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Paper Title: Beyond identification: understanding the nature of bricolage amongst diverse
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Abstract

The nature of bricolage – or ‘making do with what is at hand’ (Levi Strauss 1968) has been a source of interest to entrepreneurship scholars for some time. Recent growth in both business activity and public policy support for social enterprise has stimulated scholarly interest in this set of emergent business types. A small but growing body of research has begun to examine the resource development behaviours of social enterprise (Desa 2012; Di Domenico et al 2010; Sunley and Pinch 2012). While this provides a useful starting point for conceptualising resource development processes in the field broadly, it has done little to explicate the ways in which bricolage differs across social enterprise types and stages of business development. In this paper, we consider the nature of bricolage within eight social enterprises informed by different governance modes and at different stages of the business cycle. Based on cross-case and within-case analysis, our findings suggest that governance mode, in particular, influences the nature of bricolage behaviour in social enterprises, while stage of firm development has some influence on bricolage within particular domains.

Introduction

The aftershocks of the Global Financial Crisis continue to affect world economies (Claessens, Dell’Arricia, Igan and Laeven 2010) with market uncertainty and shifts in government economic policy creating a myriad of opportunities for entrepreneurial ventures. Social enterprises are often created to respond to the unmet social needs attributed to changing markets and the withdrawal of public resources. Recent growth in both business activity and public policy support for social enterprise has stimulated scholarly interest in these emergent businesses. There has been a lack of definitional clarity about what constitutes ‘social enterprise’ and ‘social entrepreneurship’ (Austin et al., 2006; Short et al., 2009). For the purposes of this paper, we define social enterprise as organisations that exist for a public or community benefit, trade to fulfil their mission and reinvest a substantial proportion of their income in the fulfilment of their mission (Barraket et al., 2010). Social enterprises seek to serve a wide range of missions and operate in every industry of the economy (Barraket et al., 2010). As a number of writers have observed, ‘social enterprise’ is a unifying term for a wide diversity of ventures (Thompson and Doherty, 2006; Zahra et al., 2009). These range in size, age, industry, mission, legal structure, governance arrangements and market orientation. Recognising the pre-paradigmatic nature of inquiry into social enterprise and entrepreneurship (Nicholls, 2010) there have been calls for deeper theoretical development in order to better understand the nature and effects of these hybrid businesses. This paper seeks to respond to this call, by extending conceptual thinking of resourcefulness behaviours (Powell 2011) among diverse types of social enterprise. In so doing, we also seek to expand our understanding of entrepreneurship practices more broadly, by examining the nature and function of bricolage within emergent and established forms of social enterprises.

The most abiding common characteristic of social enterprises is that they are led by their mission and utilise business strategies to fulfil that mission. As a hybrid organisational form that attempts to satisfy both mission and business-related objectives, social enterprises are typically multi-purpose organisations, reliant upon multiple resource inputs and accountable to a plurality of stakeholders (Gardin, 2006; Lane and Casile, 2011; Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011). Largely because of this hybridity, social enterprises often experience challenges accessing and managing resources. These arise due to lack of legitimacy with external stakeholders (Dart, 2004; Desa, 2012), information asymmetries (Burkett, 2010), market

limitations (Smith and Stevens, 2010; Zahra et al., 2009) and legal conditions of nonprofit forms of incorporation that limit access to finance (Barraket et al., 2010; Nicholls, 2009).

Bricolage theory has emerged in the entrepreneurship literature as a means to examine the resource behaviours of firms under constraints (Levi Strauss, 1967). Often considered a theory of resourcefulness, bricolage is defined as ‘making do by applying combinations of the resources at hand to new problems and opportunities’ (Baker and Nelson, 2005). Bricolage has been shown to be one way that firms can innovate in the face of constraints, often leading to novel solutions (Halme, Linderman and Lina 2012; Senyard, Baker, Steffens and Davidsson forthcoming). Bricolage has been applied to various domains (c.f. Baker and Nelson 2005), including firm creation (Baker et al., 2003), and institutional change (Cleaver 2009; Phillips and Tracey 2009; Fuglsang, 2010; Fuglsang and Sørensen, 2011), and has recently begun to be explored in relation to social enterprise (Desa, 2012; Di Domenico et al., 2010; Sunley and Pinch, 2012) and individual social entrepreneurs (Zahra et al., 2009).

