



**ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS:
A PROCESS PERSPECTIVE**

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To my family ...

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¡Te vuic!

Abstract

Entrepreneurship research heavily populates many of the leading business and management journals of contemporary times. It's expansive utility however is not bound by any one particular area, evidenced by the prominence of coverage in a wide-array of multi-disciplinary domains spanning from psychology and sociology to medicine and politics. Attention is fueled by a commonly held belief that multi-faceted complex issues such as, market, economic and social dynamism can all be addressed through individuals both thinking and acting entrepreneurially. It is by means of entrepreneurship that plausible and effective solutions can be uncovered towards economic necessities whilst concomitantly at a broader level developing societies, instigating social change and combating poverty. The entrepreneurship process is considered to begin upon the articulation of an intention. As such, entrepreneurial intentions (EI), as a cognitive construct imparting attention towards, and prediction of, engagement in future behaviours based upon individually held beliefs and desires, represent an important pre-condition that can act as a catalyst to the emergence, or lack thereof, of entrepreneurial behaviour. The area is one that is coming under increasing pressure to prove its worth beyond parsimonious causative models that can predict a portion of variance but concomitantly leave large amounts unaccounted for, largely due to its failure to take into consideration the true dynamism of open systems. To abridge this shortcoming, the aim of the current thesis is to increase and progress our understanding of EI embedded within a processual perspective taking time as a key variable. The key research question that follows is: How (and if) do EIs change over time? Answer to this is achieved through the presentation of three inter-related scientific research articles through a mixed-method approach, namely, a conceptual contribution systematically analysing the current state-of-art in EI scholarship (Paper 1), a qualitative case study investigating intentional transitions throughout the entrepreneurial process (Paper 2), and finally a quantitative investigation tracking changes in intentional stability longitudinally over time (Paper 3).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Resumen de la tesis doctoral.....	17
INTRODUCCIÓN	17
METODOLOGÍA	20
CONCLUSIONES	24
Introduction	31
1.0 SETTING THE CONTEXT	31
1.1 ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEFINED	31
1.1.1 A BRIEF HISTORY OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP	32
1.2 INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC OF INVESTIGATION.....	34
1.2.1 ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS AS AN INFLUENTIAL AREA OF STUDY.....	34
1.2.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	35
Philosophical and Theoretical Positioning.....	45
2.0 OBJECTIVES AND CONTENT	45
2.1 THE GUIDING INFLUENCE OF PHILOSOPHY.....	45
2.1.1 THE OPTIONS AT HAND	47
2.1.2 THE DIFFERENTIATION OF RESEARCH PHILOSOPHIES.....	48
2.1.3 THE DISCUSSION OF PARADIGMS.....	50
2.1.4 TOWARDS A PHILOSOPHY FOR THE PRESENT THESIS	54
2.2 THEORETICAL POSITIONING	57
2.2.1 PROCESS THEORY	57
2.2.2 THE MEANING OF PROCESS.....	59
2.3 THEORETICAL MODELS TO STUDY PROCESS.....	62
2.3.1 ASSEMBLAGE THEORY	62
2.3.2 THE THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOUR (TPB).....	65
2.3.3 TIMING AND CHANGE	68

Intentions Resurrected: A systematic review of entrepreneurial intention research from 2014 to 2018 and future research agenda	73
3.0 INTRODUCTION	74
3.1 METHODOLOGY	76
3.1.1 CONCEPTUAL BOUNDARIES	77
3.1.2 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS.....	78
3.2 (RQ1) Literature Analysis: What are the main features and trends surrounding EI research from the years 2014 to 2018 (inclusive)?	80
3.3 (RQ2) Does the classification afforded of current research conform to previously developed frameworks and have their recommendations been met? ...	87
3.4 (RQ3) What are the suggested avenues for future research and the implications for research and practice?	93
3.4.1 IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH AND PRACTICE	93
3.4.2 FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA.....	95
3.5 CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS.....	96
Processual lip service will not suffice: A case study into entrepreneurial intention transitions in the Spanish construction industry	111
4.0 INTRODUCTION	112
4.1 THEORETICAL RESEARCH FRAMEWORK	115
4.2 METHODOLOGY	118
4.2.1 DATA COLLECTION	119
4.2.2 DATA ANALYSIS	120
4.3 CASE HISTORY: RETROSPECTIVE ACCOUNT	121
4.3.1 Direct experience and career choice intention.....	121
4.3.2 Idea generation and business creation intention	122
4.3.3 Continuance intention and business growth	123

4.4 CASE HISTORY: REAL TIME ACCOUNT	124
4.4.1 “No other options”: re-entry intention	124
4.5 INTENTIONAL STRUCTURES, CAUSAL MECHANISMS AND EMPIRICAL CORROBORATION	126
4.6 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS.....	131
4.7 LIMITATIONS	134
Entrepreneurial Intent’s tendency for change: The temporal stability of constructs and relational patterns.....	145
5.0 INTRODUCTION	146
5.1 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND.....	148
5.1.1 ATTITUDE TOWARDS ENTREPRENEURSHIP (ATT)	151
5.1.2 ENTREPRENEURIAL SELF-EFFICACY (ESE)	152
5.1.3 SUBJECTIVE NORMS (SN)	153
5.1.4 RELATIONAL PATTERNS	154
5.2 METHODOLOGY	154
5.2.1 DATA COLLECTION.....	154
5.2.2 MEASURES.....	155
5.2.3 DATA ANALYSIS	157
5.3 RESULTS.....	159
5.3.1 DIFFERENCES IN MODEL ANTECEDENTS	159
5.3.2 DIFFERENCES IN RELATIONAL PATTERNS.....	162
5.4 DISCUSSION	164
5.5 THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS	168
5.6 CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH.....	169
General Conclusions.....	183
6.0 INTRODUCTION	184

6.1 Chapter 3 Conclusions (Article 1): Intentions Resurrected: A systematic review of entrepreneurial intention research from 2014 to 2018 and future research agenda.....	185
6.2 Chapter 4 Conclusions (Article 2): Processual lip service will not suffice: A case study into entrepreneurial intention transitions in the Spanish construction industry.....	187
6.3 Chapter 5 Conclusions (Article 3): Entrepreneurial Intent’s tendency for change: The temporal stability of constructs and relational patterns.....	188
6.4 CONTRIBUTION AND IMPLICATIONS	191

LIST OF TABLES:

Table 1 An overview of the papers composing the thesis, their main driving research questions and scientific form.....	36
Table 2 Higher order priority themes in extant EI literature with sub-categories.....	80
Table 3 Entrepreneurial intent definition “schools” employed within the literature.....	89
Table 4 Inclusion and exclusion criteria.....	104
Table 5 Data coding nodes Nvivo 11 software.....	105
Table 6 Example coding sheet.....	106
Table 7 First order quotes and second order themes.....	139
Table 8 Interview timeline.....	143
Table 9 Pairwise comparisons based on estimated marginal means of the stability of Entrepreneurial Intentions and its antecedents.....	161
Table 10 Key variable mean values at t2 and their stability based on EP groupings.....	161
Table 11 Measurement Scales.....	177
Table 12 Bootstrapped paths.....	179
Table 13 Factor loadings.....	180
Table 14 R squared values.....	180
Table 15 Reliability analysis.....	181
Table 16 Discriminant validity analysis.....	181
Table 17 Collinearity analysis.....	182
Table 18 Model fit statistics.....	182

LIST OF FIGURES:

Figure 1.1 A schematic overview of the current thesis.....	39
Figure 2.1 A duality of philosophical beliefs.....	49
Figure 2.2 Burrell and Morgan's (1979) research paradigms.....	51
Figure 2.3 Historical evolution of critical realism (Adapted from Ackroyd 2005).....	55
Figure 2.4 Outcome-driven variance model (adapted from Van de Ven (1992)).....	60
Figure 2.5 Extracted from Van de Ven (1992).....	61
Figure 2.6 A schematic overview of Delanda's Assemblage Theory.....	63
Figure 2.7 Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour.....	66
Figure 3.1 A summary of the SLR process.....	77
Figure 3.2 Publication outlets and priority themes.....	81
Figure 3.3 A self-constructed overview of the entrepreneurial process derived from literature.....	83
Figure 3.4 Educational intent research: an overview (self-constructed).....	84
Figure 3.5 A self-constructed depiction of how progression of entrepreneurial intent models has occurred.....	85
Figure 3.6 Key additions in priority themes extracted.....	88
Figure 4.1 A schematical overview of Delanda's (2006) Assemblage Theory.....	117
Figure 4.2 Methodological principles extracted from Wynn and Williams (2012).....	121
Figure 4.3 The entrepreneurial intention process: Assemblages of socially and contextually situated intent (this is an open system that will continue to emerge and change).....	127
Figure 5.1 Entrepreneurial intentions and relational patterns over time.....	163

Resumen de la tesis doctoral

INTRODUCCIÓN

La investigación sobre emprendimiento abunda en las principales revistas de negocios y administración de la época contemporánea (Carlsson et al, 2013). Sin embargo, su utilidad no está limitada a ninguna área en particular, cubriendo una amplia gama de dominios multidisciplinarios que abarcan desde la psicología y la sociología hasta la medicina y la política. Esto es así porque problemas complejos con múltiples facetas, como el mercado o el dinamismo económico y social, pueden abordarse a través del análisis de individuos que piensan y actúan de manera empresarial. Así, a través del estudio del espíritu emprendedor pueden descubrirse soluciones plausibles y efectivas para cuestiones como el desarrollo económico y social o la reducción de la pobreza (Dees, 1998; Sutter, Bruton y Chen, 2018).

La ausencia de estos comportamientos creadores de valor, innovadores y apropiados puede acumular grandes costes de oportunidad (Audretsch, Carree y Thurik, 2001). Por lo tanto, asegurar su estimulación es imprescindible en los esfuerzos para aliviar los efectos perniciosos de situaciones como el desempleo o una población con baja capitalización y desafección social. Una promoción explícita del espíritu emprendedor, a su vez, puede ayudar a estimular aumentos en la generación de ingresos y el bienestar general (Douglas y Shepherd, 2000). Por lo tanto, existe la necesidad de analizar y aumentar nuestro conocimiento en torno a un concepto multifacético y ahora diferenciado, que tiene la capacidad de crear nuevos empleos, mejorar la salud fiscal, generar riqueza y mejores sociedades, como es el emprendimiento.

El emprendimiento es un proceso y, en muchos sentidos, una reflexión consciente basada en valores o estructuras psicológicas, afectivas y motivacionales abstractas (Brosch, Stussi, Desrichard y Sander, 2018). Por lo tanto, en su esencia, es una toma de decisiones deliberada, un proceso incrustado en la noción de intención (Krueger, 2017). La Intención Emprendedora puede definirse como una construcción cognitiva que condiciona comportamientos futuros basados en creencias y deseos individuales (Van Gelderen, Kautonen y Fink, 2015).

La Intención Emprendedora es ampliamente percibida como el punto de arranque de los procesos emprendedores y, por lo tanto, representa una condición previa importante que puede actuar como un catalizador para el comportamiento emprendedor (Bullough, Renko y Myatt, 2014; Fayolle y Gailly, 2015; Liñan y Chen, 2009; Krueger, 1993). La premisa es que, si podemos estimular la intención y asegurar su mantenimiento, podemos fomentar el emprendimiento de una manera mucho más efectiva y eficiente. En consecuencia, como es lógico, la investigación contemporánea dedica una gran atención a la investigación de la intención emprendedora, dada su importancia fundamental para explicar el vínculo según el cual los meros pensamientos se traducen en acciones (Krueger, Reilly y Carsrud, 2000).

De hecho, se presupone que, si queremos entender realmente el proceso de emprendimiento, entonces se debe analizar la intención emprendedora (Ozaralli y Rivenburgh, 2016). No obstante, el área está sometida a una presión cada vez mayor para demostrar su valía más allá de los modelos causales parsimoniosos que pueden predecir una parte de la varianza, pero dejan grandes cantidades sin contabilizar (Krueger, 2017). Por este motivo se está criticando actualmente la Teoría de la Acción Planificada (Ajzen, 1991), el modelo teórico intencional más ampliamente aplicado. Se argumenta que proporciona una descripción demasiado parsimoniosa de constructos cada vez más elaborados, y que se centran solo en lo racional, excluyendo lo inconsciente y lo emotivo. Otra crítica hace referencia a que el modelo de Ajzen es incapaz de capturar efectivamente el cambio cognitivo (Sniehotta, Preseau y Araujo-Soares, 2014).

Sin embargo, esta tesis trata de buscar un equilibrio en esta discusión reciente tratando de analizar la Teoría de la Acción Planificada durante un período temporal, combinándola con otros enfoques de investigación más cualitativos). Así, podemos identificar explícitamente mecanismos y circuitos de retroalimentación (como aumentos en la experiencia empresarial y la información) que pueden haberse pasado por alto anteriormente (Ajzen, 2015).

Se admite que la relación entre la intención emprendedora y su acción correspondiente requiere de más examen por parte de los investigadores (Van Gelderen et al, 2015) para discernir el verdadero papel de las intenciones en el emprendimiento. La integración de modelos teóricos de la disciplina de la psicología social ha verificado su aplicabilidad en el contexto empresarial (Trivedi, 2017; Fernández-Pérez, Montes-Merino, Rodríguez-Ariza y Galicia, 2017; Zampetakis, Lerakis, Kafetsios y

Moustakis, 2016). Sin embargo, el creciente escepticismo señala la necesidad de revisar el concepto a un nivel mucho más fundamental, lo que en última instancia requiere una postura dinámica que acepte que las instantáneas estáticas, aunque aparentemente robustas, son inadecuadas. Esto plantea una serie de preguntas y lagunas intrigantes que deben abordarse con la creencia de que “existen múltiples oportunidades para desarrollar nuevas perspectivas intelectualmente interesantes y prácticamente útiles” (Krueger, 2017, pág. 20). Las cogniciones humanas son complejas y dinámicas, por lo tanto, su estudio debe compensar esto, ya sea a través del análisis longitudinal, la causalidad recíproca, o los constructos de naturaleza formativa o reflexiva.

Teniendo en consideración el influyente papel de la intención emprendedora en la actualidad, el objetivo de la tesis actual es lograr una mayor y mejor comprensión del concepto integrado en una perspectiva procesual, tomando el tiempo como una variable clave. Por lo tanto, la pregunta principal de investigación que se plantea es: ¿Cambian las intenciones emprendedoras con el tiempo? Y, en caso afirmativo, ¿cómo lo hacen? La respuesta a esta pregunta se logrará mediante la presentación de tres artículos de investigación científica interrelacionados a través de un enfoque de método mixto: (1) una contribución conceptual que analiza sistemáticamente el estado actual en la investigación de la intención emprendedora (artículo 1), (2) un estudio de caso cualitativo que investiga las transiciones intencionales a lo largo del proceso empresarial (artículo 2) y, finalmente, (3) una investigación cuantitativa que realiza un seguimiento de los cambios en la estabilidad intencional a lo largo del tiempo (artículo 3).

Aunque cada artículo marca sus propios aportes específicos y únicos, la tesis tiene 3 contribuciones primordiales hacia el campo de estudio. En primer lugar, reconocido como un concepto implementado en una amplia gama de contextos contextuales con numerosos fundamentos teóricos, la intención emprendedora corre el riesgo de convertirse en un área de investigación inconexa y fragmentada cuya divergencia evolutiva puede dificultar la utilidad de su estudio (Liñan y Fayolle, 2015). A través de una síntesis y estructuración de este campo, es posible ordenar las continuas modificaciones y ampliaciones que se realizan en un todo más parsimonioso. Esto permitirá aportar claridad a la forma en que actualmente, y en el futuro, podemos utilizar efectivamente la intención emprendedora para impulsar la investigación en el campo del emprendimiento. Este no es un compromiso trivial, ya que no lograr una coherencia en el estudio de la intención emprendedora podría devaluar su posición a

través de resultados de investigación inconsistentes que dificulten la determinación de implicaciones teóricas y prácticas útiles (Krueger, 2017).

En segundo lugar, los enfoques metodológicos parciales, basados en el estudio de relaciones causa-efecto mediante la captura estática de variables, consideran el fenómeno emprendedor como simplista y reducido. Este tipo de actuaciones metodológicas van en contra de la naturaleza misma del proceso emprendedor (Moroz y Hindle, 2012). Por lo tanto, la presente tesis se basa en el seguimiento longitudinal de la intención, proporcionando una perspectiva procesual sobre las transiciones intencionales que se aleja de los diseños tradicionales de secciones transversales y estáticas. Así, esta tesis avanza nuestro conocimiento sobre el proceso emprendedor teniendo en consideración el paso del tiempo, la recursividad potencial y el impacto derivado de la situación de otras potenciales variables de influencia que a menudo se pasan por alto por los enfoques estáticos más parsimoniosos.

Finalmente, la tesis contribuye a la investigación sobre la estabilidad de la intención emprendedora a lo largo del tiempo. La exposición a las demandas ambientales tiene potencial para generar percepciones positivas o negativas, y cada una ejerce su propio efecto sobre la intención emprendedora (Krueger, 1993). Uno de esos factores es la generación de conocimiento y experiencia empresarial a través de la participación en cursos basados en el espíritu emprendedor, que pueden tener influencias momentáneas o más duraderas. Los avances en la comprensión del proceso y de la cognición emprendedora se logran teorizando y probando empíricamente las relaciones subyacentes y los mecanismos emergentes que instigan las alteraciones intencionales, o lo que se denomina en esta tesis: la intención durante un tiempo determinado.

