., 2009) and is espoused in their articles of association, policies, and procedures and enacted in their business model and operating strategies. This characteristic has not been considered in previous expositions of bricolage, which have focused on individual entrepreneurs and private enterprises (Baker & Nelson, 2005). Social value creation has already been referred to in the previous section on bricolage and in Table 1, and therefore we present just one further example here. Specifically, informants from Case #3 were acutely aware of the need to remain effective and to counteract the difficulties of working for and within resource-poor communities characterized by many social and welfare problems, and the consequent high demand for their services. This was expressed by one informant who emphasized that in order to create social value, there was an endemic need for dynamic resource creation as a necessary tactical response to the pressure of resource scarcity. This was achieved by altering existing arrangements where the need arose and by improvising and adapting rather than remaining rigidly resolute to predetermined plans or formulae:

We're here to deliver a service and to deliver benefits to the local people. To do that we have to survive. To survive you have to access money. And as long as it is legal we will take any steps necessary to generate that money. . . . It depends on the lie of the land. It depends what opportunities come our way. . . . adapt as and when we need to (Chief Executive, Case #3).

Stakeholder Participation

Following on from accounts of improvisation and social value creation, all informants referred to the active involvement of stakeholders in the creation, management, and governance of their social enterprise. In practice, each social enterprise used stakeholder

participation, in effect operating a social networking strategy (Johannisson & Olaison, 2007) as a means of extending their governance structures to generate new contacts and links with key players or to those with valuable resources or expertise that might benefit the enterprise. This strategy was described by Case #5's chief executive, who was considering undertaking a number of large-scale building development projects but lacked the necessary legal expertise to do so. This was remedied by adapting the board's composition:

For example the deputy Chair of the Board is now a local solicitor. He has a very large practice. . . . So potentially there is a very important link there with somebody who can actually go and talk to developers about things which could benefit us . . . because we're about to mushroom in terms of development (Chief Executive, Case #5).

Community stakeholder participation was also used to generate support for planned strategies and projects. Informants reported how they used this to take advantage of valuable opportunities. In the following example, Case #1 used community stakeholder participation to secure the consent of a local land owner in order to pursue the possibility of developing wind turbines on his land. The building up of close relationships with stakeholders is often helped by the embeddedness and legitimacy of the social enterprise within the local community, as illustrated in the following example:

. . . our first meetings with him were across the farm gate. We didn't even get through the gate on a wet, rainy night. The next meeting we met in a cowshed and it took a few attempts and we got in the kitchen and it took a few years until we got a cup of tea. . . . Yes, it was quite difficult to secure his agreement. . . . Us as a company, being fairly well-known locally and having a fairly positive orientation locally helped. . . . His wife knew of us. . . . I think, to be honest, she helped pave the way with her husband. . . . So yes, that thing of being based locally and being based there for quite a long time (Chief Executive, Case #1).

The case evidence highlights the processes of obtaining stakeholder participation to alter existing social enterprise arrangements through adapting structures and persuading stakeholders in response to environmental and social needs. The interplay between making do and stakeholder participation was also found by Johannisson and Olaison (2007) in their analysis of emergency entrepreneurship.

Persuasion

Starr and Macmillan (1990) noted the role of the social assets of friendship, liking, trust, obligation, and gratitude in co-opting resources into an entrepreneurial venture. Our analysis supports the importance of social relations in entrepreneurial activities and identified the use of a set of persuasive tactics by informants to acquire resources and implement the strategies of the social enterprise. Persuasion was used to convince stakeholders of the potential usefulness of resources and assets and of the business case for social value creation (see Table 2). They did this in a number of specific ways. First, they sought to influence other key actors by clearly articulating the case for their inherent social legitimacy. In particular, they sought support from those who owned the resources needed by the social enterprise by demonstrating its ability to create social value. Second, they engaged in political activity to control local agendas by espousing community values, thereby augmenting and reinforcing their legitimacy; persuasion is thus used to solve problems deemed to be of social benefit while not sacrificing the commercial imperative

of the resource setting in which they operate. Finally, they sought to appropriate new resources by exerting influence through leveraging stakeholder participation.

Persuasion is related to the concept of negotiated order introduced by Strauss (see Strauss, Schatzman, Ehrlich, Bucher, & Sabshin, 1963). We extend this to include the negotiation and renegotiation of the acquisition of resources by the social enterprise. This was repeatedly demonstrated in our data. Originating from the sociological analysis of Strauss et al., the negotiated order perspective is influential in understanding processes whereby formal structures and rules are resolved into fragile sets of negotiations and persuasive acts. These continual permutations of action (Strauss, 1993) mean that influence is not static and may be subject to change, disruption, and further negotiation—features characteristic of bricolage in action. Thus, informants reported that they were instrumental in asserting the aims of the social enterprise and using persuasion as a means to articulate this to a wider audience:

We are a professional business/charity and we deliver in a very different sort of way. We just see it as a challenge. If you open the paper on a weekly basis, the local papers, [we] will have two or three articles in it, all positive. Positive PR. Our stakeholders like that. That's what we bring to the table. That's what we persuade them with (Chief Executive, Case #3).