In its attempts to take into account the differences between more traditional venture creation and social ventures, this literature has begun to explore dimensions of bricolage that may be similar or dissimilar to those identified in the study of traditional mainstream entrepreneurship. While this has provided a useful starting point for describing resource behaviours in the field, opportunities exist to explore further important influences on resource behaviours and their impacts on bricolage in social enterprises. For example, a venture’s mission and program goals shape resource valuation and salience which may affect resource behaviours. Limited research exists on the impact of stakeholders and governance modes on bricolage behaviours generally or how the different stages of the social enterprise firm lifecycle (see Mueller 1972) influence resource development behaviours within these hybrid business forms.

Through case analysis of eight social enterprises, we consider the interplay between bricolage behaviours and mission orientation, governance and lifecycle in social enterprises. In so doing, we seek to both extend current conceptualisations of bricolage behaviours among social enterprise and contribute to the wider entrepreneurship literature by examining previously unexplored influences on bricolage and some of its boundary conditions.

Making do with what is at hand: bricolage, resource development and innovation

Bricolage as a process of both resource development and innovation has salience for understanding social enterprise practices for a number of reasons. First, as multi-resource and multi-goal organisations (Gardin, 2006), social enterprises typically rely on a variety of resources at hand in the establishment of their businesses (Di Domenico et al., 2010). Second, as enterprises that are often established to purposefully respond to market and government failure (Desa, 2012), social enterprises are typically in the business of creating new goods and services where nothing (or nothing adequate) previously existed. Finally, whilst collective entrepreneurship is a relatively underdeveloped area of interest within entrepreneurship research, its function in social enterprise and social innovation has received attention from social enterprise scholars (Corner and Ho, 2010; Spear, 2006). These authors have observed that social enterprise business models are often – although not exclusively – based on collective or distributed entrepreneurship (Reich 1987). Bricolage takes into account the situatedness of resources and the distributed processes through which novel solutions are generated (Andersen, 2008). Garud and Karnøe, (2003, p. 296), for example, observe that ‘the creation of a new path occurs through the distributed efforts of many’. Andersen (2008, p. 74) suggests that the concept of bricolage is competent to account for the ‘flexibility and capacity for problem-solving at the grass-roots’. This concept is thus useful in shedding light

on innovation within social enterprises, particularly those that are initiated as grass-roots responses to local or specific demographic needs.

An emerging body of literature is examining the nature and role of bricolage among social enterprises and individual social entrepreneurs. In a conceptual typology of social entrepreneurs, Zahra et al., (2009) suggest that bricolage behaviours are dominant among social entrepreneurs that have very locally-focused missions and are closely involved in the communities they seek to serve. In an early conceptualisation of what they defined as ‘social bricolage’ among social enterprises, Di Domenico et al. (2010) identified that, in addition to common bricolage constructs of ‘making do’, ‘a refusal to be constrained by limitations’, and ‘improvisation’, the distinguishing constructs of social bricolage included ‘social value creation’, ‘stakeholder participation’, and ‘persuasion’. While Di Domenico et al. (2010) offer an important early insight into bricolage among social enterprises, we were challenged as to whether all forms of social value creation constitute bricolage. Given that social value creation is the *raison d’être* for social enterprise, we would suggest that many of these organisations seek to mobilise a wide range of resources – including, but not limited to, the means at hand – to support of this objective. Social enterprises when faced with constraints may simply acquire them (e.g Aldrich 1999) making, for example, the simple decision to purchase (Miles & Snow 1984). Further, although Di Domenico et al. (2010) identify persuasion and stakeholder participation as distinct features of bricolage among social enterprises, others have suggested these behaviours also occur within private profit venture creation (Baron & Markman 2000).

Linked with notions of institutional theory (Cleaver 2002) and collective entrepreneurship, Desa (2012) suggests that bricolage is not simply deployed as an approach to resource development, but that bricolage activities often challenge institutional norms, allowing ‘social ventures to recombine the legitimacy of fragmentary resources into a normatively legitimated whole’. Desa’s analysis suggests that bricolage plays as significant a role among social enterprises in (re)creating institutional resources as it does in providing access to critical resources.

Like Desa (2012), we find Baker and Nelson's (2005) identification of environmental domains in which bricolage is used to create something from nothing a useful framework for analysis (see Table One below).

Table One: Domains of Entrepreneurial Bricolage

Environmental Domains in Which Bricolage Was Used to Create Something from Nothing	
Domain	Description
Inputs	
Physical	By imbuing forgotten, discarded, worn or presumed “single-application” materials with new use value, bricolage turns valueless or even negatively valued resources into valuable materials.
Labor	By involving customers, suppliers, and hangers-on in providing work on projects, bricolage sometimes creates labor inputs.
Skills	By permitting and encouraging the use of amateur and self-taught skills (electronics repair, soldering, road work, etc.) that would otherwise go unapplied, bricolage creates useful services.
Customer/markets	By providing products or services that would otherwise be unavailable (housing, cars, billing system, etc.) to customers (because of poverty, thriftiness, or lack of availability), bricolage creates products and markets where none existed.