METODOLOGÍA

El campo del espíritu emprendedor tiene una composición multidisciplinaria y heterogénea que se deriva en gran parte de la multitud de fundamentos intelectuales utilizados. Esto crea una desconexión que posiblemente se encuentra en las raíces de los enfoques filosóficos que sustentan los esfuerzos de investigación, algo que puede interpretarse como altamente problemático dada su función como una plataforma desde la cual los académicos intentan mejorar nuestra comprensión y realizar una contribución significativa.

De todas las opciones consideradas y en vista de la ambición de asumir una posición pragmática, en esta tesis se toma la postura de un realista crítico. El Realismo Crítico aprueba una posición ontológica realista, mientras que al mismo tiempo epistemológicamente se desvía hacia una visión más interpretativa y, por lo tanto, escapa a la ingenuidad sugerida de las suposiciones algo extremistas del realista o naturalista (Mingers, 2004). En esencia, los realistas críticos aceptan la creencia de que el mundo existe más allá de nuestras interpretaciones. Sin embargo, nuestra capacidad para identificarlo está influida por percepciones socialmente construidas y falibles. De hecho, es esta naturaleza equívoca del conocimiento la que proporciona respuesta a un mundo que solo se construye socialmente (Sayer, 2004). El Realismo Crítico es un ajuste muy apropiado para esta investigación, ya que para obtener información y aclaraciones sobre los mecanismos operativos de la postura intencional en el espíritu emprendedor incluimos el contexto. Las intenciones emprendedoras están expuestas al ambiente abierto (y también ocurre lo contrario), el cual afectará a su funcionamiento dentro del proceso, por lo que es imperativo enmarcar los mecanismos causales en el contexto en el que operan (Ackroyd, 2004).

Como hizo Pettigrew (1990) con los procesos de toma de decisiones estratégicas, existe la ambición de capturar la realidad particular de cada individuo con respecto a la evolución de sus intenciones emprendedoras. El proceso se ha definido previamente como "un grupo coordinado de cambios ... una familia organizada de sucesos que están vinculados sistemáticamente entre sí, ya sea de manera causal o funcional ... un conjunto integrado de cambios interrelacionados que se desarrollan en coordinación conjunta" (Rescher, 1996 pág. 38). Al acomodar los aportes reveladores que se pueden obtener desde la perspectiva de la ciencia del Realismo Crítico en términos de mecanismos causales interconectados, configuraciones y poderes, también se asume un proceso meta-físico desde el carácter interactivo del espíritu emprendedor y la agencia humana. De esta manera, se asume que una versión de los enunciados pragmáticos de Rescher (1996) sobre la primacía reconoce que las ideas de proceso actúan como constituyentes de nuestra comprensión de las cosas. Por lo tanto, las relaciones afectivas de poderes, mecanismos y configuraciones se manifiestan a través del proceso.

Este enfoque realista pragmático se alinea estrechamente con la Realismo Crítico, lo que permite el reconocimiento de entidades objetivas y, al mismo tiempo, reconoce la naturaleza falaz de nuestras experiencias y del conocimiento que podemos generar. El proceso se divide en dos perspectivas

diferentes, y sin embargo, relacionadas: en primer lugar, las narrativas que describen el desarrollo y la aparición de "cosas" que responden a las preguntas "cómo"; y en segundo lugar, una de las categorías de conceptos o variables relacionadas con acciones y actividades para determinar "si" se ha producido un cambio.

La primera interpretación se implementa en el segundo artículo que investiga, a través de la metodología de estudio de caso, a un empresario individual en la industria de la construcción española mediante el uso de la versión de Manuel DeLanda (2006) de la Teoría del Ensamblaje (Assemblage Theory). La Teoría del Ensamblaje se adopta porque contrasta las generalidades derivadas del individualismo metodológico, ya que en lugar de ver a un agente humano como una entidad o sujeto discreto que simplemente posee pasiones o deseos, se considera que el agente humano evoluciona a través de su interacción con su entorno. Esta perspectiva histórica ayuda a ubicar los mecanismos causales. Va más allá de la noción lineal de "misma causa, mismo efecto" y sus postulaciones engañosas de si A, entonces B debe seguir necesariamente. Delanda (2006, p20) articula lo que él llama una causalidad "productiva" por la cual A causaría la producción de B, negando así la causalidad implicativa en el caso de la primera. Los ensamblajes son entidades mucho más complejas y, por lo tanto, requieren formas no lineales adicionales que tengan en cuenta los umbrales de potencialidad afectiva. Los individuos pueden ser percibidos como conjuntos de artefactos personales, incluidos sus hábitos, habilidades y, de hecho, intenciones emprendedoras, que se unen entre sí y, además, también con otros conjuntos humanos, sociales, institucionales, regionales y nacionales. Mediante estos ensamblajes se pueden obtener mejores explicaciones sobre qué tipos de combinaciones o relaciones están involucradas en la producción y el mantenimiento de las intenciones en contextos particulares.

La segunda interpretación del proceso se utiliza en el tercer y último documento, que examina la tendencia de la intención emprendedora a cambiar con el tiempo en un grupo de estudiantes de máster ubicados en 2 escuelas de negocios diferentes dentro del mismo país. Este estudio está respaldado por la articulación teórica de la Teoría psicosocial de la Acción Planificada de Azjen (1991) y el estudio de resultados o eventos no lineales derivados de transiciones adaptativas (disonancia entre los estados deseado, esperado y actual) y las tensiones que evolucionan posteriormente. Este modelo teórico causal postula que la acción se puede predecir de manera efectiva a través de las intenciones

y se basa en la Teoría de la Acción Razonada original de Fishbein y Ajzen (1975) que articuló la influencia antecedente de la información saliente hacia el comportamiento. Esencialmente, el comportamiento se percibe como una función tanto de la conveniencia como de la capacidad de control de un individuo.

Las creencias forman la base fundamental de la Teoría de la Acción Planificada de Azjen (1991), que extiende la noción de acción razonada a través de su funcionamiento a través de tres planos de creencia predominantes. El primero de ellos es el de las creencias de actitud que actúan como fuentes de información con respecto a las percepciones de las posibles consecuencias de realizar un comportamiento particular. Es importante destacar que estas creencias de actitud emergentes interactúan entre sí e influyen en las actitudes hacia el comportamiento dado, convirtiéndola en una proposición más o menos atractiva. Las actitudes son, por lo tanto, un reflejo de las expectativas de resultados y los juicios favorables posteriores. Estos mecanismos de evaluación tienen la capacidad de cambiar en función de la confrontación con los comportamientos de los objetos (como el emprendimiento en esta tesis) a medida que las actitudes se construyen y modifican a través de experiencias vividas.

En segundo lugar, las creencias normativas que tienen en cuenta las expectativas de los referentes, incluidos el yo y otros, también asumen una posición prominente. Dan como resultado la formulación de normas subjetivas que pueden crear deseos de ajustarse o no a lo que puede determinarse como generalmente aceptable o inaceptable. Aquí, las inclinaciones para someterse a los comportamientos normativos a través del cumplimiento son claves en la formación de normas subjetivas. Finalmente, las creencias relacionadas con la capacidad de uno para controlar ciertos factores, que pueden asumir la función de promotores o inhibidores de un comportamiento particular, se materializan en la forma de creencias de control basadas en niveles de dificultad percibidos. En otras palabras, representan la percepción sobre el propio control conductual del individuo (Teoría de la Acción Planificada); es decir, la percepción sobre la autoeficacia emprendedora en el contexto de esta tesis. Esta percepción de control sirve como una variable proxy en ausencia de la medición del control real de un comportamiento (Ajzen, 2005). La interacción de estas tres construcciones cognitivas proximales emergentes y anidadas que se derivan de creencias distales precursoras, se manifiesta en la producción de intenciones que funcionan como transmisor de conductas reales.

CONCLUSIONES

Esta tesis ha brindado la oportunidad de analizar activamente con la Intención Emprendedora (IE) desde una lente procesual que involucra múltiples metodologías que proporcionan una evaluación conceptual analítica y crítica del campo de estudio de las intenciones emprendedoras en cuanto a las tendencias en su evolución. Con este enfoque se ha estudiado un empresario individual ubicado en la industria de la construcción y un grupo de estudiantes universitarios que estudian a nivel de posgrado-. El uso de ambas estrategias metodológicas ha ayudado a proporcionar una perspectiva más amplia, como se refleja en las conclusiones de esta tesis doctoral.

Con esto, la tesis ha cuestionado enfoques más tradicionales y comunes en la mayoría de los campos que han seguido principalmente una metodología cuantitativa de corte transversal para analizar de forma estática un fenómeno que es intrínsecamente abierto y dinámico. También contribuye al entendimiento de la naturaleza efímera de las intenciones emprendedoras. En la investigación de las intenciones emprendedoras, el tiempo a menudo es un factor que se descuida. En cambio, esta tesis ha dado un enfoque dinámico en el cual el tiempo es un factor fundamental.

Es importante destacar que, en la búsqueda de medios sobre cómo podemos apoyar y fomentar efectivamente las intenciones emprendedoras, se recomienda no limitarse únicamente al estudio de factores exógenos y endógenos. Las intenciones emprendedoras pueden ser estimuladas y cohibidas de muchas maneras debido a su naturaleza compleja y social. Esta tesis, por lo tanto, sugiere la introducción de las intenciones del proceso emprendedor como un paraguas conceptual mediante el cual se pueden realizar contribuciones más matizadas y más útiles.

La tesis ha realizado importantes contribuciones respecto sobre el espíritu emprendedor general como, más específicamente, en los campos de investigación de las intenciones emprendedoras a nivel académico (conceptual y empírico) y práctico (formulación de políticas, profesionales de la educación, órganos de gobierno, etc.). En primer lugar, la principal contribución teórica que emana de la tesis es la reconceptualización de las intenciones emprendedoras como un constructo dinámico que experimenta cambios que dependen de las circunstancias tanto contextuales como experienciales. Basado en una perspectiva procesual, el término intención se utiliza para resaltar la capacidad de las intenciones para variar tanto en su fuerza como en su dirección. Dando un paso hacia interpretaciones y creencias perceptivas similares a los estados, mientras se aleja de las perspectivas de rasgos

más tradicionales, esta nueva lente teórica contribuye al debate académico dentro del dominio específico de las intenciones emprendedoras.

En segundo lugar, para garantizar que la complejidad y el dinamismo asociados con la intención emprendedora no se agreguen a la fragmentación ya observada en el campo, se ha sugerido la noción de intenciones de proceso emprendedor que se derivó del nuevo marco de las intenciones emprendedoras en términos la Teoría del Ensamblaje de Delanda (2006). Así, se halló que el proceso de intenciones, a través de la contención del realismo crítico del conocimiento mediado, conducía a varias formas intencionales. La transición entre las sucesivas fases en ese proceso depende de lo avanzado que esté el viaje emprendedor del individuo en cuanto a sus estados cognitivos y emotivos. Así, se puede considerar que las intenciones de los procesos emprendedores operan tanto en el nivel intencional como en un nivel más alto relativo a comportamientos específicos.

En tercer lugar, las intenciones del proceso emprendedor abarcan combinaciones de lo material y lo expresivo, lo codificado y lo no codificado, los componentes que pueden impactar en la intención y también actuar como estabilizadores en condiciones particulares. Por lo tanto, si queremos reducir la brecha intención-conducta, resulta imperativo identificar esas variables específicas y, lo que es más importante, su configuración óptima (que resulta en altos niveles de intención). Estas formas intencionales funcionan recursivamente desde trayectorias ascendentes y descendentes, por lo que la exposición continua a comportamientos emprendedores que cumplan con las expectativas de manera positiva puede actuar como un mecanismo clave para reforzar una intención y estimular la realización de los comportamientos.

En cuarto lugar, la literatura reciente (Lerner, Hunt y Dimov, 2018) está comenzando a proponer diferentes perspectivas sobre la acción, lo que sugiere que no es tan intencional como se pensaba, ya que una variedad de lógicas puede funcionar, ya sea racional o emocional. A través de la perspectiva del proceso tomada en el segundo artículo de esta tesis, se puede explicar una mezcla de estas lógicas. Por ejemplo, hemos visto la desinhibición del empresario que, de manera intuitiva, supervisó el crecimiento de su negocio sin pensarlo mucho, pero en otras ocasiones, a través de un enfoque mucho más razonado, usó una gran cantidad de análisis y deliberaciones en referencia a su camino futuro. Esto se suma a la creencia de que tal vez no todas las conductas empresariales son intencionales y esto debe tenerse debidamente en cuenta como lo hace la tesis actual. Esta visión no se limita al

mundo del espíritu emprendedor y también puede ampliar el conocimiento dentro del campo de la gestión estratégica en su conjunto. En general, esta contribución teórica ayuda a mantener la relevancia y el valor de las intenciones emprendedoras como una estructura de investigación y una variable clave en el proceso emprendedor, al tiempo que acepta que pueden existir otras explicaciones complementarias.

La quinta contribución es la aplicación de la Teoría de la Acción Planificada en el tiempo, algo a menudo ignorado por quienes la adoptan. Se ha identificado su robustez y se han supuesto posibles variables reguladoras como el proceso emprendedor. Su aplicación ha considerado el papel que juega la estabilidad en nuestros niveles intencionales en el ámbito del emprendimiento. A través de la implementación longitudinal en 2 momentos temporales, la toma de decisiones y el procesamiento cognitivo parecen más relevantes en la realidad como reflejo del espíritu emprendedor en su conjunto. Esta tesis se ha sumado al pequeño pero creciente cuerpo de investigación que está logrando un avance significativo en el conocimiento de las intenciones emprendedoras a través del estudio a lo largo del tiempo. Se reconoce que el estudio longitudinal ya no es una sugerencia sino una necesidad de aumentar el conocimiento que podemos generar sobre cómo se estimulan, optimizan y mantienen las intenciones emprendedoras. Por lo tanto, el estudio ha respondido a los llamamientos de muchos académicos dentro del área (Ahmed, Chandran y Klobas, 2017; Hessels, Grilo, Thurik y Zwan, 2011; Kautonen, Van Gelderen y Tornikoski, 2013; Laspita, Breugst, Heblich y Patzelt, 2012) para asegurar avances en el desarrollo del conocimiento.

Como complemento, se ha avanzado en la educación para el emprendimiento, ya que se descubrió que una actividad formativa con una duración más corta de 4 meses tuvo un impacto positivo en el proceso emprendedor. Parece que la exposición continua es clave para generar una familiaridad dentro de los estudiantes que puede mejorar los niveles de intención a través de la facilidad de procesamiento de los efectos. Con esto, se sugieren nuevos marcos teóricos en busca de una explicación más detallada de la IE y la educación. Más específicamente, una trayectoria de 'U' invertida con la existencia de una zona de funcionamiento óptimo se postula basándose en una premisa subyacente del efecto de mera exposición (Zajonc, 1968). Finalmente, desde una perspectiva teórica, el campo contemporáneo se ha llevado a un conjunto estructurado y ordenado para evitar un cuerpo de investigación inconexo, fragmentado y mal dirigido (Liñan y Fayolle, 2015). A través de una revisión

sistemática de la literatura, se han identificado y priorizado varios temas que pueden ser de gran beneficio no solo para los nuevos académicos que ingresan en la disciplina; pero también para aquellos que son más experimentados en busca de nuevas líneas de investigación y, por supuesto, para los que proceden de otras disciplinas de investigación.

También se ven diversas contribuciones a la práctica. Consideramos, en primer lugar, a los responsables de la política educativa, quienes operan en una disciplina en la que sigue sin ser claramente concluyente la influencia de diversas políticas y programas sobre la intención emprendedora. En este sentido, se sugiere que los resultados particulares que se desean deben ser claros. Estos pueden venir en diferentes formas, incluyendo el desarrollo de habilidades emprendedoras específicas, el aumento de la conciencia empresarial, la generación de ambiciones altas o bajas, la creación de una nueva empresa o, además, la realineación de creencias que pueden actuar como un filtro potencial para aquellos que tienen alta capacidad de cambio frente a baja.

Existe la necesidad de ser mucho más realistas y astutos en cuanto a la forma en que nos involucramos con la educación para el emprendimiento con ideas recientes que demuestran que nuestra pedagogía puede tener resultados no deseados, beneficiando a algunos e impactando perjudicialmente a otros (Brentnall, Rodríguez y Culkin, 2018). Por ejemplo, y en relación con los hallazgos actuales, se debe considerar cómo superar o atenuar la influencia ejercida por los períodos reducidos de exposición a los comportamientos emprendedores, así como la información que puede reducir los niveles de antecedentes cruciales y, a su vez, las intenciones emprendedoras.

Los profesionales de la educación pueden usar escalas de medición, como el Cuestionario de Intención Emprendedora (Liñan y Chen, 2009), no solo de manera puntual, sino también de manera continua, para rastrear las variaciones intencionales a lo largo del tiempo. Aquí, las variaciones simplificadas del contexto del cuestionario deberán desarrollarse para alinearse con los marcos específicos de "medios", "fines" y las duraciones temporales seguidas. Tal seguimiento podría potencialmente actuar como una herramienta de evaluación pedagógica reflexiva tanto para el estudiante como para el facilitador educativo.

Las políticas gubernamentales, a la luz de los hallazgos actuales, debe tomar precauciones con respecto a considerar únicamente aquellas personas que muestran altos niveles de intenciones emprendedoras, ya que pueden ser momentáneos o influidos por contextos específicos. Estos contextos

pueden cambiar con el tiempo, algunos de estos cambios pueden ser predecibles y otros no, pudiendo dar lugar a resultados que no cumplan con las predicciones previas. Por lo tanto, la promoción del espíritu emprendedor debe tomarse como un objetivo político a largo plazo para promover niveles intencionales a lo largo del tiempo. El apoyo no debe detenerse cuando se realizan las primeras acciones, como la creación de la empresa. Sin embargo, debe centrar la atención en la promoción de una forma intencional diferente. Los gobiernos también deben tratar de exponer el espíritu emprendedor a edades más jóvenes en los niveles de primaria y secundaria. Aunque se está ganando terreno, no se está haciendo lo suficiente para aumentar los niveles de base a través de contenidos y actividades estimulantes y mediante los cuales los estudiantes pueden hacer la transición a la educación superior con valores y creencias emprendedoras firmes invirtiendo así en el largo plazo.