The use of persuasion can be considered as an essential tactic to counteract the limitations imposed by a resource-poor environment in order to create social value. In each of the case studies the informants reported that they simultaneously engaged with their local communities, employees, and volunteers, as well as with local and national policy makers, whom they considered their key stakeholders. They actively sought to play a part in controlling agendas through espousing the values of their local community using particular types of language to legitimate their position:

I discovered that the town council was putting in a competitive bid to fund CCTV cameras, so I went to see them and I said "look, we are developing a community safety centre, wouldn't it be a good idea for us to sit round the table and talk about whether this could be incorporated within this bid rather than putting in a competitive bid, which actually is in danger of undermining both?" It took quite a lot of persuasion, but eventually they have come on board . . . we managed to convince them that it was a good idea . . . that it made sense (Chief Executive, Case #5).

The stakeholder-based governance structure of social enterprises is of course at the heart of the efficacy of their persuasion. This was most prominent in lobbying and advocacy. Interestingly, their effectiveness in these respects was enhanced by the increased autonomy that resulted from their reduced reliance on grants and donations. Moreover, many of the social enterprises had originally been set up by individuals who were members of the community within which the enterprises were embedded and which they served. For example, the grassroots nature of the enterprise's origins was described by the Case #7 chief executive, who emphasized the power of persuasion through lobbying and striving to achieve a consensus that would be to the community's advantage. These acts underpinned the original need to set up the social enterprise:

It was a locally based group that went into direct action . . . we were one of those groups who were active in the lobbying for regeneration that meant something. . . . So, it had a historical route to it and we campaigned for this building. . . . We had a long campaign for use of this building by the community and to do that we needed to have a Community Development Trust . . . we had already been

through two years of community consultation, some of it high tension stuff, like people picketing the building and public meetings attended by 400 or 500 people. In the end the whole community ends up with a consensus that we sign up to and this building was at the heart of our ten-year delivery strategy (Chief Executive, Case #7).

In summary, this section has presented evidence from the empirical case studies that we have used to extend the generic concept of bricolage to social entrepreneurship, and to conceptualize a new process of social bricolage. Social bricolage is a process that involves *making do, the refusal to be constrained by limitations, improvisation, social value creation, stakeholder participation, and persuasion*. It is therefore distinct from previous conceptions of bricolage such as intellectual and political bricolage, and bricolage in the private sector. We propose an integrated conceptual framework of social bricolage in the context of social entrepreneurship (see Table 3). The constructs combine to form a contextualized amalgam of social action capabilities that can be leveraged by social entrepreneurs in their efforts to create social value (see Table 4).

The three constructs of *making do, the refusal to be constrained by limitations, and improvisation* that underpin the bricolage literature have not, until now, been subject to systematic analysis in the context of social entrepreneurship. Moreover, the three new constructs of *social value creation, stakeholder participation, and persuasion* extend the bricolage concept and allow us to introduce and conceptualize the notion of social bricolage. Although constructs such as persuasion and stakeholder participation can be found in the entrepreneurship literature to address alternative phenomena, they have not been thus far linked explicitly to bricolage. Our research has uncovered these links empirically and offers a model of social bricolage. In common with financial bootstrapping, by recognizing the potential value unused in resources, social bricolage has the

Table 4

Proposed Conceptual Framework of *Social Bricolage* in the context of Social Entrepreneurship

Proposed principles and processes of social bricolage	Explanation
Making do with limited resources available and creating something from nothing for a social end	Combination of resources/making do with the limited resources at hand. Creating something from nothing such as creating a new market or providing a new service where none existed beforehand; using discarded, disused, or unwanted resources for new purposes; and using "hidden" or untapped local resources that other organizations fail to recognize, value, or make adequate use of.
Refusal to be constrained by limitations imposed by pervading environmental constraints in pursuit of social goal	Refusing to be constrained by limitations by trying out solutions as tactical responses to pervading institutional structures/rules; subverting the limitations imposed by available resource environments particularly in their ability to create social value
Improvisation to enable active pursuit of social purpose	Improvising through "best-fit" approaches within the constraints of the limited resources available. Process of trial and error.
Creation of social value	Generating employment opportunities, work integration, skills development, training and development, social capital, and community cohesion
Stakeholder participation	Governance structures and decision making, board membership, strategy determination, and implementation
Persuasion of other significant actors to leverage acquisition of new resources and support	Persuading other actors within the resource environment of the business case for social value creation

potential to lower costs, reduce the risks associated with financial expenditure, and potentially increase the returns on assets. By engaging with stakeholders, social bricolage also creates, extends, and strengthens social relations among communities and augments the legitimacy of social enterprise.