Institutional and regulatory environment	By refusing to enact limitations with regard to many “standards” and regulations, and by actively trying things in a variety of areas in which entrepreneurs either do not know the rules or do not see them as constraining, bricolage creates space to “get away with” solutions that would otherwise seem impermissible.
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Source: Baker and Nelson, 2005

Drawing on this framework, and seeking to advance early thinking about social bricolage by Di Domico et al (2010) and entrepreneurship scholars highlighting the importance of mission orientation in social enterprises (Moss et al 2010) , our first research question is:

1. How does mission orientation affect bricolage behaviour?

While the limited prior research on bricolage among social enterprises provides a useful starting point for conceptualizing resource behaviours in the field, it provides scant explanation on ways bricolage usage may be instigated within different stages of a venture’s development. The mainstream business literature tells us that legitimacy, for example, may be critical for ventures suffering from liabilities of newness and smallness (Stinchcombe 1965), but this may be less relevant for established enterprises with some prior success. Firm age, size and perceived stage in the business cycle (Van de Ven and Poole 1995; Covin and Slevin 1997) shape resource sets and capabilities, decisions to instigate bricolage behaviours. This leads us to our second research question:

2. (How) does bricolage change across firm life-cycle in our sample?

Further, while social enterprise constitutes a diversity of business types (Thompson and Doherty, 2006), relatively limited attention has been given to how these differences shape bricolage behaviour. Given that social enterprises rely upon multiple actors for resource inputs, that they are often accountable to multiple stakeholders about when and for what purposes these resources are used, and the requirements of specific structures, strategies and processes for enterprise development (Aldrich 1979), the literature remains strangely silent about stakeholder influence. One mechanism previously under-explored in the both the mainstream business and social enterprise literature on bricolage is organisational governance, which can be broadly defined as “the relationships among various participants in determining the direction and performance of corporations” (Monks and Minow 1995; 1). These relationships exist because of shared goals that provide purpose, direction and motivation to organisational and individual activities. Thus, board-level governance comprises a fine balancing of the needs of internal and external stakeholders, with tangible and intangible resource demands and availability. The corporate governance literature spans a large range of theories that try to explain the proper normative and instrumental bases for different types of governance arrangements (Aguilera and Jackson 2010, Donaldson and Davis 1991). Naturally, different theories explain organisational priorities in alternate ways, but they still focus on how to effectively protect beneficiaries’ interests by properly guiding managerial action. In this spirit, social enterprise governance shares with other firms the fundamental principle of doing what is in a key group’s best interests. All other decisions, including those affecting attitudes to risk, financial accountability and social performance are (normatively) taken with this shared interest in mind.

Yet, social enterprise governance also differs from traditional corporate governance by virtue of these businesses’ mission-led orientations, and the nature of their primary beneficiaries; depending on the mission and structure of the enterprise, these can be the customers, members or owners. Consequently, social enterprise governance definitions reflect these differences,

e.g.: “strategic and operational board-level leadership, enabling service users, managers, trustees and other defined stakeholders to create and maximise social benefit” (Mason, 2009). Existing research also illustrates tensions that centre on how a social enterprise board sets the tone for managerial behaviour, resource allocation and upholding ethical standards (Cornforth, 2004; Ridley-Duff, 2007). In some ways, these tensions underlie key problems that many boards try to tackle in this field, i.e. the importance of ‘expert’ board members who may provide access to important resources and skills, and legitimacy (Daily et al 2003), instead of representative boards (Cornforth 2004); the ideological shift from unitarist to pluralist modes of governance of social enterprises (Ridley-Duff 2007); and the interface between these boards and the broader public framework, from which resources are obtained, prompting a more private-sector (stewardship) orientation (Low 2006). All of this presents a rather fragmented and challenging environment within which boards operate, but nevertheless social enterprises find a negotiated pathway through this paradoxical mire. One view of how governance adds value to social enterprise work is the nature and strength of shared social and cultural (perhaps institutionalised) values, that guide decision-making in key stakeholder interests (Mason et al., 2007). Indeed, the sheer diversity of representation, expertise, skills and ideologies on these boards can potentially offer insight into how they add value for beneficiaries. Importantly, each of these factors (and more) are likely to influence the way that organisational decisions are discussed, formulated and executed. In small organisations, as social enterprises often are, driving ideas and decisions often originate with the founder(s), individuals with a key role in the origins and development of the organisation. As a consequence of the large number of demands on social enterprise boards, we suggest that decision-making is ambiguous, driven by competing demands and more *ad hoc* and reactionary than responsive. Consequently, *governing* may impact bricolage behaviours, as it encompasses the broad-level coordination of people and resources, together with planning and decision-making (both formal and informal). Depending on the *mode* of governance adopted by a social enterprise, bricolage is likely to be a common feature of how key decision-makers enact resourcefulness to create social benefit.