Como emprendedor o emprendedor potencial, puede ser útil considerar diversas estrategias que permitan percepciones positivas hacia diversas situaciones. Por ejemplo, estas estrategias pueden incluir: una conversación positiva con uno mismo que puede fomentar la asimilación, el uso de la práctica metacognitiva para permitir decisiones más informadas, o la búsqueda de una participación continua en el espíritu emprendedor que permita una evaluación realista de la factibilidad, disminuyendo cualquier impacto negativo potencial derivado de una ilusión de control.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.0 SETTING THE CONTEXT

Entrepreneurship research heavily populates many of the leading business and management journals of contemporary times (Carlsson et al, 2013). It's expansive utility however is not bound by any one particular area evidenced by the prominence of coverage in a wide-array of multi-disciplinary domains spanning from psychology and sociology to medicine and politics. Attention is fueled by a commonly held belief that multi-faceted complex issues such as, market, economic and social dynamism can all be addressed through individuals both thinking and acting entrepreneurially. It is by means of entrepreneurship that plausible and effective solutions can be uncovered towards economic necessities whilst concomitantly at a broader level developing societies, instigating social change and combating poverty (Dees, 1998; Sutter, Bruton and Chen, 2018).

Absence of these value creating, innovative and appropriating behaviours can accrue large opportunistic costs (Audretsch, Carree and Thurik, 2001) and therefore ensuring their stimulation becomes imperative in efforts to alleviate the negative restraints and inertial forces of unemployment, an under-capitalised population and social disaffection as by-products of hysteresis processes. An explicit promotion of entrepreneurship in-turn can help to spur increases in income generation and overall general well-being (Douglas and Shepherd, 2000). Hence, a desire, or at risk of being more forthright, a necessity exists to further decompose and gain knowledge surrounding a multi-faceted and now differentiated concept that has the ability to create new jobs, improve fiscal health, generate wealth and better societies.

1.1 ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEFINED

Definitions and operationalisations, as to which consensus still remains elusive are reflective of the complex constitution of entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs have been previously defined from a myriad of perceptive lenses including their classification as individuals who innovate initiating change (Schumpeter, 1934); who satisfy needs and inefficiencies (Kirzner, 1985); who bear risk for personal and monetary reward (Hisrich and Peters, 1995) and who create, own and manage a small business

(Stewart and Roth, 2001). Withstanding these different interpretations it is clear that entrepreneurship is a process whether implicitly or explicitly recognised that involves the creation of value, the source of which heavily contested.

Some traditionalists perceive this value to be economically-driven in a narrow form of new business creation (Gartner, 1989) whereas contemporary and more expansionist understandings draw us toward the notion of an embedded entrepreneurship that is a learnable construct emitting many other forms of beneficial outcomes inherent from lived reciprocal interactions (Bruyat and Julien, 2001). Nonetheless, each conceptualisation incorporates a process be that of thinking, acting or interacting with various endogenous and exogenous factors. This is the posture that is adopted in the current work not only allowing for the exploration of understudied areas but so too acting as a mechanism to draw together observed definitional divides (Moroz and Hindle, 2012). Taken in this manner entrepreneurship is socially situated involving both narrow and expansive components thus distance is established between one that is allocative in favour of movement towards one of becoming and based on a flow of interactions (Steyart, 2007).

1.1.1 A BRIEF HISTORY OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurship has evolved from the theoretical foundations exposed through the early postulations of the equilibrium theories of Say (1880) and Smith (1904); the disequilibrium theories of Cantillon (1931), Casson (1982), Kirzner (1973) and Knight (1921) and the more radical revolutionary equilibrium theory of Schumpeter (1934). It is now considered to be a domain level concept whose boundary conditions are difficult to sharply define (Carlsson et al, 2013). During the 1960s interest turned away from the traditionalist economic theories and moved towards more psycho-sociological drivers whilst in the 1980s thought transitions that shifted the emphasis from larger firms to the potency of more dynamic and adaptable smaller sized businesses created the momentum that has progressed to the modern-day proliferation in entrepreneurial educational institutions, programmes and specific research journals.

Early scholars sought answers to questions undergirded by desires to identify individual differences including “who” is an entrepreneur? “Why” do they choose to engage in entrepreneurial behaviours? and “What” differentiates them from the normal population? This line of inquisition placed emphasis

on content and more specifically personality and immutable traits in search of a genetic blueprint for the archetypal entrepreneur. McClelland's (1965) seminal explications of behavior through achievement motives ignited a further stream of investigation into other traits and sociological aspects including risk-taking propensities (Brockhaus, 1982), desire for autonomy (Sexton and Bowman, 1985), and locus of control (Rotter, 1966) which although were informative their predictive capacity was highly disputed (Gartner, 1989).

This interpretation as to the effectiveness of the personality "school" led to its subsequent abandonment and in its position focus on the pre-fix of "how" was inserted. This came with the connotation of process with scholars lending attention towards what is done and how the creation of, businesses (Gartner, 1989), opportunities (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000) and value (Bruyat and Julien, 2001) come into existence. As discursive interests shifted this resulted in a diverse range of research approaches allowing for contextual interpretations of entrepreneurship. Another directional pathway was also paved through a somewhat revived view of the actions of the individual on this occasion from a behaviouralist perspective (Ogbor, 2000). This evoked a sub-discipline that began to explore more cognitively derived facets with Shapero and Sokol (1982) and Bird (1988) introducing us to their notions of entrepreneurial intentions (EI). This had important implications as theorizing was translocated from differences amongst individuals towards variations in cognitive processes (Baron, 2008). These entrepreneurial cognitions form the foundation of the current thesis and although their explicit recognition was conveyed by the seminal publications of Bird (1988) their remnants can be traced back much further to the postulations of judgement by Cantillon (1931) and Jean-Baptiste Say's (1821) reference to entrepreneurs as thinkers and actors.

The idea of entrepreneurial cognition, or as defined by Mitchell et al (2002, p97): "the knowledge structures that people use to make assessments, judgments or decisions involving opportunity evaluation and venture creation and growth", has gained much traction within the contemporary body of entrepreneurship scholarship. Shaver and Scott's (1991) petition for the reintroduction of emphasis towards the psychological and decision-making processes of the individual has been met with rigour with a plethora of investigative efforts centering upon topics including affect (Baron, 2008), information-processing (Robinson, Stimpson, Huefner and Hunt, 1991); logic (Sarasvathy, 2001); biases and heuristics (Forbes 2005; Gaglio, 2004) and entrepreneurial expertise (Haynie, Shepherd and

Patzelt, 2012) to name but a few. One highly influential area that has spawned from this canon has built upon the initial utterances of Bird (1988) and elected to focus on EI as is the case in the present work.

1.2 INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC OF INVESTIGATION

1.2.1 ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS AS AN INFLUENTIAL AREA OF STUDY

EIs have been afforded the commonly used definition of being a “self-acknowledged conviction by a person that they intend to set up a new business venture and consciously plan to do so at some point in the future” (Thompson, 2009 p676). As aforementioned entrepreneurship is a process, and, in many ways a mindful contemplation based on values or abstract psychological, affective and motivational structures (Brosch, Stussi, Desrichard and Sander, 2018), thus at it’s very core is a volitional decision-making process embedded in the notion of intent (Krueger, 2017). EI can therefore be assigned as a cognitive construct that imparts attention towards, and prediction of, engagement in future behaviours based upon individually held beliefs and desires (Van Gelderen, Kautonen and Fink, 2015).

It is widely perceived to be the entrepreneurial processes’ point of embarkment and therefore represents an important pre-condition that can act as a catalyst to the emergence, or lack thereof, of entrepreneurial behaviour (Bullough, Renko and Myatt, 2014; Fayolle and Gailly, 2015; Liñan and Chen, 2009; Krueger, 1993). The premise follows that if we can stimulate intent and ensure its maintenance then we can foster entrepreneurship in much more effective and efficient ways. Contemporary research, therefore, unsurprisingly devotes a great deal of attention to investigating intention given its fundamental significance in explicating the link between how mere thoughts translate into hard action (Krueger, Reilly and Carsrud, 2000).

Indeed, it is presupposed that if we are to truly understand the entrepreneurship process then effort must be designated to its analysis (Ozaralli and Rivenburgh, 2016). Nonetheless, the area is one that is coming under increasing pressure to prove its worth beyond parsimonious causative models that can predict a portion of variance but leave large amounts unaccounted for (Krueger, 2017). Entrepreneurship literature is in danger of suffering from the same criticisms that are being confronted in other fields. These commentaries encourage the retirement of the Theory of Planned behaviour

(TPB) (Ajzen, 1991), the most widely applied theoretical intentional model, grounded in the beliefs that it provides an overly parsimonious account of increasingly elaborate constructs focusing only on the rational at the exclusion of the unconscious and the emotive. The argument follows that the model is unable to effectively capture cognitive change (Sniehotta, Presseau and Araujo-Soares, 2014). However, this perhaps misguided view must be challenged (and is done so in this dissertation), as if we are able to implement the TPB over a temporal period in combination with other research approaches (more qualitatively based) we can explicitly convey regulatory mechanisms and feedback loops (such as increases in entrepreneurial experience and information) that may have been previously overlooked (Ajzen, 2015).

Nonetheless it is conceded that the relationship between EIs and their value (predictive and attentional sustaining capacity) is characterised by obscurity and there still remains large amounts unresolved concerning the transition from ideas into reality (Van Gelderen et al, 2015) and the true role of intentions in entrepreneurship. The integration of theoretical models from the discipline of social psychology have verified their applicability in the entrepreneurship context (Trivedi, 2017; Fernández-Pérez, Montes-Merino, Rodríguez-Ariza and Galicia, 2017; Zampetakis, Lerakis, Kafetsios and Moustakis, 2016), however, the increasing scepticism on the other hand signals a need to revisit the concept at a much more fundamental level ultimately requiring a dynamic posture accepting that static snapshots, although apparently robust, are inadequate and lacking. This raises a number of intriguing questions and gaps to be addressed with a belief that “there are multiple opportunities to develop intellectually interesting and practically useful new insights” (Krueger, 2017 p 20). Human cognitions are complex and dynamic their study therefore should atone for this be it through longitudinal tracking, reciprocal causalities, transitional or phase-like tendencies or considerations of their formative or reflective nature.

1.2.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

With the influential role of EI and potential gaps to be abridged explicated the aim of the current thesis is to increase and progress our understanding of the concept embedded within a processual perspective taking time as a key variable. The key research question that follows is therefore: How (and if) do EIs change over time? Answer to this question will be achieved through the presentation

of three inter-related scientific research articles through a mixed-method approach, namely, a conceptual contribution systematically analysing the current state-of-art in EI scholarship (Paper 1), a qualitative case study investigating intentional transitions throughout the entrepreneurial process (Paper 2), and finally a quantitative investigation tracking changes in intentional stability longitudinally over time (Paper 3) (Table 1).

Paper	Focus	Research Questions	Form
1	Systematic Review of EI literature	<p>RQ1. What are the main trends emerging from the contemporary EI literature?</p> <p>RQ2. How do emerging themes relate to previous attempts at classification?</p> <p>RQ3. What are the implications for practice and future research?</p>	Conceptual
2	Individual, Longitudinal Case Study Examining Intentional Transitions	<p>RQ1. How do EI evolve over time?</p> <p>RQ2. How do various internal and external factors combine to develop EI?</p>	Qualitative
3	Entrepreneurial Intent's tendency for change: The temporal stability of constructs and relational patterns	<p>RQ1. Is there a change in an individual's levels of entrepreneurial intending over time?</p> <p>RQ2. Are there differences in the relational configurations of it's antecedents?</p>	Quantitative

Table 1 An overview of the papers composing the thesis, their main driving research questions and scientific form

Although each paper marks their own specific and unique inputs the thesis has 3 overriding contributions towards the domain. Firstly, renowned as a concept implemented in a vast range of contextual settings with numerous theoretical foundations EIs run the risk of becoming a disjointed and fragmented area whose evolutionary divergence can hinder utility (Liñan and Fayolle, 2015). Through a synthesis and structuring of the field the continual modifications and extensions that are made can be ordered into a more parsimonious whole bringing clarity to how we currently, and in the future can effectively, use EIs to propel research in the field of entrepreneurship forwards. This is not a trivial undertaking given as failure to bring a coherency to the study of EI could greatly devalue its position through inconsistent research outputs making it difficult to determine useful theoretical and practical implications (Krueger, 2017).

Secondly, the fallible partialities of attributions grounded in cause-effect relationships from stationary capture of variables equates the entrepreneurial journey to one that is simplistic and reducible whereby one designates entitlement to a methodological individualism that only serves to ignore the equivocal and unpredictable nature of the journey. Embracing opportunistic and sporadic facets entails a research posture that is in acceptance of the notion of process, a term which is in frequent articulation however, more often than not, lacking the scaffold of a strong and explicit theoretical and empirical base (Moroz and Hindle, 2012). The current thesis therefore provides this base through the longitudinal tracking of intent providing a processual perspective on intentional transitions which departs from the traditional cross-sectional designs that depict a stable endurability. Knowledge is advanced regarding temporalities, potential recursivity and finally the situationally derived impact of other potential influencing variables that are often overlooked by the more parsimonious approaches.

Finally, the thesis contributes to research regarding the stability of EI over time. The multiplicative foundation upon which intent is built would imply multiple situational dependencies amongst its formative constructs that can produce differentials and inconsistencies both within and across relationships over time. Exposure to environmental demands will exhibit a potential to generate either positive or negative perceptions with each exerting their own effect (Krueger, 1993). One such trigger for this is the generation of entrepreneurial knowledge and experience through participation in entrepreneurship-based courses that may have momentary or longer lasting influences. Advance-

ments to the entrepreneurship cognition and process domain are made by theorising and empirically testing the underlying powers and emergent mechanisms that instigate intentional alterations or what I call intending over a given temporal duration.

In so doing, there is answer to the call of numerous scholars (Ahmed, Chandran and Klobas, 2017; Hessels, Grilo, Thurik and Zwan, 2011; Kautonen, Van Gelderen and Tornikoski, 2013; Laspita, Breugst, Hebllich and Patzelt, 2012) whom highlighted the pressing need for knowledge generation on the time-based aspects that lead to action. Thus, dynamism is introduced to the study of EI something that has seldom been enacted within the field and that can not only help to further explicate the accepted antecedent variables but also give consideration to new emergent constructs and their role in the development of associated temporal patterns of entrepreneuring.

The current thesis contains 6 chapters, of which three are empirical studies. Figure 1.1 one depicts a schematic overview to its overall structure. Following on from this first introductory chapter, Chapter 2 gives clear and detailed indication to the philosophical research posture assumed introducing the theoretical framework in which the work is positioned, whilst Chapter 3 provides a systematic overview of the current EI research arena identifying gaps in the literature and possible beneficial moves for future researchers and practitioners. Building upon these avenues for further research Chapter 4 presents the findings of a longitudinal case study on intentional transitions both via retrospective and real-time means. Next, Chapter 5 considers the change in intentions overtime, again in longitudinal fashion, however via employing a quantitative methodology, investigating a specific cohort of postgraduate school students taking into account their participation in entrepreneurial modules and workshops examining the potential impact this has on antecedent variables. The final chapter discusses the overall results and findings of the 3 empirical investigations in light of their contribution to the scholarship body. Implications on both theory and practice are articulated with a number of proposals being made to direct future endeavours and bring the thesis to a close.