Conclusion

We set out to explore the micro-processes of social entrepreneurship in which resources were identified, acquired, and used by the social enterprise to achieve social goals within the structure of a financially sustainable business venture. Our analysis of the existing literature revealed that social enterprises are typically created in response to unmet needs within a community, leverage resources that are either unused or considered worthless by existing organizations (and therefore often acquired for free or at a low cost), and when necessary improvise their use of resources to achieve their goals. These characteristics led us to adopt the concept of bricolage as an approach to analyzing social enterprise creation and development. Through a critical analysis of the bricolage literature across multiple disciplines, we highlighted the processes of *making do*, *refusal to be constrained by limitations*, and *improvisation*. Our multiple case qualitative study not only supported these processes but also uncovered three other processes associated with social entrepreneurship, and from this we have proposed a new conceptual framework of *social bricolage*. We propose that the identification of the constructs of *social value creation*, *stakeholder participation*, and *persuasion* means that *social bricolage* is conceptually distinct from other forms of bricolage.

In social entrepreneurship the concept of agency is crucial in resource acquisition and construction. Instead of adopting the same mind-set as others, the social enterprise bricoleur responds to the unmet needs of communities by making do and creating something from nothing. This can be traced to the need to continually adapt and remain responsive to the macro structural environment and local resource constraints. As Cleaver (2002, p. 20) comments, “the concept of bricolage implies an active assembly of parts, the adaptation of norms, values and arrangements to suit a new purpose.” Using resources at hand and recombining them for new purposes is fundamental to creating social value in resource-poor environments and achieving financial sustainability. This dynamic use and exchange of resources by social enterprise bricoleurs within their environment reflects a recognition of institutional pressures (Douglas, 1986) in which the social enterprise moves beyond the constraints of institutional rules and structures to fashion its own bundle of resources and repertoire of strategies and activities. We have shown that social bricolage has a tangible impact on organizational outcomes, with the potential to create a sustainable enterprise that also generates social and community benefits. We contend that the process of social bricolage is associated with resource-poor environments in which the lack of resources pushes the social enterprise to use all available means to acquire unused or underused resources that are capable of being leveraged in a different way to create social value.

Uncovering the micro-processes of social entrepreneurship naturally lends itself to qualitative research in which informants give their personal accounts of their involvement in social enterprise creation and development. Consequently, our study is exploratory and inductive, and draws on empirical data from a group of case studies. While we make an important contribution to the entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, and bricolage literatures, we recognize that more work is needed to refine and extend our model of social

bricolage. In the remainder of this section we offer three possible directions for future research that we believe have the potential to move the field forward in this important area.

First, it would be useful to learn more about and extend the repertoire of persuasive practices used by social enterprises as they acquire and construct their resources portfolios. Moreover, other practices, such as benevolence and altruism, might serve a similar function to persuasion, and research that sought to uncover such practices has the potential to make a significant contribution.

Second, further research could examine social bricolage in more diverse cases and settings. Our case studies are all located in the U.K., and as such they are embedded in a distinct socio-political context, one in which the logic of revenue generation through trading now dominates: Social enterprises have become a central part of social policy in the U.K. in an attempt to encourage more enterprise and entrepreneurial activity by social purpose organizations and charities. As such, social bricolage may in part be a manifestation as well as a practical response to such an environment. Research on bricolage in other national contexts would help develop and refine the concept of social bricolage in places where social enterprises have different histories, and must negotiate different operational constraints, funding sources, and legislative frameworks. For instance, in the United States there has traditionally been less intervention in enterprise, particularly by the federal government, and examining social bricolage in this context may yield interesting conceptual and empirical similarities and differences to those highlighted in our study. In addition, investigating social bricolage in environments where resource constraints are much more acute, such as in developing countries, would be interesting and could provide valuable insights into enhancing social and economic development through social entrepreneurship.

Finally, further research could apply and extend the concept of social bricolage to organizations other than social enterprises. For instance, our critique of the literature considered the parallels with respect to social activity between social enterprises and other entrepreneurial ventures. Thus, the application of our conceptualization of social bricolage to the wider field of entrepreneurship, as well as other forms of economic organization, may yield interesting findings about social value creation. In addition, other types of organizations beyond those that are primarily economic or socially motivated—such as political organizations, social movements, and nongovernmental organizations—could benefit from this kind of analysis. These organizational forms may prove fascinating contexts for the systematic exploration of social bricolage.

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