Mindful of the often neglected *active* nature of those who govern the organisation, governance remains the organisation’s fulcrum; one that balances the protection of beneficiaries while also fostering an internal climate that enables innovation and agency with a social purpose. To the best of our knowledge, no prior research has evaluated governance processes in bricolage and resource management processes more generally. These insights and gaps in the literature lead us to our final research question:

3. (How) do governance modes inform bricolage behaviours in our sample?

In order to operationalize this question, we draw here on Ridley-Duff’s (2007) meta-theoretical view of organisational governance, which suggests that different modes of governance are variously informed by unitarist, pluralist, individualistic and communitarian philosophical standpoints. Our interests here are in what we are defining as ‘founder led’ (informed by individualism and unitarism), ‘board led’ (informed by communitarianism and unitarism), and ‘collectivist’ (informed by communitarianism and pluralism) modes of organisational decision-making.

Methodology

This research adopted an inductive qualitative approach, which is optimal for developing theory or a pattern of meaning (Babbie, 2001). A multiple case study analysis allowed for a deep and rich understanding of the participants’ behaviours in response to constraints (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994). Further, the use of multiple case studies to inform the

research enabled replication logic as each case was used to test emerging themes from the data (Yin, 2003).

Purposive sampling identified eight social enterprises selected from Queensland and Victoria based on the research team's existing knowledge of the Australian social enterprise sector and informed by the Finding Australia's Social Enterprise Sector project (see Barraket et al 2010). The sample included both established and new social enterprises operating in the social and environmental fields. The sample also included social enterprises characterised by different governance modes, defined here as 'founder-led', 'board-led' and 'collectivist'. Table Two presents a summary account of the sample.

Table Two: summary of sample

	Mission	Industry	Stage	Governance mode
SE1	Connect isolated older women through craft	Fashion retail	Start-up	Founder-led
SE2	Provide education and employment opportunities for refugee youth in Melbourne, Victoria	Fashion retail	Start-up	Founder-led
SE3	Provide affordable housing in south east Queensland	Housing	Expansion	Board-led
SE4	Provide socially just and environmentally responsible financial services to the local community	Financial services	Expansion	Board-led
SE5	Generate economic and social benefits for [a rural town] and surrounding areas	Petrol station	Consolidation	Board-led
SE6	Empower children, youth, adults and families to overcome hurdles and unlock potential for life.	Community services	Expansion	Collectivist
SE7	Support cultural richness, environmental sustainability and social equity	Environmental services and food retail	Expansion	Collectivist
SE8	Minimise industrial waste and model workers' democracy	Environmental services	Consolidation	Collectivist

Eleven semi-structured interviews were conducted with representatives of the participating social enterprises over a period of six weeks. Six enterprises were represented by one spokesperson, one by two spokespeople and one by three spokespeople. Interviewee roles within the organisations included, four CEOs, three Directors, one Team Leader, one Operations Manager, one Programs Manager and one Marketing Manager. These participants were selected based upon their strategic involvement in the participating organisations and were key informants for uncovering information regarding social enterprise resource acquisition and utilisation. The interviews were audio-recorded and lasted approximately 1hr to 1.5hrs. These recordings were later transcribed verbatim for analysis. Supplementary information regarding

enterprise operations was elicited from publicly available data, including websites, annual reports and media sources.

Data analysis involved within-case analysis followed by cross-case analysis. This is characterised by first becoming familiar with each individual case study before proceeding to search across cases for patterns or disconfirming evidence (Eisenhardt, 1989). Analysis of the data was assisted by use of Nvivo. The process involved thematic coding guided by methods often used in inductive theory building (Miles and Huberman, 1984). Drawing on Baker and Nelson's (2005) framework, primary patterns were created regarding resource salience in each domain. Pattern matching across cases was then adopted to build explanations of why some firms operated in a particular way and whether this was consistent across the other participating social enterprises. Cross-case comparison focused particularly on differences and similarities between firms based on mission, firm lifecycle and governance mode.