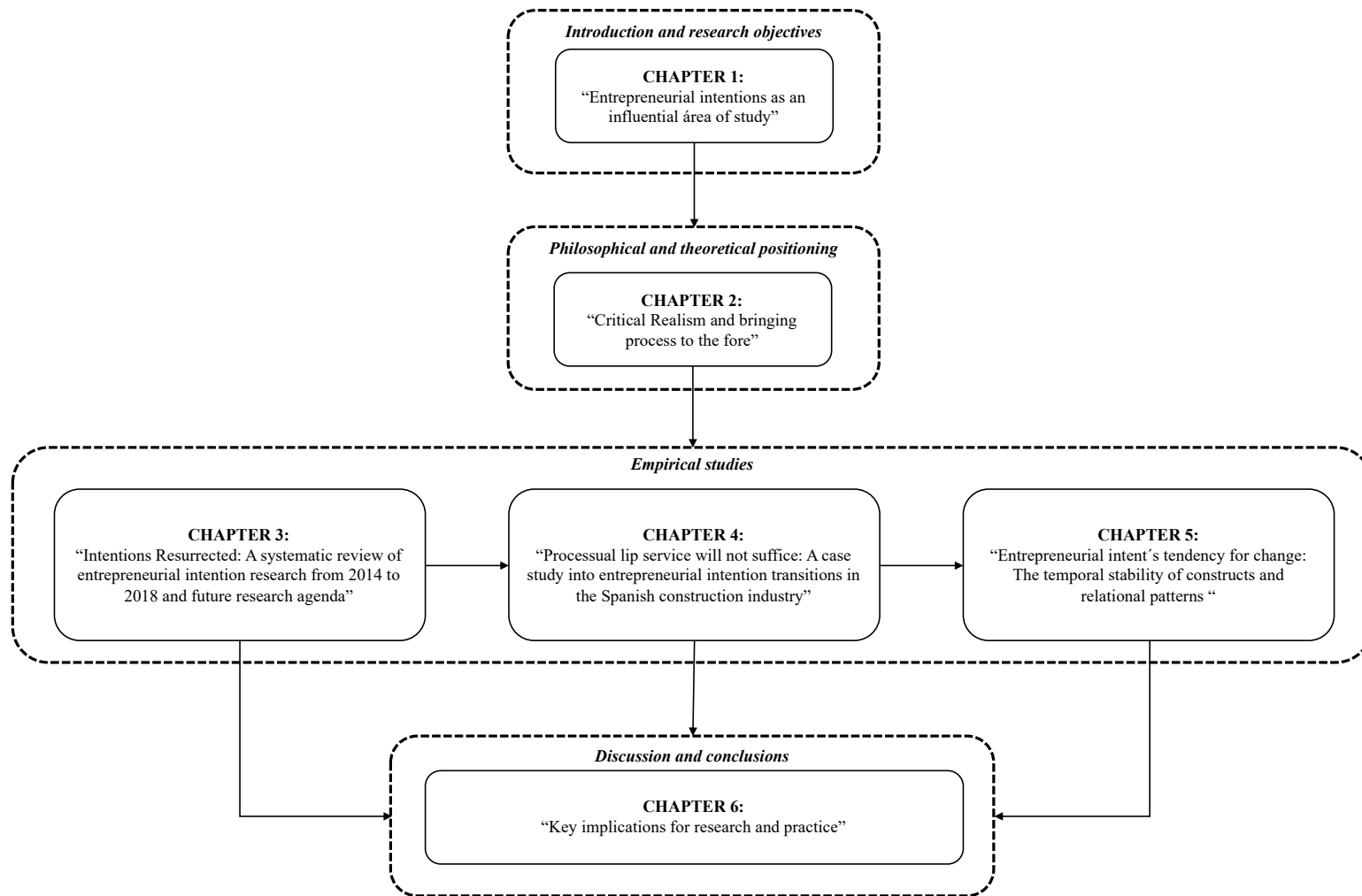


Figure 1.1 A schematic overview of the current thesis

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Chapter 2

Philosophical and Theoretical Positioning

2.0 OBJECTIVES AND CONTENT

This current chapter will provide outline to the philosophical and theoretical posture adopted to investigate the key themes which to reiterate are, the current state-of-the art in entrepreneurial intention research, the temporal transitioning of the entrepreneurial intent construct, and finally the tendency for intentions to change from one time-point to another. As the thesis is a consolidation of three inter-related investigative papers each will therefore have their own section to discuss the specific methodology selected and procedures implemented. Thus, this chapter endeavours towards the feat of detailing the meta-philosophical and methodological techniques used within the work in a much broader sense (Leitch, Hill and Harrison, 2009). It is comprised of two sections, the first of which deals with the philosophical posture assumed and it's foundations. In progressing, the second part informs the reader of the theoretical drivers that originate from and evolve along a process trajectory.

In attempt towards explication of the research design effort will firstly be focused towards the justification of the empirical approach assumed which is that of a critical realist. This entails analysis of traditional approaches and their level of appropriateness in opposition to Critical Realism (CR) as a mechanism to effectively provide answers to the current research queries. Attention then shifts in the direction of process conceptualisation with the realisation that each of the three papers contain perspectives that are in accompaniment with a number of salient considerations that need to be addressed in order to achieve success in contributing to the area. In accordance, scrutiny will be afforded towards the innate constituents of the approach selected which in the present circumstance appears to be evermore delicate and indeed prominent as the research is of a processual nature.

2.1 THE GUIDING INFLUENCE OF PHILOSOPHY

The field of entrepreneurship is synonymous with its multi-disciplinary and heterogenous composition that is largely derivative from intellectual underpinnings that are self-serving and, in most cases,

opaquely conveyed (that is assuming that they are conveyed to begin with). This creates a disconnect that arguably finds source at the very roots of the philosophical approaches undergirding investigative endeavours, something which can be construed as highly problematic given their function as a platform from which scholars attempt to advance our understanding and find meaningful contribution. With this at the forefront of our thoughts it is evident - although frequently with insufficient clarity - that the integral and often inadequately attended to notion of philosophical foundation has provided the point of embarkment for many research domains and methodologies enacted upon which complete paradigms have been built and developed (as recognised by Burrell and Morgan (1979) whom assert that philosophical assumptions be them implicit or explicit serve as underpinning features to research in the social sciences). To become cognisant and be explicit about our metaphysical undercurrents is of great value considering that we often unknowingly embrace meta-theorising within our work in a tacit manner (Touskas and Chia, 2011) with the resultant influence being imposed upon the way in which phenomena are and can be explicated.

There appears to be a somewhat affirmation orientation within extant work that largely upholds the assumptions of philosophical and theoretical preferences that are in accordance with our own perspectives with the concomitant discarding of those that suffer from disconformity and that may in fact be more rigorous and valid. Apparently, an apt depiction of the revelation that Gioia and Pitre (1990) made decades in advance that both social and organisational science encounter difficulty in attempts to cast aside the somewhat constraining influence of enduring traditionalist views. Through such practices a culture of avoidance and one might well say hostility has been generated that directs attention towards acceptance of articulated assumptions to which challenges of the status quo are seldom attempted and if done so met with fierce retort. Perhaps, these neglective tendencies are scaffolded upon frail or misguided bedrocks that elect to pit inherent conceptions of various philosophies on dualistic terms.

With this, an awareness should be promoted indicating that it is not so much an either or scenario whereby one must strictly abide by their philosophical beliefs come what may and in-so-doing succumb to the premise of their superiority, however instead, a better alternative may be to consider both the research purpose and question at hand (Crotty, 1998) understanding that various philosophical approaches can indeed provide answers but one may afford a more appropriate fit (Kelemen and

Rumens, 2008). This becomes ever more prevalent given the idiosyncratic adoption and use of philosophical ideals within the entrepreneurship research domain (Tsoukas and Knudsen, 2003) whereby one cannot benefit from the simple “off the shelf” routinised selection of the most widely used or perceived best philosophy.

Jones (1995 p123) advises that “when doing research it is necessary to confront and at least try to resolve for yourself the uncertainty and contradictions inherent in studying human and organizational behaviour”. As consequence, the usefulness and relevance of the knowledge generated within this thesis is largely influenced by overriding a priori philosophical assumptions that impact upon strategies adopted, which in turn, not only have a bearing on actions taken to achieve answers they also affect comprehension as to what exactly it is that I am seeking to investigate: the dynamic nature of entrepreneurial intent (Johnson and Clark, 2006). As aforementioned, if appropriate methodologies are to be selected then concerted effort should be displayed towards the exploration and explicit recognition of the philosophical assumptions that shape the decision-making process. In this regard I am in agreement with Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016, p135) in their notion of “philosophical affinity rather than equivocality”. Indeed, it has been suggested that reflexive activities concerning selection of a particular approach in lieu of alternatives is a fundamental facet of any research strategy (Alvesson and Sköldbberg, 2017).

2.1.1 THE OPTIONS AT HAND

Methods selected, as previously noted, are framed within the philosophical stance one elects to embrace. This sub-section will consider the traditionalist stalwarts in the modern study of science namely positivism and interpretivism. Whilst it is recognised that these are not the only options available they have been referred to as the dominant forms of both orthodoxy and heterodoxy in scientific philosophy (Gorski, 2013).

Positivism, the most widely applied approach, assumes the orthodox narrative stemming back to the conceptions proposed of the scientific world by the “Vienna Circle” group of researchers whom were driven by two fundamental pillars: firstly, the belief that knowledge is established through experience and secondly, that logical analysis through symbolic logic permits philosophical clarification both in terms of assertions and challenges. Positivism is a projection of the underlying as-

sumptions of the natural scientist who seeks unequivocal law-like generalisations from the objective collection of data relating to the continuous conjunction of events which must be accessible to the senses from an observable social reality (Hume, 1978). The idea is postulated that a small number of governing principles can describe a broad range of phenomena and that these definite rules can be confirmed or falsified via means of hypothesis generation and empirical testing of cause-effect relationships (Joullié, 2016). It is presupposed that if something is to exist then it must have the capacity to be both seen and instrumentally measured either via direct or indirect means.

Interpretivism, on the other hand has foundation based upon the perceived shortcomings of the proposed true scientific approach spawning from the sociology of German hermeneutics and their notion of *Verstehen* (understanding). Post-modernistic scholars questioned the use of such quantitative and statistical analysis by the positivist on the grounds of its conceived lack of applicability towards a domain that is inherently dissimilar from that of a material world. This scholarly body believed that the goals of both *Geisteswissenschaften* (mental science) and *Kulturwissenschaften* (cultural science) was the search for understanding and thus differed from *Naturwissenschaften* (natural science) that instead pursues scientific causal explanation or *erklären* (Schwandt, 1994). Scholars within this school of thought developed a strand of thinking imparting that social actors occupy an important role in the construction of reality which is facilitated through dialectical, historical and linguistic means (Wachterhauser, 1986). Interpretivism therefore embraces an attribution of meaning and conceptual representations of social entities whereby knowledge generation can derive from both intrinsic and extrinsic sources (Packard, 2017).

2.1.2 THE DIFFERENTIATION OF RESEARCH PHILOSOPHIES

An analytical engagement of these philosophies in relation to their suitability for a given investigative thesis allows for the formation of an ontological and epistemological posture that not only adheres to personal research beliefs (axiological assumptions) but also is overtly conveyed and thoroughly thought through ensuring that problems associated with opacity and arbitrary selection are adverted. In accordance, discussion will now turn to the articulation of these three discerning features (ontology, epistemology and axiology) (Saunders et al, 2016). Two main emanating philosophical dimensions within entrepreneurship, and indeed at the broader level of business management,

research have been identified as those of objectivism and subjectivism (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). These philosophical beliefs are positioned at opposing ends of a continua representative of a useful framework through which analysis of differences can be effectively observed (Figure 2.1).

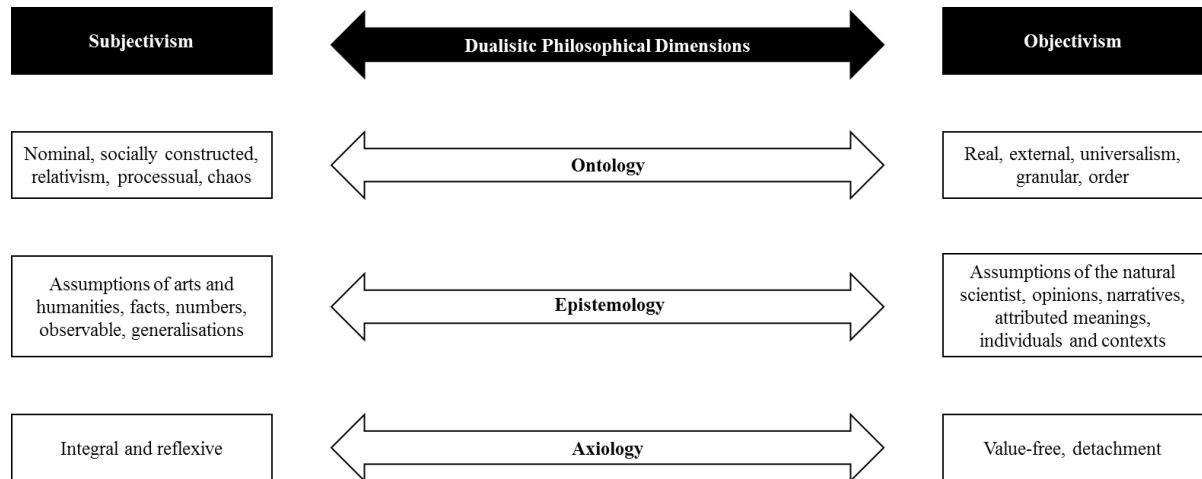


Figure 2.1 A duality of philosophical beliefs

Ontology, which is in reference towards the axiomatic way in which we perceive the nature of reality (Burrell and Morgan, 1979; Guba and Lincoln, 2005; Saunders et al, 2016), involves concentrating on how reality is constructed which imparts a resulting impact upon what is conceived to be knowable. An objective view is closely aligned to the positivist who makes a clear separation between the observer and reality (Crotty, 1998), with reality being conceived as a concrete entity (Morgan and Smircich, 1980). Thus, present is the acceptance of realism believing that there is in existence one true social reality of which all individuals experience.

Objectivism withholds the epistemological principle that research should report impartial and real conclusions in a generalisable manner. This is predominantly done via the ambition to establish a positive science involving the collection, and measurement of, factual data. The object and observer are independent and thus dualistic which pertains to practical descriptions of phenomena as can be witnessed in many of the economic approaches to the study of entrepreneurship that have a profound tendency to negate the agentic nature of the individual (Pittaway, 2005). In relation to the final discernable feature, namely axiology, proponents of the objectivist view will always try to isolate their own personal values from the research that they carry out so as to avoid contaminated conclusions.

However, in reality it is questionable as to the possibility to achieve this pure and somewhat utopian separation (Saunders et al, 2016).

Subjectivism, on the other hand is located at the other end of the continuum and adopts a contextually embedded outlook articulating that it is the interactive activity occurring between both the object and observer that creates reality (Saunders et al, 2016). From a very much anti-positivist or post-modernist angle perceptions of social actors influence their actions and cannot be separated from the context in which they are located. A subjective ontological stance asserts the belief that multiple realities exist and that these are dependent upon interpretive mechanisms unique and inherent to the individual themselves (Morgan and Smirch, 1980). In embracing this perspective, a nominalist approach ensues whereby external reality is regarded as unstructured with the names, concepts and labels allocated to it by the individual establishing its structural form. Epistemologically speaking, the subjectivist is driven by the desire to acquire phenomenological insights a complete contrast to the positivism of the objectivist. What's more, the subjective researcher is truly embedded in the research process in that they cannot find detachment between their own personal values and the research that they carry out thus axiologically their values have strong influence on their methods. Certainly, in true form, subjective or interpretivist philosophies are absent from the contemporary entrepreneurship domain but there have been recent calls to action for its study via such means (Packard, 2017).

2.1.3 THE DISCUSSION OF PARADIGMS

The provocative and vastly impactful previously cited contribution of Burrell and Morgan (1979) in their work entitled "Sociological Paradigms and Organizational Analysis" which garnered inspiration from Kuhn (1962) afford three overriding informational insights towards the importance of taking heed of such meta-theorising upon the construction of entrepreneurial and organizational research. Firstly, by confronting the issue of philosophy overtly they placed a much needed emphasis on the importance of their role within investigative processes, secondly and in-so-doing, they conveyed the complex nature of research within the organisational domain, and finally, their lines of articulation have also helped to increase appreciation surrounding the notion of paradigms and how they vary in degrees of conduciveness towards certain types of knowledge. In efforts to synchronise

ongoing debates at the time Burrell and Morgan (1979) produced a matrix that classified the main underlying differences amongst philosophies into four different research paradigms (Figure 2.2).

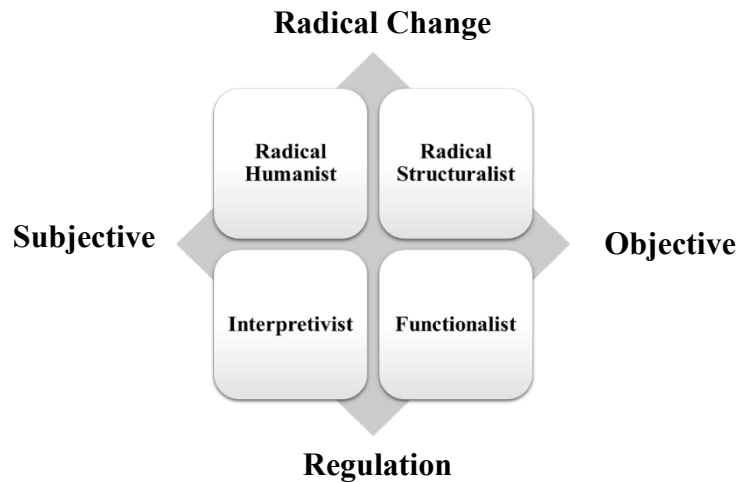


Figure 2.2 Burrell and Morgan's (1979) research paradigms

These paradigms, which were defined as those fundamentally differing sets of assumptions and perspectives that undergird the philosophies of various groups of researchers found location through their degree of affinity along two dimensional continua. Their importance in our understanding of research is paramount as each paradigm has a differentiated frame of reference which by consequence ends in the production of distinct methods to build theory (Gioia and Pitre, 1990). The dimensions provide a mechanism through which we can distinguish amongst the philosophies within the management and entrepreneurship field the first of which being that afore-discussed: subjectivity versus objectivity represented on the horizontal axis.

The analysis afforded by Burrell and Morgan (1979) determined that in addition to this objective-subjective dualism there also existed one of regulation versus radical change (the vertical axis). These two distil extremities are concerned with the nature of society differentiating from one another through their political or ideological inclinations: regulation referring to the questions surrounding social maintenance, actuality and the status quo, and radical change towards structural conflict, potentiality and extreme changes (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). The matrix, containing both dimensions

provides visual representation towards each of the four different paradigms underwriting features whilst also determining the theory they have the potential to build. We can observe that the functionalist intellectual terrain aligns closely with a regulated objectivism, an approach that is typified by its rationalism and the creation of generalisable models that operate within existing structures due to their suggested universalism. This paradigm is acknowledged as the most predominantly used (Saunders et al, 2016) and is enacted through largely deductive measures with appropriate theoretical hypotheses generated and tested against statistically derived data. In contrast, the interpretivist paradigm is oriented towards the conscious of the individual who participates as opposed to observes and the subjective meanings that they attribute to life as it is experienced. The interpretivist paradigm does however similarly adhere to the same functionalist ideals of stability and regulation whilst focusing much more on the irrational.

The first of the final two quadrants deals with the radical structuralist who accepts objectivism and the notion of conflict and radical change. Theory within this ideal set endeavours, through a process of refinement and challenge, to comprehend and critique existing mechanisms within real structural relationships served with the ambition of generating transformational change (Heydebrand, 1983). The second and final quadrant, the radical humanist, still embraces this concept of radical change via means of a critical outlook however from a much more subjectivist perspective focusing upon why social realities are constructed at the taken-for-granted or deep-seated level. The social world in this regard is transformed via means of cognitions and consciousness.

With this brief consideration of each paradigm and what form of knowledge they can, and seek to, create, one would be forgiven the assumption that all that is left is the simple selection of one such approach. This straightforward interpretation however is not the case. Burrell and Morgan (1979) in their original address highlighted the incommensurability of each of the four quadrants suggesting that if one paradigmatic position was adopted then the likelihood that even one more of the resulting three would be appreciated by the researcher was all but unlikely, if not impossible. Withstanding this attempt towards coherence through the perception of mutual exclusivity, acknowledgement nonetheless, was afforded to comparable characteristics of each through the employment of the term contiguous but ultimately each was viewed as a distinct entity. This contentious proclamation of incompatible meta-theoretical assumptions has led to the evolution of a body of literature that has

ebbed and flowed in warlike fashion of its consideration of paradigm combinative possibility (or indeed impossibility) with no apparent agreed upon resolution to conflicting ideologies in immediate sight (Tadajewski, 2009). This is an important consideration in development of methodology and the decision to position ourselves within a given meta-philosophical grouping which can largely be construed as dependent upon as to how we perceive their boundaries: impenetrable, permeable or indeed disposable.

In support of Burrell and Morgan (1979) and their protectionist stance of the incommensurable nature of paradigms various other scholars (Jackson and Carter, 1991) have promoted this concept of diversity and emancipation. Contrasting others however (Donaldson, 1988; Pfeffer 1993) petition for synthesis through a much more integrative or unifying approach to contain the impact of domain fragmentation and paradigm “apartheid” (Donaldson, 1988, p31). A third cohort advocate a pluralistic outlook to the debate seeking to enhance communication across boundaries due to their widely recognised commonalities (Hassard and Keleman, 2002; Weaver and Gioia, 1994; Wilmott 1993). Their quest is the promotion of a multi-paradigmatic approach rejecting both the ideas of isolationist incommensurability and integration thus refuting the belief that concurrent study enacted within multiple paradigms in a given temporal period is impossible. Additionally, some scholars (Deetz, 2009) have even suggested that a more advantageous direction would be the dissolution of the concept of paradigms altogether instead in its place inserting the idea of discourses given the idiosyncrasy associated with research goals.

Withstanding such complexities and debates the valence of Burrell and Morgan’s (1979) contribution towards the consideration and allowance of meta-theoretical approaches in research strategy cannot be understated. Although consensus as to the exact conditioning boundaries and functional usability has not yet been reached the notion of paradigms has withheld a prominent position within the large majority of business and management research (Shepherd and Challenger, 2013). This has also stimulated investigation concerning the use of paradigms within the specific field of entrepreneurship (Grant and Perren, 2002; Pittaway, 2005; Savage and Black, 1995).

The perspective of paradigms in the current thesis, recognising that Burrell and Morgan’s (1979) matrix is a somewhat overly-simplistic description is that communication can occur across borders or research groups (Wilmott, 1993) as it is my own personal view and somewhat reflective of

Bhaskar (2013) that scientific endeavor is a product of, and is also reliant upon, creative social interactions and therefore permeability exists. However, the mechanistic structures that it detects are in a priori operation be them discovered or not, the notion of “existential intransitivity”. This type of mutual collaboration can create support that can ensure a greater depth of understanding towards the process of intentional dynamism.

2.1.4 TOWARDS A PHILOSOPHY FOR THE PRESENT THESIS

Is it therefore not possible to reconcile the dualistic divides and unyielding traditions? Entrepreneurship is characterised by a complex inter-mingling of structure and agents (Mole and Mole, 2010) with the intentional stance to engage in this process following suit. If we elect to assume an either or focus we are doing the discipline a large disservice. With such aspirations we are baited to discard “Kuhnian” incommensurability and venture into more pragmatic territory engaging in thought processes “beneath the correlation coefficients” (Jones, 1995 p124). A middle ground is therefore searched for and found between positivistic and post-modernistic ideals in the philosophical posturing of CR. CR condones a realist ontological position whilst simultaneously epistemologically erring towards a more interpretive view and thus it largely escapes the suggested naivety of the somewhat extremist assumptions of the realist or naturalist (Mingers, 2004). In essence critical realists are in acceptance towards the belief that the world exists beyond our interpretations however our capacity to identify it is influenced by socially constructed and fallible perceptions. Indeed, it is this equivocal nature of knowledge that provides retort to a solely socially constructed world (Sayer, 2004).

We are bereft of a unifying framework that can provide definitional clarity as to what exactly CR is, however from a dialectic perspective encompassing similarities can be detected through its epithets, their shared commonalities, and their fundamental tenets. Historically, the genesis of CR stemmed from various extensions and additions to the common-sense realism of the 19th century (Figure 2.3). It was conceived by the search for an alternative towards the dogmatic assertions of positivism that led way towards a concerted and collaborative effort to establish more appropriate and satisfying meta-assumptions.

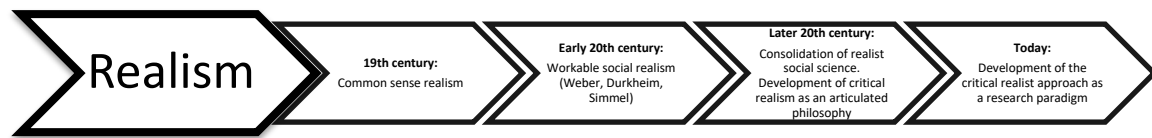


Figure 2.3 Historical evolution of critical realism (Adapted from Ackroyd 2005)

Positivism, as has been previously depicted is enduring and upholds the natural sciences as the touchstone for all knowledge, to be proven rational it is proposed that it must be scientifically and empirically verifiable. In this manner knowledge cannot be garnered beyond empiricism, bounded by experience and logic, all acting as impositions which outweigh rationally derived idealistic facts (Hume, 1978). This positivistic notion of science was confronted by copious amounts of criticism from an ontological standpoint by scholars including Bhaskar (2013) and Harré (1975) whom lamented that universal laws were not an appropriate metaphor for science however they acclaimed that it is the causal powers, structures and mechanisms that are of interest.

The ontological challenge was undergirded by the realisation that the closed world created within experimental settings is inherently different from the real and open one existent on the outside. This articulation further resonates in the complex, dynamic and open-ended characterisation of entrepreneurship whereby realistic closure of the system may prove difficult and in many cases it is simply not plausible. What's more, we have seen great degrees of success in the study of attitudes, beliefs and intentions in reference to their predictive power therefore these invisible cognitive states are in existence independent from the labels attached. Following on from this the proposed resolution postulated was that laws were not the ultimate objects of science however it is casual powers, mechanisms and structures that within circumstantial conditions produce law like outcomes.

From this positioning an independent objectivity is accepted and so too the partiality of the truths that can be unearthed, an indication of a degree of realism in regard to the content and the subsequent accuracy of knowledge we can potentially gain. Different socio-material mechanisms within open systems will interact creating distinct results and it is these interactions and outcomes relating to the entrepreneurial agent and the entrepreneurial process that appeal the most to the current thesis. Potential, nascent and new entrepreneurs interact with materialistic structures that have causal pow-

ers that may not be explicitly observed, powers that are socially embedded and contingent ensuring that the decisions agents take will not always be based on symmetry of information and context. Such situational transience affords the potential for a range of idiosyncratic agent needs, desires and motivations from the multiplicity of meanings formed (Gulati and Srivastava, 2014).

Relevant to the study of the cognitive element of intent Bhaskar (1979) conveyed that an individual's reasoning can serve as cause towards change. Here we take a non-physical object in the form of a cognition (however it is conceded that our cognitive functioning is also a physical resource) as having the capacity to establish change. Sayer (2004) however informs that the causative potential of reasons is largely associated with how well that they are understood. Individuals will construe different understandings of what surrounds them and thus a constant conjunction of events may not proceed, nonetheless causative potentials remain. Drawing on this, reasons for intending to engage in entrepreneurial behaviours need to be understood in relation to their structural specificity which is by no means a trivial undertaking given their ambiguous composition (Sayer, 2004). In sum, the effects of activated powers are context and agent dependent.

Agents or individuals are endowed with a collection of complex dispositions or powers that remain in potentialised form enduring transfactually. Taking the possible entrepreneur as the agent we witness these dispositions through various physiological, psychological and socio-relational attributes. Humans are not pre-set, they engage in tasks and actions to varying degrees after a recursive process of ideation, initiation and execution. For the entrepreneur their disposition to conceive innovative and creative ideas is of critical importance towards their establishment of intent and subsequent taking of entrepreneurial action. Potentiality however is not sufficient, this disposition must be exercised, perhaps through attendance of a business creation course or a discussion with a current entrepreneur, that in combination act as a trigger to the latent power. Finally, the power will be actualised when the desired effect, i.e. intent, is generated and through this a factual outcome can be observed. Indeed, if individuals were bereft of such powers in conjunction with the powers of other entities there would be very little purpose in the current thesis.

Fleetwood (2005) introduces us to his notion of mechanisms referring to a combinative grouping of causal factors that when configured in specific ways generate emergent properties that cannot be found within the preceding constructive factors. This signifies an irreducibility which permits the

formation of typical methods of behaving or in other words tendencies. Open systems restrict isolated tendencies (or forces) to act factually and therefore they operate and co-exist concomitantly with various others that meet in a given spatio-temporal point. For the study of entrepreneurial intent a range of sub-processes governed by sub-configurations (Fleetwood, 2005) exhibit numerous and distinct tendencies that will exert influence upon their establishment and stability. A diverse range of facilitating or inhibiting relationships will be occurring. For example, the tendency to engage in entrepreneurial behaviours may be counteracted by the tendency to gain educational certification or the tendency to increase the amount and rate of activities engaged in may augment tendencies to continue within the process.

This CR perspective is therefore a very appropriate fit for the current research piece as it affirms that to gain insights and clarification into the operating mechanisms of the intentional stance in entrepreneurship we are implored to engage in it's contextual examination. Intentions are exposed to the open environment (with the reverse also occurring) which will impact upon their functioning within the process as such it is imperative to frame the causal mechanisms in the context in which they operate (Ackroyd, 2004).

2.2 THEORETICAL POSITIONING

2.2.1 PROCESS THEORY

As Pettigrew (1990) did with strategic decision-making processes, I have the ambition to capture each individual's particular reality concerning the evolution of their EIs. Process has been previously defined as "a coordinated group of changes...an organized family of occurrences that are systematically linked to one another either causally or functionally...an integrated series of connecting developments unfolding in conjoint coordination" (Rescher, 1996 p38). In the accommodation of the insightful inputs that can be gathered from a CR perspective of science in terms of inter-relating causal mechanisms, configurations and powers, a process meta-physical outlook is also assumed given the interactive nature of entrepreneurship and human agency. In this way a version of Rescher's (1996) pragmatic utterings on primacy is assumed that concedes that process ideas act as constituents towards our understanding of things however this is not at the complete neglect of more Democritium

substantive thinking¹. Thus, affective relationships of powers, mechanisms and configurations manifest through process and their intrinsic organisations provide a potential locus of causality and emergence. This pragmatic realist approach aligns closely to CR permitting the acknowledgement of objective entities whilst simultaneously recognising the fallacious nature of our experiences and the knowledge that we can generate.

Entrepreneurial research and in particular EI research has for the most part been undergirded by a-social and a-processual variance approaches. Furthermore, cognitive science unlike most other sciences that have devoted interest towards “processism” (for example the substance of phlogiston was discarded for the process of combustion or *in situ* of the substance of caloric as heat the process of random kinetic motion was positioned) has lagged behind (Bickhard, 2004). Moving from substance to the juxtaposition of process has a number of consequences for the more classical default object focused stance that emphasises stasis. Building on Deleuzian thinking change becomes inherently continuous and the new norm, stability contrarily now adopts the role of requiring explication. Stability of EIs can be determined as either “energy well” in that they remain in stasis for prolonged periods of time or “far from equilibrium” requiring continual maintenance (Bickhard, 2011).

Previous intentional research has mostly focused upon substance assuming that if preceded by a number of antecedent variables the outcome of their presence is encountered, however, perhaps this is too simplistic negating large amounts of explicative information. Thus, it may be more appropriate to view intention as process construed as “far from equilibrium” given its multiplicity and its locus within an open-system of several inter-relating relationships that have the tendencies to influence emergence. Taken from this ephemeral perspective an individual organises a continuous flow of idiosyncratic entrepreneurial activities embedded within particular situational and relational contexts in attempts towards intentional maintenance. Different circumstantial options within these will be available for selection as the individual seeks to compensate for change. What’s more, recursive intentional maintenance may emerge through the capacity to enact intentional-maintaining activities within these nascent situations- maintaining intentional-maintenance (Bickhard, 2009). This is not dissimilar to the concept of dynamic capabilities (Tece, Pisano and Shuen, 1997) however it is con-

¹ Disagreement with substantive thinking has locus, for me, within the belief that stable things have the incapacity to change or do so only through time and space. Such substantializing is perhaps a somewhat misconceived perspective given the natural flow and fluctuations of things and events.

verted from a static independent variable towards one which is not only continuous but so too socially embedded.

For EIs to serve their function which I perceive as their ability to transmit desire (a perfuse and changeable concept) into action that creates value they need to be maintained whilst supported in the presence of other facilitating processes or sub-processes. They become highly interdependent upon these other occurrences whom themselves may be serving their own function in what becomes an extensively complex inter-connected web of relationships. How we presuppose the function of our EI will be influenced by its maintenance within the process as beliefs and indeed situations may be re-interpreted, re-evaluated and re-assessed throughout.

This thesis seeks to through the perspective of the individual agent answer “if” and “how” intentional stability is influenced over time incorporating their emergence, development, growth, transitional form, and perhaps even dissolution. Answers are sought through sequences of events and temporalities embedded within the entrepreneurial process as an individual actively participates in associated behaviours. Interactions with a multiplicity of generative mechanisms, each with their own powers and tendencies will be causative towards differing events that have the capacity to alter our intentions to continue in pursuance of value creation goals, be them personal, social, cultural or economic. Interestingly, Van de Ven (2007) instructs us that finding solution to “how” questions are without meaning unless accompanied by explication in the determination of causative powers. In this manner focus should be devoted towards Pettigrew’s (1990) notion of context, content and process, imploring a necessity to establish stable relativism in variance fashion via examination of both inputs and outputs.

2.2.2 THE MEANING OF PROCESS

Accordingly, it is important to clarify the meaning as to what the process of intentional change represents in the current thesis. Responding to this, it is viewed as the difference in form, intensity or state of an individual’s EI over a period of time which is largely reflective of the intermingling and liaisons of various internal and external events. This permits the identification of temporal differentials with noticeable divergence a signal of change. Van de Ven (2007) highlights two distinct ap-

proaches towards the study of such process thinking that maintain a prominent standing within literature:

1. Categories of concepts or variables related to actions and activities to determine “if” a change has occurred.
2. Narratives describing development and emergence of “things” answering the “how” questions.

The first of which typically pertains to studies underpinned by variance theorising (Figure 2.4) inspired by the desire to explicate given outcomes (dependent variables) derivative from independent variable sets. Independent variables are distinguishable concepts and can include various types of human agency; the environment; structural factors or performance. Through their operationalisation we are afforded the capacity to examine them as fixed entities whose attributes differ in terms of intensity. Van de Ven (p 4) describes these process models as “input-process-output” which serve as a mechanism facilitating the deconstruction of event sequences through temporal variations in pre- and post-entity states. In this manner, the measurement of independent variables is designated a pivotal position in the depiction of key influencing factors.

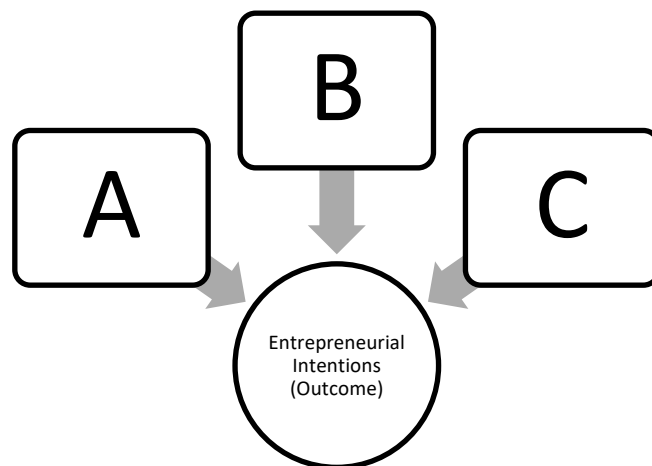


Figure 2.4 Outcome-driven variance model (adapted from Van de Ven (1992))

The second approach is acknowledged as the true process method whose origins stem from the seminal insights offered by Greek philosopher Heraclitus. Heraclitus accounted reality as a composition of meandering processes emerging from fluctuations within activities that in continuous fashion evolve creating ever-changing outcomes. Event sequences and the activities that contribute towards these are deemed descriptive in relation to how change occurs over time. From an incidental posture, attention is lent towards the unfolding of historical developments, and importantly, progression (sequencing and ordering of events, activities, actions etc) assumes the central focus as opposed to variables. Progressions need not be linear, they may evolve in unitary simplicity, multiplicity (parallel, divergent, convergent), cumulatively, conjunctively or recurrently (Figure 2.5).