Findings

Mission Orientation and Bricolage Behaviour

Being led by a mission that creates a public or community benefit is what distinguishes social enterprise from other business forms (Ridley-Duff and Bull, 2011). Drawing upon Baker and Nelson's (2005) framework and a thematic analysis of the key issues raised in the interview transcripts, our findings suggest that mission orientation informs bricolage behaviour in a number of ways.

First, with regard to the customers/markets domain, all social enterprises in our sample were created in attempts to address a gap in the market; that is, responding to an unmet social or environmental need. This was principally driven by the mission-based objectives of all social enterprises in our sample in terms of creating a product or service where none existed before, or which would otherwise be unavailable if the social enterprise did not exist.

Second, while all of our respondents described bricolage behaviours they in response to resource constraints that were similar to experiences reported in the mainstream business literature, half of the social enterprises in our sample also identified bricolage – in the form of materials reuse or rejuvenation – as central to or a part of their mission. For example, one recycling cooperative recovers industrial waste to sell to the public. They also use recovered products in producing gifts that they sell in the gift shop and their mission is to create environmental awareness. Two of the social enterprises that sought to provide local services within communities reported reusing existing infrastructure – including government owned land and a former private sector business – as central to the fulfilment of their missions. The founder of another social enterprise in the sample reflected that, while fashion was primarily used in this business to engage its targeted beneficiaries (young women from refugee backgrounds), the reuse of industry materials – specifically, seconds and discards from major fashion outlets that were then redesigned and onsold – had a significant but originally unanticipated impact and resulted in the social enterprise expanding its mission to play a greater educative function in waste minimisation within the industry:

“(Fashion) is a very wasteful industry so there's lots of excess there that can be used. All our fabrics and garments are donated from industry that would otherwise go to landfill. There is a lot of money in fashion and we figured we could try and tap into that and use a little bit of that money for something positive, in a social sense”. (SE2)

In each of these cases, bricolage occurred not just as a response to resource constraints but because it presented an opportunity to help fulfil the enterprises' environmental and social missions. This suggests that bricolage behaviours among these enterprises would occur regardless of the availability of other types of resources. It is evident for social enterprises in our sample that bricolage can be driven by a mixture of both resource constrained decisions and mission-related motivations.

Bricolage and Firm Life-Cycle

Our findings suggest that bricolage may be different for social enterprises in various stages of the business life-cycle. This was particularly evident in the skills domain. The two most established social enterprises in our sample did not mention bricolage in the skills domain. All other social enterprise in start-up and consolidation stages described evidence of bricolage behaviour in terms of permitting and encouraging the use of amateur and self-taught skills. This is illustrated in the Table Three below.

Table Three: Stages of development and bricolage domains

Firm	Stage of Dev.	Physical Input	Labour	Customers/Markets	Skills	Inst. Reg.
SE1	Start-up	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
SE2	Start-up	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
SE3	Expansion	N	N	Y	N	Y
SE4	Expansion	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
SE6	Expansion	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
SE7	Expansion	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
SE8	Consolidation	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
SE5	Consolidation	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

This finding of more established firms not describing bricolage may be an artefact of the use of a paid workforce rather than relying on a mixture of volunteer and paid employees as many other social enterprise firms do in their start-up phase (Gardin, 2006). It may also be attributed to industry standards, given that the two firms that reported no bricolage activity are in financial services and housing, two highly regulated industries. While bricolage in the institutional domain presented in all our participating social enterprises and is discussed further below, regulatory demands and associated needs for professional skills and services may underpin why these organisations did not report bricolage in the skills domain. This is reflected in the following comment on organisational governance by a manager of a local credit union:

“Now the governance will come right down to our constitution which has our values, mission statements and objects but it comes down to also managing all the pieces of legislation and the compliance requirements. It’s a very specialised area now, you simply can’t just ask for volunteers, You need to have the right skills to run a financial institution” (SE4)

Apart from these two organisations, all other social enterprises reported bricolage behaviour in the skills domain, particularly at start up, with most social entrepreneurs entering into business with very limited formal business knowledge. This is highlighted in the following statement by one social enterprise founder whose professional background was as a social worker *“I guess initially, it had a strong focus on the [beneficiaries] and not as stronger focus on the business aspect. Hadn’t done business before”*. Similarly at the start-up of another community owned social enterprise, the co-founder noted that the board had to learn

“everything really, from learning to buy fuel, none of us who were involved had ever run a service station before”. These are examples of skills bricolage that were consistent across all social enterprise, particularly during start-up as founders with mission-related expertise sought to develop industry-specific knowledge and mission-relevant skills to meet the combined commercial and mission-based needs of their business.