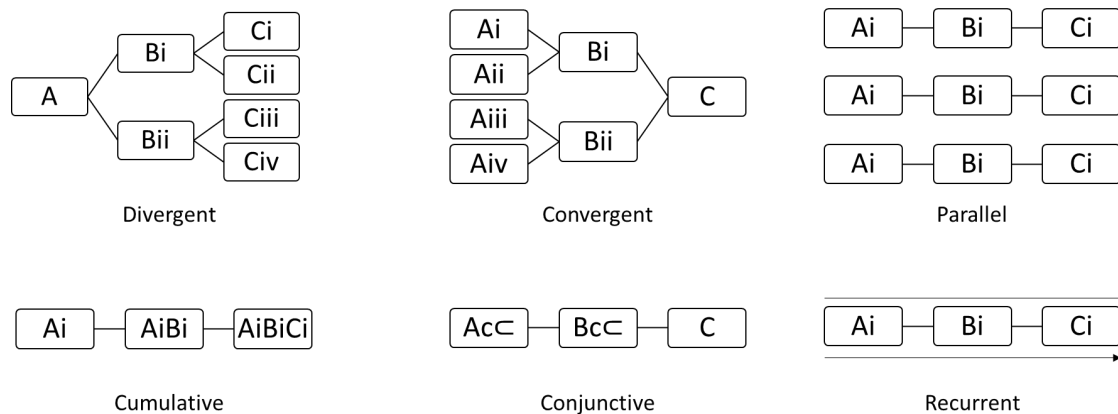


Figure 2.5 Extracted from Van de Ven (1992)

These two separate postures relating to process although distinct can be implemented conjunctively through framing the process in different, although complementary, theoretically based models each capturing and providing their own specific contributions to knowledge creation. For example, firstly, one may wish to generate an historical narrative through a more phenomenological orientated approach that can articulate lived experiences whilst setting the scene in terms of generalisations relating to the context. After this, it is then possible to transition into causally derivative methodologies to gain more robust inferences into occurrences based on formulate theory. Engaging in this process method permits the preservation of ordering and sequence of key incidents allowing social changes and evolutions to be more adequately theorised. In consideration of this and due to the complexity of the entrepreneurial process that transcends the explicative capacity of any one isolated model two

prominent theoretical process models representative of the two approaches aforementioned will serve as reference frames in this thesis within the different investigations.

2.3 THEORETICAL MODELS TO STUDY PROCESS

Research in entrepreneurship from a processual perspective has utilised various different conceptual models to undergird investigative efforts. Steyaert (2007) asserts that process studies are coming to the fore within the entrepreneurial arena and exposts no less than 13 conceptual lenses through which entrepreneurship has, and can, engage with this theoretical positioning. From these Assemblage Theory (AT) is selected and implemented in paper 2 whilst a new alternative approach to Azjen's (1991) psycho-social model of planned behavior (TPB) is used in paper 3 with ambition to gain a plurality of perspective that affords incomplete, however amplified, coverage of the topic at hand.

2.3.1 ASSEMBLAGE THEORY

First, to diminish the impact of any a-priori determinism and to embed the emerging nature of intentions within the entrepreneurial process a narrative is generated through a more interpretive case study approach. Here an attempt is made towards thicker description through the eradication of intention as a noun and replacing it with a verb: intending. This conceptual adjustment in terminology allows for the investigation of temporal transitions in intentional forms. AT is adopted in efforts to achieve this as it contrasts the reified generalities drawn from methodological individualism as rather than viewing a human agent as a discrete entity or subject that simply possesses passions or desires these sub-personal constructors are seen as emerging through relational encounters of becoming and assembling (Delanda, 2016; Deleuze and Guattari, 1980).

Assemblages are defined as;

“a multiplicity which is made up of many heterogenous terms and which establishes liaisons, relations between them...assemblage's only unit is that of co-functioning: it is a symbiosis, a 'sympathy'...alliances, alloys...not successions, lines of descent, but contagions, epidemics, the wind” (Deleuze and Parnet, 2007 p69)

and thus run in contrast to the grain of wholeness and totality associated with relationships of inter-iority. AT is reframed by Delanda from a mixture of incoherent thoughts and inconsistent semantic

conveyances into a coherent theoretical model applicable to social science. It is deemed that relationships of interiority, or those in which the various constituents of a whole are fused to create identity, are incapable of respecting the heterogeneity associated with said parts. Emphasis shifts to external liaisons whereby different parts do not become homogeneously merged but instead co-function via exogenous means maintaining their own particular functional capacities. These contingency relations are vividly depicted in Deleuzian thinking through the biological example of cross-fertilisation, a process that requires the alliance of heterogeneous species, namely flower and insect. Delanda adds more meaning and clarity to the boundary concepts of internal and external relationships, or strata and assemblages (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004), discussing these in terms of parameters with “knobs” the setting of which determines the degree of fixity or coding of a given ensemble. Taken in this manner, problematic utterances of essences can be avoided and the form of EI is perhaps best expressed as state-like dependent upon the extent to which its particular contextual constituents are parameterised or coded along a continuum ranging from homogenised to heterogeneous or through the parlance of AT, territorialisation and de-territorialisation (Figure 2.6). Interestingly, the composing parts of an assemblage are also considered to be characterised by this notion of parameters, essentially resulting in what Delanda (2016 p3) specifies as “assemblages of assemblages”.

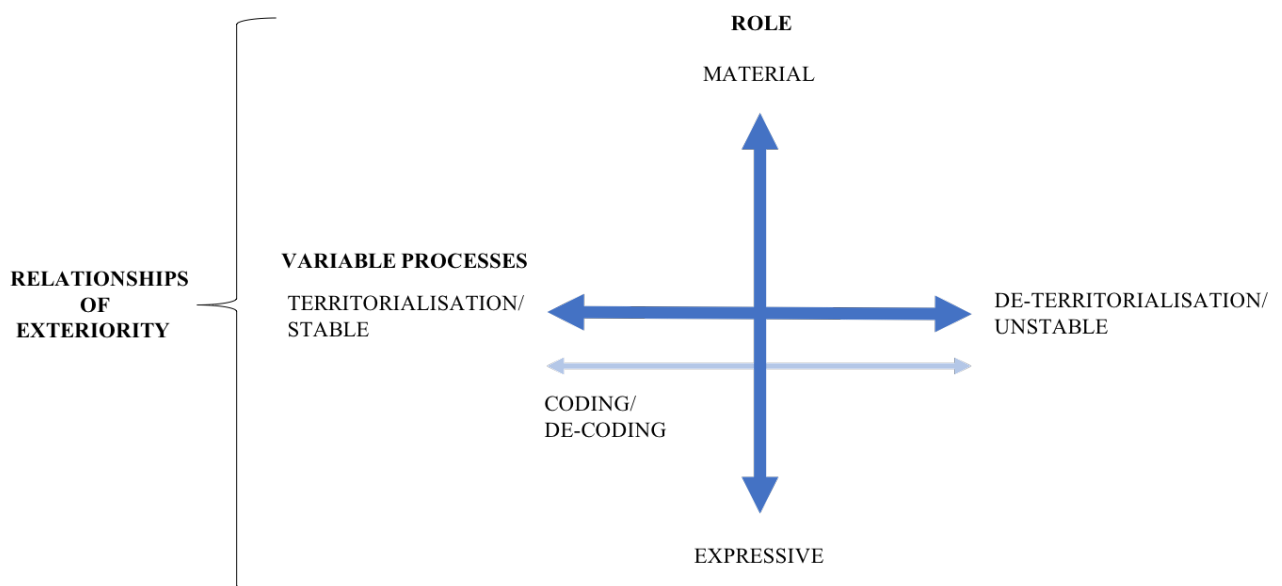


Figure 2.6 A schematic overview of Delanda's Assemblage Theory

In addition to reference towards parameterisation of variable processes through territorialisation and coding a second axis is introduced to help in the characterisation of assemblages, one that emphasises the particular role that the component parts may assume, either material or expressive. This dimension like that aforementioned is composed of two extremes however mixtures can, and often do, occur as it is perfectly plausible that one part can assume a material and expressive function derivative from the different sets of capacities that it withholds. Material functioning is explicitly observed in the EI domain via human bodies, their psychological mechanisms and the physical endeavor associated with their evolution including the many social interactions that emerge between the entrepreneur and their networks. Expressive roles on the other hand are witnessed through linguistic and symbolic forms such as the conversations we engage in and the content in which we convey. However, Delanda (2006) cautions us towards the reduction of expressivity to mere language and symbols identifying various other modes of transmission exemplified through actions, bodily expressions, affect, desires, reputations and identity legitimacy.

The potential and tendency of the particular combinative capacity of assemblage components are particularly important and when realised allow for the manifestation of a capacity that could not previously be derived by the functions of any one part ultimately highlighting the irreducibility of the theoretical construct (parts may be detached and maintain their own capacity). If, however, this potential capacity does not manifest it is termed virtual creating a space of possibility from which to function that is reflective of the individual's historical development (Delanda, 2016). There is an adamant refute to both the micro- and macro- reductionist postures that in the context of entrepreneurship either ebb in favour of the rational agent or social determination which is achieved through acceptance of emergence and relationships of exteriority. We are implored therefore to consider the individual and their own subjective and personal sub-components in a serious manner (Delanda, 2016). Indeed, the exogenous associations between an individual's material sense organs and their expressive sense impressions can give rise to ideas and intention to act contingent upon the content of evolutionary and experiential pathways.

This historically driven perspective helps in the location of the causal mechanisms in AT. It goes beyond the linear notion of "same cause, same effect" and its misleading postulations of if A, then B must follow by necessity. Delanda (2006, p20) articulates what he terms as a "productive" causality

whereby A would cause the production of B, thus negating the implicative causality in the case of the former. Assemblages are much more complex entities and thus require additional non-linear forms that take into consideration thresholds of affective potentiality. External causes may therefore act as a catalyst impacting upon the inner processual operations of the heterogenous parts and importantly may result in different events refuting the aforementioned linear “same cause, same effect” postulation. A second form of non-linear causality is also conveyed referred to as “statistical causality” (p 21) that challenges the certainty which emboldens law-like postulations that if A then always B. Instead, grandioso claims are met with the retort that in open systems with numerous complex and contingent relations it is impossible to say with the utmost certainty that, for example, “the smoking of cigarettes causes cancer” as other impacting forces may intervene such as diet and physical activity levels. Instead, all we can propose is that there is an increased probability of a particular effect.

AT in its full articulation by Manuel Delanda, therefore provides the theoretical model to which process is addressed within paper 2 on the grounds that liaisons of associated groupings of heterogenous events and processes have potentials to evoke effects upon intentions considering both materialistic and discursive elements. From this, individuals can be perceived as assemblages of personal artefacts including their habits, skills and indeed intentions, that coalesce with one another and additionally so too other human, social, institutional, regional and national assemblages. Greater explanations can be gained as to what kinds of combinations or relations are involved in the production and maintenance of intentions within particular contexts.

2.3.2 THE THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOUR (TPB)

Paper 3, is undergirded by the theoretical articulation of Azjen’s (1991) psycho-social TPB and the study of non-linear outcomes or events derivative from adaptive transitions (dissonance between desired, expected and current states) and the tensions that co-evolve thereafter. This causative theoretical model posits that action can be effectively predicted through intentions and builds upon Fishbein and Ajzen’s (1975) original Theory of Reasoned Action that articulated the antecedent influence of salient information towards behaviour. Essentially, behaviour is perceived as a function of both an individual’s desirability and controllability.

Beliefs form the core foundation of Azjen's (1991) TPB which extends the notion of reasoned action through its functioning across three predominant planes of belief, the first of which are attitudinal beliefs that act as sources of information concerning perceptions of the likely consequences of engaging in a particular behaviour. Importantly, these emergent attitudinal beliefs then interact with and influence attitudes towards the given behaviour either making it more or less attractive. Attitudes are therefore reflective of outcome expectancies and subsequent favourability judgements. These evaluative mechanisms have the capacity to change based on confrontation with object behaviours, such as entrepreneuring in the current thesis, as attitudes are constructed and modified through lived experiences.

Secondly, normative beliefs that consider expectancies of referents including the self and others also assume a prominent position as these result in the formulation of subjective norms that can create desires to either conform or non-conform to what can be determined as the generally acceptable or unacceptable. Here, inclinations to fulfil normative behaviours through compliance are key in subjective norm formation. Finally, beliefs related to one's capacity to control certain factors that can either assume the function of promoters or inhibitors to a particular behavior materialise in the form of control beliefs based on perceived difficulty levels or in other words an individual's perceived behavioural control (PBC) (entrepreneurial self-efficacy in the current context). This perception of control serves as a proxy variable in the absence of the measurement of actual control of a behavior (Ajzen, 2005).

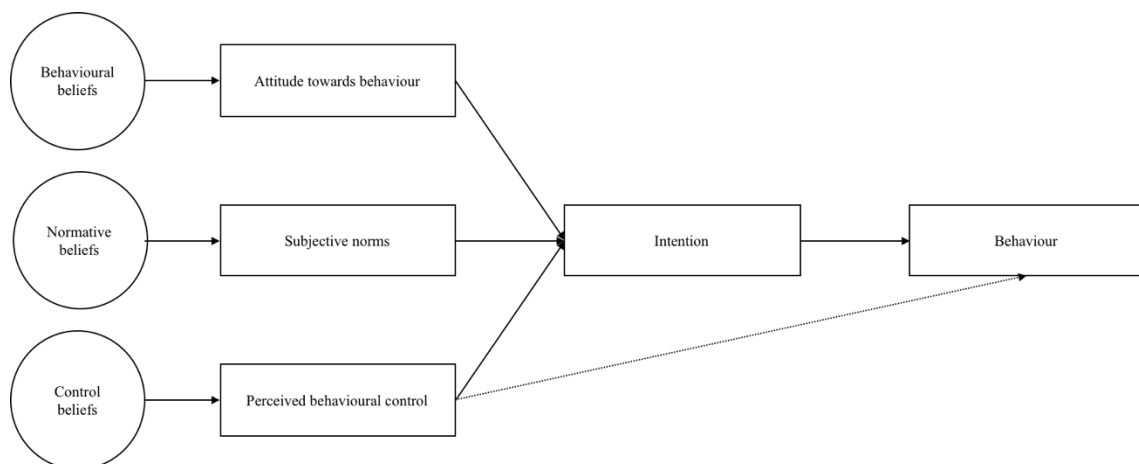


Figure 2.7 Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour

The interaction of these three emergent and nested proximal cognitive constructs (Figure 2.7) which follow on from precursory distal beliefs manifest in the production of intentions that function as a transmitter to actual behaviours. Thus, intentions act in full mediation of attitudes, subjective norms and PBC under conditions typified by high degrees of volitional control (Ajzen, 1991). However, as the volitional composition of a behaviour begins to decrease then it is suggested that so too does the mediation capacity of entrepreneurial intentions on PBC with a more direct link to behaviour being observed.

This theoretical framework has been accompanied by large amounts of academic criticism as it seeks to abridge parsimony with thoroughness of conceptual coverage. Failure to elaborate on subconscious factors (Sheeran, Gollwitzer and Bargh, 2013); the influence of emotive responses (Conner, Gaston, Sheeran and Germain, 2013) and its static coverage of variables (McEachan et al 2004) have all been cited. Sniehotta, Pesseau and Araujo-Soares (2014) reiterate the tendency of the model to neglect time and change and thus suggest that it does not account for modifications in cognitions. On the contrary, Azjen (2015) refutes this claim through postulating that it is ignorance through lack of comprehensive engagement with explicated models that produce such allegations as feedback loops based on reactive responses are oft-included in the TPB.

Taking this into consideration alongside the numerous potential intervening variables from the time of intentional conveyance and behavioural engagement that act as a potential source of change, and the additional complexity associated with emergence of different belief formations derivative from hypothetical and actual behaviours (Azjen, 2012), paper 3 will explicitly include the potential regulatory impact of engagement in actual entrepreneurial modules and workshops that increase information availability. Another key introduction with ambition to negate limitations of model stasis is its longitudinal application as the cognitive antecedents are measured over a time-span of 4 months on two different occasions. This largely correlates with a hybrid variance style process model that incorporates both elements of structural change and time looking at pre and on-going values. It is therefore imperative that time assumes a pivotal role in the current investigation of EIs.

2.3.3 TIMING AND CHANGE

As the study is both descriptive and explanatory based the undergirding desire exists to gain knowledge surrounding the continuous, dynamic, non-linear and recursive iteration of activities, assemblages, events and personal characteristics, which by function and necessity require the ability to generate comparisons regarding the effects that a selection of variables exert upon one another over a temporal period. Time becomes an integral component and a clear understanding of what it represents is required. Simply put, to build effective and quality process theory narrow, boundary functioning conceptualisations do not suffice, instead time must explicitly withhold an integral role in all theorising (George and Jones, 2000). Indeed, I myself have been guilty of it's compression into a descriptive variable through the somewhat vague elucidation that entrepreneurship is a dynamic process. Time is a critical component of human life and is a concept which can be interpreted in many differing ways from it's categorisation as either objective or subjective and as either continuous or occurring in episodes (Orlikowski and Yates, 2002).

As aforementioned, it is not stasis that is of interest however dynamic change and evolution of EIs, with this, emphasis is placed towards the realisation that things change over time as opposed to because of it's mere presence (Pitariu and Ployhart, 2010) with temporal absoluteness representing a convenient metric scale to frame transitions (Bizzi and Langley, 2012). A key decision therefore arises as to how best to capture temporalities, as they happen or through historical recollections of key agents. A large array of studies rely on retrospective accounts in which key outcomes are a priori knowledge. Van de Ven (2007 p11) highlights the advantageous nature of this exposte approach which ensures that a bigger picture can be generated that allows for greater depth of interpretations stating that "until we have the compass of the entire process, we often have no way of knowing what information is important and what is not".

Caution is urged however, not only due to potential filtering effects and entry of biases from cognitive recounts but also from an increased likelihood that ephemeral subtleties may go undetected that can emit key explicative powers. In contrast, real time data collection incorporates capture as events occur in a much more open-ended approach ensuring richness of information but is also accompanied with the paradoxical drawbacks of uncertainty in regard to the timing of outcome appearance necessitating large degrees of pragmatism (Bizzi and Langley, 2012). What is recommended by Van

de Ven (2007) therefore is initiation of observation in advance of known outcomes and ideally in real time as change unfolds in order to contend with short-lasting influencers.

However, in this academic offering there is embracement of the benefits derived from a trade-off between methods, recognising that different empirical investigations will profit from the employment of a mixture of both retrospective and real-time data collection (Leonard-Barton, 1990). This is perceived to be more advantageous given the possibility of gaining information concerning clear and substantial temporal change whilst also being alert to emergent nuances within the process.

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Intentions Resurrected: A systematic review of entrepreneurial intention research from 2014 to 2018 and future research agenda

ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurial intentions represent a frequently adopted theoretical construct implemented with ambition to help explicate an individual's transition from distal thoughts into more proximal entrepreneurial action. A large body of diverse and wide spanning literature is now evolving in this area recognising the importance of developing and nurturing initial ideas in hopes of facilitating their transfer into more tangible personal, social and economic value. Accompanying this increase in research attention is a continual necessity for structural ordering that can serve to both rejuvenate previous attempts at organisation and spur new and novel contribution to advance the field. Progress will be more effective if we are able to constructively build upon explicitly recognised common foci as opposed to disparate contribution. This current paper therefore seeks to afford an up-to-date thematic overview of entrepreneurial intention research via systematic means and in contemplation of previous classification efforts.

3.0 INTRODUCTION

As human-beings, we are constantly confronted with a range of different scenarios and contexts that require us to engage in a continuous flow of decision-making processes that more often than not are non-linearly distributed (March, 1994, Sarasvathy, 2001). These decisions are temporally embedded and are enacted upon contemplation of alternatives, expectancies and availability of time (Klapproth, 2008). In many circumstances the decisions we ponder are characterised by delays from commitment to outcome and appear to have great significance upon not just our own but so too the lives of many others. In the present review focus is afforded to one such decision, the desire to engage in entrepreneurially based behaviours that can have huge and ever-changing rewards or contrarily drawbacks in relation to psychological, social and economic outcomes whose degree of observational immediacy can alter subsequent attractiveness of choices made (Klapproth, 2008).

Contrived as a process entrepreneurship in many ways is a mindful contemplation based on values or abstract cognitive, affective and motivational structures (Brosch et al, 2018), thus at its very core is the notion of volitional decision-making embedded in the concept of intent (Krueger, 2017)². Entrepreneurial intention (EI) has built upon the seminal offerings of Bird (1988) who viewed it as a conscious antecedent to the action of business establishment and is contemporarily defined as a “self-acknowledged conviction by a person that they intend to set up a new business venture and consciously plan to do so at some point in the future” (Thompson, 2009 p676). It is therefore psychologically grounded placing concern upon future goals and actions (Van Gelderen, Kautonen and Fink, 2015; Virick, Basu and Rogers, 2015). Deemed functional to the transmission of ideas into action EIs are fundamental in gaining deeper insights into how the entrepreneurial process unfolds (Saeed et al, 2015) and previous reviews of the landscape have highlighted their increasing popularity and enrichment potentiality (Liñán and Fayolle, 2015).

The adoption of a theoretical base from the alternative field of social psychology, on the whole, has been successful in advancing robustness (Schlaegel and Koenig, 2014) however, with a wide-ranging variety of implementation settings and theoretical derivatives the canon of research which ensues has been portrayed as one which is susceptible to fragmentation and evolutionary divergence.

² It is accepted that not all entrepreneurial actions are intentional in nature as some behaviours enacted within the process could have resulted from moments of impulsiveness and spontaneity. However, the process, as a holistic concept can, in most cases, be argued to be preceded by intent.

Concept proliferation and adoption has ensured the continual affordance of modifications, extensions and blurring of boundary conditions which can lead to inconclusive findings (Krueger, 2017). Upon these revelations attempts have been made to provide some systemisation to the field with Liñán and Fayolle (2015) introducing us to a convenient framework based on citation analysis and the thematic content of the literature. From this, five key threads of research were identified namely core intention models, personal level variables, entrepreneurship education, context and institutions, and finally, the entrepreneurial process. Subsequent gaps for future endeavor were shared with ambition to create greater order to EI research however we remain ignorant of progress made to achieve such recommendations.

The current paper in similar fashion seeks better conceptualisation of the landscape via means of a systematic literature review (SLR) with focus on thematic content attempting to build upon and advance the necessary efforts of Liñán and Fayolle. It provides an extension in the form of an updated review of EI articles from the year 2014 to 2018 (inclusive). SLRs have a number of inherent benefits that can lead to the concomitant evolution of both discipline and understanding. Not only does such an undertaking enhance validity by a clear portrayal of the methodological steps taken (Denyer and Neely, 2004) it also increases rigour derivative from the interrelationships of evidence and research queries allowing for reasoned speculative inputs from the concise synthesis of accumulated knowledge (Wang and Chugh, 2014). Furthermore, alleviation of the somewhat more burdensome traditional practices entrenched in entrepreneurship studies that have the potential to reduce both scope and depth of study is realised (Fetscherin and Henrich, 2015).

Given the differing research designs, methods implemented and even suggested death of EIs (Krueger, 2017) a number of important and novel contributions are conveyed in an effort to revive the subject area. Firstly, from a solid systemised starting point Liñán and Fayolle have provided the grounds for the classification of a large myriad of foci into a comprehensive and parsimonious outlook. Through considering the extant literature it is possible to not only rejuvenate but so too determine the robustness of these groupings identifying whether new lines of inquiry have been opened. Secondly, a series of recommendations were put forward in attempts to advance the domain, through considering these in comparison with the contemporary state of the art we are able to synthesise

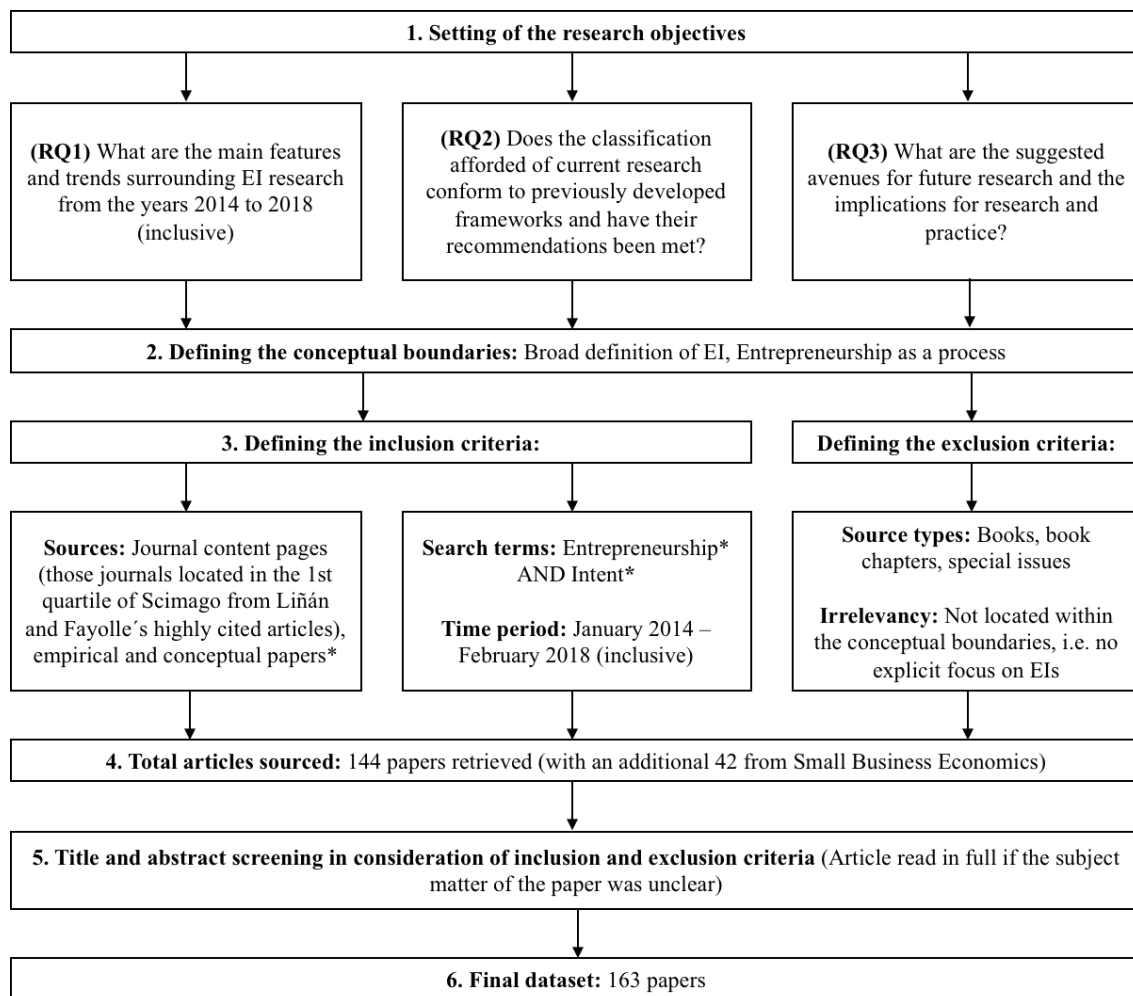
progress or lack thereof. The third and final contribution lays in the provision of a refreshed future research agenda with a number of implications for researchers and practitioners.

In summation, the research questions (RQs) undergirding the present SLR are: (RQ1) What are the main features and trends surrounding EI research from the years 2014 to 2018 (inclusive)? (RQ2) Does the classification afforded of current research conform to previously developed frameworks and have their recommendations been met? (RQ3) What are the suggested avenues for future research and the implications for research and practice?

The structure of the paper is as follows: the first section presents a detailed version of the methodological approach taken which is followed by the reporting of findings concerning themes and trends emerging from analysis of the literature (RQ1). Next, consideration is given towards how these themes relate and if they are in correspondence to those previously suggested (RQ2). Finally, from a critical perspective the main overall findings are discussed with implications, suggestions for future research and conclusions all being drawn (RQ3).

3.1 METHODOLOGY

Sometimes a short respite is required during the progression of a field of study that can afford the opportunity to take stock of past accomplishments and to re-assign new direction for future efforts (Low and Macmillan, 1988). This task is of critical importance and is met in the present review by adopting the research guidelines suggested by Denyer et al (2008) and Tranfield, Denyer and Smart (2003) through the implementation of a SLR. This versatile approach affords a robust and organised scientific procedure through an analytical framework that is not only replicable but so too transparent (Armitage and Keeble-Allen, 2008; Tranfield et al, 2003). Such endeavour permits effective and efficient synthesis whilst minimising potential biases (Tranfield et al, 2003) concerning the collective content of the field that otherwise could prove disparate and troublesome (Denyer and Tranfield, 2006). A sequential stage model is adopted (Figure 3.1) whose content is designed to improve the overall quality of the review process and the outcomes that can be derived (Mihalache and Mihalache, 2016).



*The Small Business Economics journal was also included at a later stage upon recommendation by an expert anonymous reviewer.

Figure 3.1 A summary of the SLR process

3.1.1 CONCEPTUAL BOUNDARIES

After the development of the three driving research questions the next task was to clarify the conceptual boundaries regarding EIs (Denyer and Tranfield, 2009). Withstanding the many benefits of a systematic review Wang and Chugh (2014) urge caution towards the limiting and constraining influence of its potential narrowing effect that has a tendency of becoming too rigid³. In recognition of this, the definition used for the explanandum which in our case is EI can be conceptualised narrowly and with specific reference to particular entrepreneurially based behaviours, such as, “I intend to grow the business” (Kozan et al, 2006), “I intend to exit my company” (DeTienne and Wennberg,

³ A systematic approach is perceived as a guiding procedure (Lee, 2009; Wang and Chugh, 2014) used to provide structure, not a rigidly prescribed set of instructions, therefore it presents an adaptable and useful tool to explicate the current landscape (Pittaway et al, 2004)

2016) or “I intend to internationalise” (McDougall-Covin, Jones and Serapio, 2014). Conversely, it can be positioned at the opposing end of the spectrum at a much more encompassing level such as “I intend to become self-employed” (Abebe and Alvarado, 2016). There are intermediary grounds to be acknowledged as that assumed by Krueger (2017) who deemed EI as “I intend to start a new business venture”. The current study in coherence with the ultimate aim of the review adopts the broader conceptualisation of “I intend to become an entrepreneur” given the ambition to explore and categorise new trends and applications of EI. Importantly entrepreneurship is defined as a process that can occur both within and outside a business and at differing levels (Davidsson, 2016; Stevenson and Jarillo, 2007; Steyaert, 2007). It is however imperative to recognise that these different conceptualisations have the potential to focus on different phenomena which can lead to various idiosyncratic outcomes so caution of interpretation is advised (Krueger, 2017).

3.1.2 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

To establish a comprehensive collection of EI articles (available upon request) various inclusion and exclusion criteria were developed (Appendix 1). Firstly, in relation to search boundaries focus was placed on academic journal articles only, other publication outlets including books, book chapters, conference papers etc., were occluded (Liñan and Fayolle, 2015). This ensured that the information provided was validated, with peer review acting as a proxy for quality and therefore the articles were accepted to be accompanied with greater levels of trust thus usability (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Bachrach and Podsakoff, 2005). Secondly, source restriction was enacted constructed from Liñan and Fayolle’s (2015) exposition of the most cited papers within the area during the time period 2004-2013. The outlets of these papers were identified and used to ensure a more manageable dataset size with only those located in the first quartile of the Business, Management and Accounting section of the Scimago journal ranks eligible for selection. This process confined sources to the following journals: The Journal of Business Venturing (JBV), Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice (ET&P), Journal of Small Business Management (JSBM), International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research (IJEBR), International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal (IEMJ), Education & Training (E&T), International Small Business Journal (ISBJ) and the Journal of Business Research (JBR) underpinning an aim to scrutinise sources that are of greater quality allowing for higher de-

degrees of accuracy and reliability in the conveyance of key themes in the domain. As aforementioned Small Business Economics (SBE) was added at a later stage during the process. Such restrictive selection of top-quality journals and those that are taken to be more sympathetic to the area provides a greater likelihood of a higher concentration and higher pertinency to EIs thus allaying a more contemporarily accurate reflection of the field.

Thirdly, a search of the content of these journals was conducted covering the time-frame from 2014 up to and including February 2018⁴. The title and abstract fields of interest consisted of the key words of Entrepreneurship* AND Intent* to increase the likelihood of including all articles within the conceptual boundaries. From this, a total of 144 journal articles were extracted. Of these, 23 were excluded as they failed to meet requirements on grounds of irrelevancy (i.e. not explicit focus on EI as a core theme) which was determined after having carefully read through the abstracts and were doubt did arise the article in its entirety. The final dataset accounted to 163 articles through the addition of 42 relevant publications sourced from the journal of SBE.

Manual coding of the articles following Pittaway and Cope (2007) was completed using the NVivo 11 software and consisted of identifying a number of pre-determined thematic classification constructs termed “nodes” which were derived and adapted from previous SLRs (Danese, Manfè and Romano, 2018; Wang and Chugh, 2014) (Appendix 2). These nodes included, “Research Context”; “Theoretical Perspectives”; “Hypotheses and Propositions”; “Methodology” (including unit, country, method of analysis, data collection, measures and sample); “Key Findings and Theoretical Contributions”; “Implications”; “Limitations”; “Suggested Future Research”; and “Key Definitions”. This coding procedure does have limitations especially in regard to the acceptance that not all nodes were explicitly stated or visible within articles and therefore some decisions relied upon the coder’s (which in this case was the author’s) own subject knowledge. This limitation was somewhat mediated through consultation with various prevalent academics within the field to counteract any ambiguities.

⁴ Although accepted as a relatively short period for a review similar periods have been observed in other fields e.g. health (Hemsley et al, 2018); education (Zhu, Sari and Lee, 2018) and Tourism (Weed, 2006), with the proliferation of articles in the area (163 publications) warranting a need for a structural ordering providing an intermediate checkpoint on which to address progress within the field. It has been suggested that decisions as to whether a SLR is in need of updating are largely based on the availability of new information that could potentially lead to a change in conclusions (Moher et al, 2008), certainly in the current case due to the sheer quantity of extant literature and the rate at which this is accumulating a necessity exists. Here, there is an attempt at prioritisation of critical questions in reflection upon previously suggested directions.

3.2 (RQ1) Literature Analysis: What are the main features and trends surrounding EI research from the years 2014 to 2018 (inclusive)?