In terms of the labour domain, there was no consistent evidence across all firms that their lifecycle affected labour bricolage. Most social enterprise regardless of stage of firm life-cycle describe the use of volunteers, family members or customers in providing work on projects in order to overcome resource constraints. One organisation however, that did notice a change over time is the community-owned petrol station. As one board member recalled in the start-up phase of the organisation:

“Certainly when we were on the old site that was on the jobs of the Directors, to man the site and pump fuel because we couldn’t afford to pay staff so we just did it between friends and family”. (SE5)

As the social enterprise matured and grew, the need for labour bricolage was not as prominent as the firm was able to employ and pay staff. However, among most social enterprises in our sample, this change was not as evident and labour bricolage was apparent in most organisations regardless of their stage of business development. As another social entrepreneur noted:

“Every time we do a launch or an event, I have musician friends who come and play for free and people who bake cupcakes and come and help set up and none of these people charge for their time. So kind of, I do have this team of people that help us and when we do events and make stuff happen. I couldn’t do a lot of stuff without those guys, they are pretty significant”. (SE1)

The finding that bricolage is evident across all stages of firm development may be attributable to the mission-led of social enterprise and the fact that many are deeply embedded in close community ties which require the involvement and buy-in of community members to ensure success. Labour bricolage thus assists firms with mission fulfilment and is drawn upon in our sample regardless of business life-cycle.

With regard to the product domain, most social enterprises in our sample relied on discarded or worn physical inputs often in the form of donations. This was particularly evident in the start-up phase of the firm when resources are scarce and the firm is seeking to generate community/stakeholder interest. An example of bricolage because of resource constraints is highlighted in the following comment, where the founder of the social enterprise describes her approach to acquiring equipment necessary to run a café as part of the start-up of the business.

“No No, we had to build and design the kitchen, we got all the equipment from eBay second hand so it was very minimal set up. We still don’t have a microwave. We still don’t have an oven. We make do with a toaster, a sandwich press and a rice cooker and we manage to do quite well with those few things”. (SE2)

All social enterprises in our sample displayed bricolage behaviour within the institutional domain. This was primarily discussed in terms of challenging institutional constraints in start-up. While Baker and Nelson (2005) suggest that the institutional regulation domain can encompass unlawful behaviour, the social enterprises in our sample described pushing institutional boundaries within legal limits. For one large housing social enterprise,

challenging institutional boundaries was clearly evident when the founders requested substantial investment from government for no financial return. The participant described how their proposal provided challenges for Treasury because the funding model lay outside institutional experience:

“They are accustomed to spending small amounts of money and getting a good return and we were saying, spend a large amount of money and we’ll never give you any of it back. So it was really proving to them that there were broader benefits to the State Government”. (SE3)

A community-owned petrol station also described institutional bricolage during the start-up stage of the firm, noting the challenges that traditional funding regimes presented for them. In order to overcome this barrier, they had to seek alternative financial resources outside of institutions that typically supported community endeavours. The following comment reflects how this community organisation overcame institutional barriers during the start-up phase in order to keep the petrol station in town.

“The big one was the initial public share offering, I don’t think it would have happened without that. The government was not going to fund a fuel station, that’s the long and short of it. They could fund development for a lead tenant in an industrial estate and develop the industrial estate but not a service station, so the community really needed to come up with the money for that”. (SE5)

Given the difficulties in attracting support from government, the enterprise had to rely on community investment for the venture to be successful. In order to ensure adherence to the collectively agreed mission of the organisation and constrain the concentration of shareholder power, however, the company constituted a maximum voting share ownership of 10% for any single owner. The significant amount of financial support from the community was articulated by our respondents as being a model of what was possible to prospective government funders.

A further example of a social enterprise engaging in institutional bricolage by challenging existing norms and regulations was described by a locally-focused credit union. At a time when traditional banks were not involved in environmentally designed loans, this local credit union produced a loan product that was described as a precedent in the industry.

“We’re one of the leaders of financial institutions into environmentally designed loans and what we’ve put back into the community. A number of other players have followed us now so we’re looking for those next innovations”. (SE4)

The participant believed that they had “raised the bar” in the financial services industry by introducing environmental loans which were subsequently copied by other financial institutions. A challenge to institutional norms and regulations is further highlighted when the local community members withdrew money from the mainstream banks and redeposited it in the local credit union.

“Then on day one, it’s a bit of a funny story for us, we took \$50,000 in our first couple of days. That money was all taken from the local [commercial] bank then we just went down the road and redeposited it into the local [community] bank. But those savings we got were monies that were available to be loaned back to members to develop the businesses that they were looking at or making the products that they were looking at”. (SE4)

The local credit union effectively challenged existing norms in the financial services industry by creating a locally-owned banking institution to compete against the traditional banks. In doing so, our respondent suggested that the community were then able to fund prospective local businesses/products that may have been more difficult through the larger mainstream banks.

All social enterprise cases displayed evidence of challenging institutional norms and regulations because of their social mission, which generated practices and objectives that did not cohere neatly with mainstream business behaviours. This is further illustrated in a comment by a cooperative that initially sought advice from business consultants. *We were a member of the Retailers Association, until we realised that they were horrible right wing. Yeah a clash of cultures*” (SE8). This comment reflects a common theme throughout the interviews wherein the participants describe how they do not fit in mainstream business frameworks. It is evident that social enterprise challenge business norms and practice given their social mission and related resource development approaches.

Governance modes and bricolage

Our research questions also sought to uncover whether there were differences in terms of bricolage behaviour and governance modes. Cross-case analysis revealed that, across all domains, bricolage behaviour tended to be more prevalent in social enterprise with a largely collectivist governance mode. This is illustrated in Table Four below.

Table Four: Governance culture and bricolage domains

Firm	Governance Mode	Physical Input	Labour	Customers/Markets	Skills	Inst. Reg.
SE1	Founder-led	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
SE2	Founder-led	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
SE3	Board-led	N	N	Y	N	Y
SE4	Board-led	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
SE5	Board-led	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
SE6	Collectivist	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
SE7	Collectivist	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
SE8	Collectivist	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

This is largely attributed operating within an essentially ‘flat’ decision-making structure. An example of the collective nature of one of the social enterprise is highlighted in the following firm description:

“We are an organisation that has membership and therefore governed by our membership because they elect people to our board and the board provides governance. And then on the other hand we’re a collection of social enterprises that have been established by staff and built up by staff and the decision making about those social enterprises is essentially done by those staff so we’re both a member and a community based organisation but also a business”. (SE7)

It is evident that this organisation encompasses a range of decision-making processes that are collective in nature and do not necessarily follow a hierarchically determined chain of command. This collectivist governance mode was also evident in the one other social enterprise in our sample that had a number of social intrapreneurs operating within the organisation. One employee of a social services enterprise noted, in particular, that entrepreneurial behaviour is encouraged in the organisation in terms of attracting resources and finding financial support.

“Everyone is very good at that, identifying okay, here’s somebody who’s expressed interest in a program, what can we do to get out and network with them and get some business from them”. (SE6)

This enterprise prided themselves on being able to identify creative and innovative opportunities, with one staff member noting that *“I really believe that the staff are given the permission to come up with great ideas and to take those great ideas somewhere”* (SE6). The organisational challenge of managing this flexibility was expressed later when the participant explained that balancing the ideas and resourcing decisions between staff members’ priorities was difficult. As the organisation moved into consolidation, the need for all social enterprise activities to move *‘in the same direction’* (SE8) became more pronounced. This need for controlled bricolage behaviour was a common theme among all those social enterprises in our sample with collectivist governance modes which was not expressed by those from the more hierarchical or individualistic social enterprises in our sample. For example, one medium collectivist organisation that operated a number of distinct social enterprises noted that, while physical inputs may not be scarce, inadequate systems and procedures made it difficult to manage the various resources and this potentially led to conflict between members.

“While the project may be well resourced, the interaction between that project and all the other things that are happening on this [site] is not so well resourced so we end up with clashes with people trying to use the same physical space for different programs. Systems not properly thought out because one group who’s doing a lot of buying of organic veg, you know there’s another group that needs to buy organic veg, how are they going to work out in a different way of doing it between them and that sort of interactivity is not well resourced”. (SE7)

The constraining effect of conflict on resource use within a collectivist governance culture was echoed by another social enterprise, a workers’ cooperative in which strategic decisions were made by consensus:

“...you have to have people around you who have a shared, I guess, goal and a shared, relatively shared perspective on how to go about achieving that goal. You don’t all have to be exactly the same but you need to have a fairly high level of cohesion. The times in this organisation where we’ve come quite close to falling over is the times where there’s been internal conflict essentially”. (SE8)

In applying Baker and Nelson’s (2005) framework it is evident that, while the physical input domain may not be a constraining factor for all firms, bricolage in the domains of labour and skills may present challenges for collectivist firms in which decision-making cultures are explicitly participatory.

Discussion and Conclusion

Our findings suggest that mission orientation informs bricolage behaviours in specific ways. As ventures formed specifically to meet an unmet social or environmental need, social enterprises are active in bricolage in the service/product domains. Beyond this, our findings highlight the relational, rather than the instrumental, function of bricolage and its use among mission-led businesses. That is, while there was clear evidence of bricolage behaviours enacted as an extractive response to resource constraints within our sample, bricolage was also enacted as a productive process. This manifested in two specific ways. First, bricolage was utilized as a market creation opportunity among those enterprises in our sample that were explicitly concerned with materials reuse and environmental education. Second, all social enterprises in our sample described the relational importance of bricolage to the fulfilment of

their mission. That is, as well as adopting bricolage behaviours to access embedded resources, bricolage served to produce resources, in the form of social and cross-sectoral networks, that ensured wider community commitment to the missions of individual social enterprises. In this sense, bricolage was necessary not simply as a means of extracting resources but also as a means of producing the social and relational resources necessary to make the values and mission of these enterprises binding upon a wider section of the populace.

With regard to firm life-cycle and bricolage behaviours, our findings were mixed. There was evidence of greater use of bricolage in the skills domain among those enterprises in our sample that were in start-up and consolidation phases than those in the expansion phase, which may suggest that increased professionalisation of these businesses over the firm life cycle reduce the need or value placed on bricolage behaviours. However, our data suggest that industry orientation may be a stronger driver of these behaviours than firm life cycle, with more heavily regulated industries prescribing more formalized acquisition of skills, with implications for the workforce profile and governance of social enterprises. Given, the size and composition of our sample, these suggestions are speculative and greater cross case analysis of social enterprises within specific industries would be required to further test this proposition.

In relation to firm life-cycle, however, it is notable that all the enterprises in our sample gave detailed accounts of the enactment of bricolage in the institutional domain in the start-up of their businesses. This was explicitly related to the hybridity of the social enterprise form and their missions. With regard to the former, institutional bricolage was characterized as a necessity as social enterprises sought to establish new business models that lacked legitimacy in the eyes of a range of stakeholders, including beneficiaries, regulators, funders and the general community. With regard to mission fulfilment, all of the enterprises in our sample described themselves as path-breakers, responding to unmet societal needs. In this context, institutional bricolage was intimately bound up with social enterprise start up as these businesses sought to model new ways of responding to social needs to governments, the corporate sector and existing civil society organizations. Paradoxically, the lack of legitimacy of social enterprise as a business form (Nicholls, 2010) also resulted in institutional constraints on bricolage within our sample; specifically, those social enterprises that operated within highly regulated industries reported limited bricolage in the skills domain, partly because of the need to establish the legitimacy of their hybrid business forms.

Finally, modes of governance appeared to have specific effects on bricolage behaviour within our sample, with those social enterprises characterised by collectivist governance modes reporting wider adoption of bricolage behaviours than those with hierarchical (board-led) and individualistic (founder-led) governance modes. Zahra et al (2008) have suggested that the embedded nature of social bricoleurs in their communities may constrain firm development because of reliance on community-level resources. Our data suggest, however, that governance mode, rather than the community embeddedness of individual social entrepreneurs, plays a particular role in determining the adoption and management of bricolage behaviours within social enterprises.

Drawing upon Baker et al's. (2005) framework, our findings go beyond the general identification of bricolage behaviours and suggest that, among diverse social enterprises, there are a number of firm characteristics that influence bricolage behaviour. The mission orientation of social enterprise influences bricolage behaviour in such a way that it can be both a means (of resource development) and an ends (of mission-consistent market creation).

In our sample, bricolage is a central means of building relational support both for the enterprise's business activities and the societal mission that they seek to serve. Our findings suggest that governance mode, in particular, influences bricolage behaviour in social enterprises, while stage of firm development has some effects on bricolage within particular domains. The value of identifying firm characteristics and their potential influence on bricolage activity is that it allows for a more nuanced understanding of how and why resource development behaviours differ among various social enterprises, and how they differ between hybrid social business forms and other types of enterprise. In future work, we expect to further tease out the influence of collaboration within the community, particularly focusing on skill availability, and how that may further shape social innovation and success over time.

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