This section outlines the key themes and trends of the literature that can be drawn from the 163 articles in relation to the classification nodes. As aforementioned NVivo provided a mechanism whereby each article was carefully read in full and through narrative coding via key nodes important content was able to be exhumed. One of these nodes, “Research Context” was used to develop the priority theme groupings emanating from the literature through consideration of the perceived fundamental subject matter and topical contribution of the papers. This resulted in a total of 8 higher order priority themes from which a number of secondary level topics spawned through the “Theoretical Perspectives” node (Table 2).

“Research Context” Priority Themes	“Theoretical Perspectives” (Secondary Themes)
Career Choice (13)	Family (5) Employment status (1) Demography (1) Experience (1) Influencers (1) Career Type (2) Work Environment (2)
Context (16)	Environment (12) Culture (4)
Corporate Intent (9)	Institutional (2) Identity (1) Family (1) Entrepreneurial Orientation (2) Strategy (1) Motivations (2)
Education (31)	Comparative (4) Content (4) Context (4) Demand (1) Gender (1) Individual (1) Outcomes (10) Programme Types (3) Proposal (2) Review (1)
Process (32)	Longitudinal (15) Growth (3) Conceptual (2) Exit intentions (7) Continuance (2) Re-entry (3)
Intention Models (27)	Additional Variables (16)

	Model Configuration (2)
	New Conceptual Models (7)
	Review (1)
	Test of model (1)
Individual (25)	Gender (6)
	Psychological (19)
	Sustainability (2)
	International (1)
Other (10)	Methods (1)
	Family (1)
	Individual (3)
	Reviews (2)

Table 2 Higher order priority themes in extant EI literature with sub-categories

The extensiveness of thematical coverage indicates an expansive interest in EIs. In reference to publication outlets and the dispersion of priority groups (Figure 3.2) the SBE journal has been the most active in the publishing of intentional studies with the IEMJ second, followed closely in third by the IJEER. Interestingly both the JBV and ET&P as a collective only contribute 14 articles to the area which is rather disconcerting given the perceived importance of EIs towards the entrepreneurship process. Evidently four overarching topics of attention dominate the contemporary field, namely, process, education, intention models and the individual. Each of these will now be considered in turn.

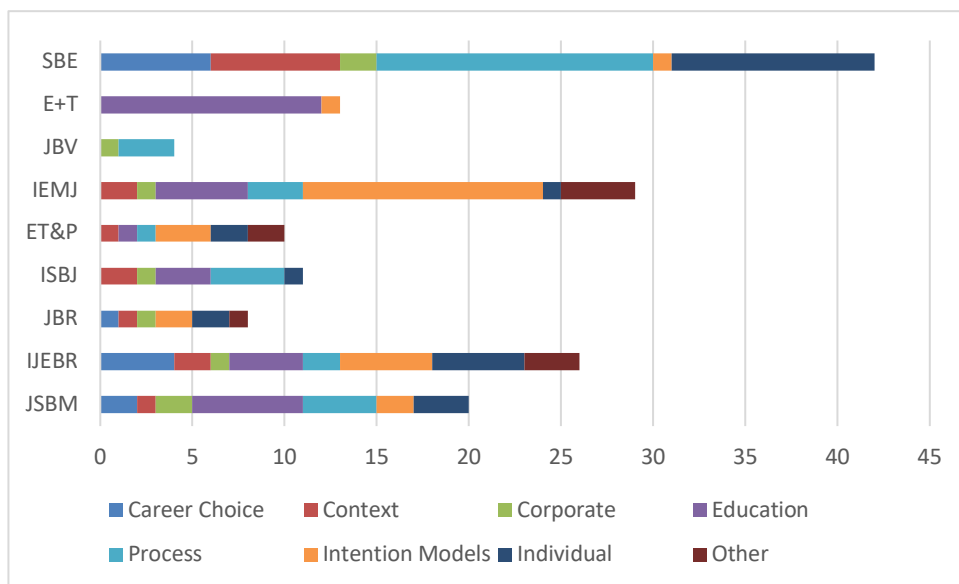


Figure 3.2 Publication outlets and priority themes

Firstly, studies in alignment with the contemporary interpretation of entrepreneurship and decision-making elect to place the facets of process at the core of their investigative efforts. There appears to be the accumulation of a tentative momentum in regard to a high-profile, relevant and extremely influential core theme which is represented by thirty-two articles. A selection of process research (Figure 3.3) lends its attention towards longitudinal methodologies, two of which provide stand-out contribution through depth of interest relating to the intention to action link whilst other publications fall short of the proposed longitudinal threshold of at least three waves of data collection (Chan, 1998). Van Gelderen et al (2015) through their contribution shed light on the apparent gap between intention leading to observable behaviours determining that self-regulatory mechanisms are a positive moderator of this linkage which not only signals the importance of gaining further information regarding potential moderators of the process but so too the counter-active effect of self-control upon volitional decision-making. Building upon this Gielnik et al (2014) demonstrated that a 30-month period was required to create a business for 55% of their participants resulting in almost half not translating their intent into action. This study entrusted us with the postulation that intent is not sufficient and action planning is also necessary to facilitate the transition.

Various theoretical frameworks have been employed temporally to help explicate the intentional phenomenon including an individual adaptation of the resource-based view, opportunistic costs (Mickiewicz, Nyakudya, Theodorakopoulos and Hart, 2017) and Action Phase Theory (van Gelderen, Kautonen, Wincent and Biniari, 2018). Other longitudinal studies rely on secondary sources of data such as Danish registry data (Hoffman, Junge and Malchow-Moller, 2015); the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) (Giotopoulos, Kontolaimou and Tsakanikas, 2017); the US Current Population Survey (Zhang and Acs, 2018) and the German Socio-Economic Panel (Caliendo, Fossen and Kritikos, 2014) that although can cover longer temporal durations are limited towards the intricacies of insights that can be summoned due to the lack of information and use of proxies that may not fully capture the concept of interest.

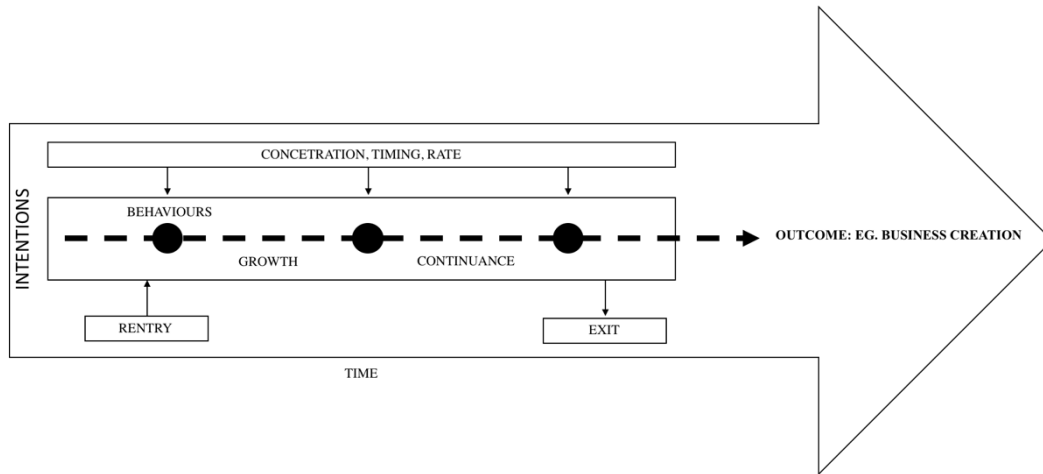


Figure 3.3 A self-constructed overview of the entrepreneurial process derived from literature

The final sub-groupings of the process category concern desires to continue within, grow, leave or re-enter the process. In reality, these papers deal with the study “of” process as opposed to “how” events occur and evolve. It is a contemporary area of which large numbers of researchers are beginning to take notice. Results convey that as we progress through the entrepreneurial journey nascent behaviors providing direct experience can either reaffirm or disconfirm our initial perceptions of entrepreneurial knowledge (Miralles, Giones and Gozun, 2017). Depending on the dissonance EIs are modified either favourably or in a disfavoured manner leading to a desire to continue or discontinue along the pathway. If we choose to exit the process a number of variables may intervene such as the impact of family support (Zhu, Burmeister-Lamp and Hsu, 2017) or emotional attachment (Kammerlander, 2016). One final article through the lens of Prospect Theory contrarily looks at what drives individuals to decide to re-enter the process concluding that entrepreneurial self-efficacy assumes a pivotal role (Hsu, Wiklund and Cotton, 2017).

The second most abundantly covered articles are those that are educationally grounded and are driven by the belief in the socio-economic potency of entrepreneurship and its capacity to be fostered through high quality pedagogies and experience (Balan, Maritz and McKinlay, 2017; Kuratko, 2005). They heavily populate E&T as we would expect as an educationally focused journal but they are also permeating through into many others such as the IEMJ, IJEBR and JSBM which is very promising. It is an area that has matured greatly throughout the previous two decades and as the

present review demonstrates continues to occupy a central position. The large majority of this grouping analyses outcomes in the form of intentional impact (ends) whilst a number centre upon more design-based components (means) (Figure 3.4).

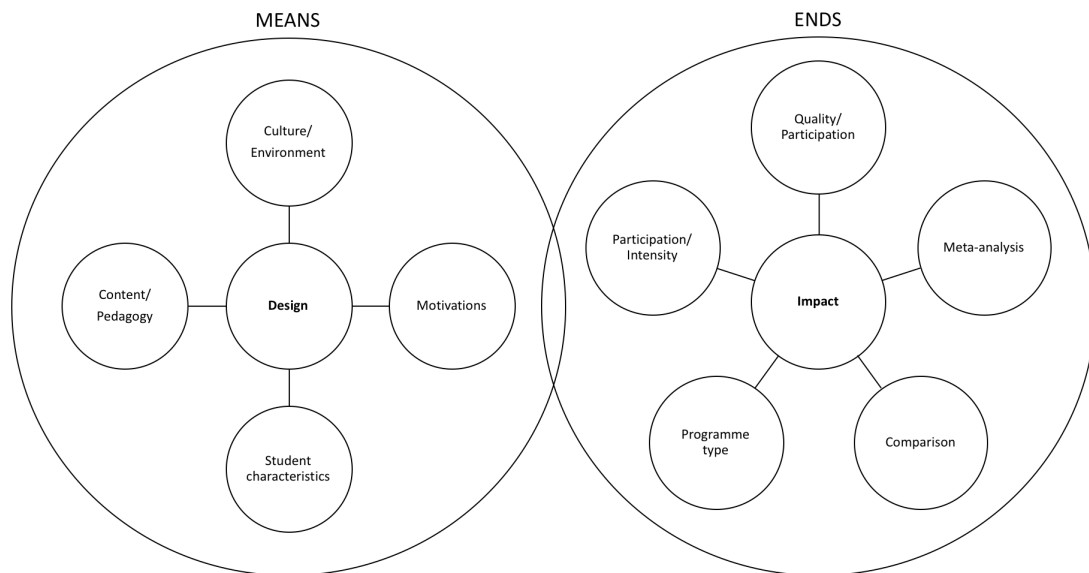


Figure 3.4 Educational intent research: an overview (self-constructed)

In their co-citation analysis covering the date range from 1991-2014 in search of the theoretical foundations of entrepreneurship education Loi, Castriotta and Di Guardo (2016) highlighted the importance of EI through its classification as the most influential of five core themes resonating from the area. Even with such invested interest findings have not provided the desired conclusiveness regarding the impact of education and educational programmes (EEP) on developing EI. For example, positive outcomes of EEP in the form of: future enrolment in entrepreneurial courses (Thompson and Kwong, 2016); increases in generic entrepreneurial skills (Storen, 2014); higher satisfaction ratings of participants (Chen et al, 2015); and increases in EI themselves either directly (Zhang, Duysters and Cloudt, 2014) or indirectly (Bae et al, 2014); have all been cited. However, contrasting others have failed to uncover such positive conclusions either discovering no significant influence (Camacho-Miñano and del Campo, 2017), a lowering of intentions (Ahmed, Chandran and Klobas, 2017) or even a significant negative effect of EEP on EI (Lima et al, 2015). This is in-line with Honig (2004) who postulated the confrontational nature of EEP research however within the

present review Bae et al (2014) through their meta-analysis evidenced a small and positive link. This observed conflict becomes a concern and is an apparent symptom of the differing conceptualisations of entrepreneurship as an educational construct.

The third prominent thematic topic was determined to be that of intention models. The level of interest in this theme is unsurprising as it is to be expected given the core theoretical contribution that such models afford to the field. In reality there have not been any great shifts in thinking and as consequence prevalence in attempts to gain deeper understandings concerning EI are embedded within the ever popular psycho-socio Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991) and largely correlated Entrepreneurial Event Model (EEM) (Shapiro, 1975). Variance models assume that a number of more proximal antecedent motivational variables have the capacity to not only influence but so too act as conduits to distal auxiliary constructs. To this end, additional variables such as creativity (Belló, Mattana and Loi, 2018); entrepreneurial knowledge (Roy, Akhtar and Das, 2017); social valuation (Shiri et al, 2017); an assortment of endogenous barriers, the exogenous environment (Trivedi, 2017); and anticipated ambivalence (Zapkau et al, 2015) have all been introduced in search of greater explication.

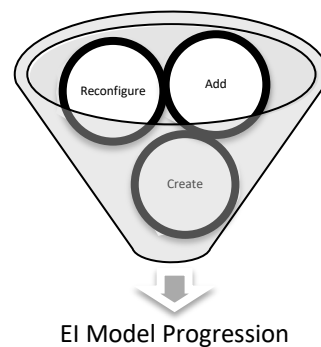


Figure 3.5 A self-constructed depiction of how progression of entrepreneurial intent models has occurred

A popular contemporary method is the reconfiguration of perceived proximal precursory constructs in efforts to examine their possible mediating and moderating effects. Findings have revealed many interesting considerations such as the moderating effects of attitudes towards entrepreneurship (ATE) and perceived behavioural control (PBC) towards the relationship between entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) and EI (Tsai, Chang and Peng, 2016); the perceived ability to search for opportunities acting as a mediator between risk aversion and EI (Zhang and Cain, 2017); and level of edu-

cation moderating the intentional goal-orientation link (Botha and Bignotti, 2017) which have all served to spur knowledge progression within the discipline. The addition of variables and modification of models (Figure 3.5) has an apparent increase in their predictive capacity with some reporting percentages from 41% (Roy et al, 2017) to higher values of 61.8%, 67% and 68.2% respectively (Trivedi, 2017; Fernández-Pérez et al, 2017; Zampetakis et al, 2016) substantially improving upon previous findings (Schlaegel and Koenig, 2014). Interestingly, the stability of the various antecedents and the EI construct itself have not been tested in this capacity which is now becoming common place in other fields of study such as health and education (Kellar and Hankins, 2013) which is deemed a key manner in which to extend the models.

Within the individual category psychological constructs appear to have overcome a period of increased scepticism in their ability to afford any real meaningful and above superficial contribution to the entrepreneurial debate. Some of the old stalwart concepts have maintained the attention of scholars within the field such as the big five personality traits with openness being determined as the most influential towards EI (Antoncic et al, 2015) whereas locus of control was found to have no influence and the propensity to take risks as having a positive one (Nasip et al, 2017). However, we are now witnessing an escalation in alternative factors including identity entrepreneurship (Newbury et al, 2018) and dualistic notions of positive characteristics such as optimism and those that are deemed more negative as is the case with the “Dark Triad” (Hmieleski and Lerner, 2016). Another important, novel and nascent trend is the study of what can be described as psychological symptoms such as Attention Deficit Disorder (ADHD) with initial findings suggesting that those exhibiting such disorders are more likely to be entrepreneurially inclined (Verheul et al, 2015).

Moving towards the lesser populated thematical areas topics including corporate intentions and career choice are receiving notable and growing levels of interest. There is also a sub-section emerging that as of yet has no clearly established boundaries (other). Finally, the expectancy would be that considering the contemporary theorising of entrepreneurship as a contextually embedded process it would be necessary to investigate intentions from this perspective however research in this area has only started to gain momentum. Contextually grounded studies either examine environmental factors such as natural disasters, danger zones or economic circumstances or form a cultural perspective via country comparisons or social legitimacy. Results indicate that context assumes a pivotal role in the

development of EIs and it is often through our cognitive representations that this has most impact (Arrighetti et al, 2016).

3.3 (RQ2) Does the classification afforded of current research conform to previously developed frameworks and have their recommendations been met?

Taking Liñan and Fayolle's (2015) framework as a comparative measure we are afforded with two beneficial outcomes that contribute positively to the field. Firstly, it is a method through which we can assess the robustness of the categories generated determining the enduring nature of themes whilst also identifying potential new areas of interest. Secondly, we are able to ascertain as to whether previous recommendations to enhance the discipline have been acted upon.

Figure 3.6 depicts the key differences between the priority groupings that have been extracted from the literature over two differing temporal periods. At first glance we can draw alignment between those categories presented in the present review and those of Liñan and Fayolle (2015) suggesting a strong applicability of the previous framework. However, if we delve deeper into the secondary level categories more nuanced insights can be made. Of particular interest, the first grouping "*Core Model/Intention Model*" has progressed from general testing of models (23 articles focused on this previously and now only 1) towards the addition of variables to help fine tune its applicability (progressing from 5 to 16 articles)⁵. From this we can infer that EI models form a strong and highly useful foundation to research in the area and as we move from theoretical consolidation through the reification of their suitability perhaps now their function is best served not in isolation however via integration. Contrarily, diminishing studies relating to the area of direct theory testing may be consequence to the belief that they are theoretically lacking thus limiting publication opportunities as can be witnessed by a dearth of exposure in outlets such as the JBV and ET&P. This possibility may also explain efforts at variable addition to extend what is already known in novel ways.

⁵ It is important to state that Liñan and Fayolle's dataset was much larger (409 articles) than the present review.

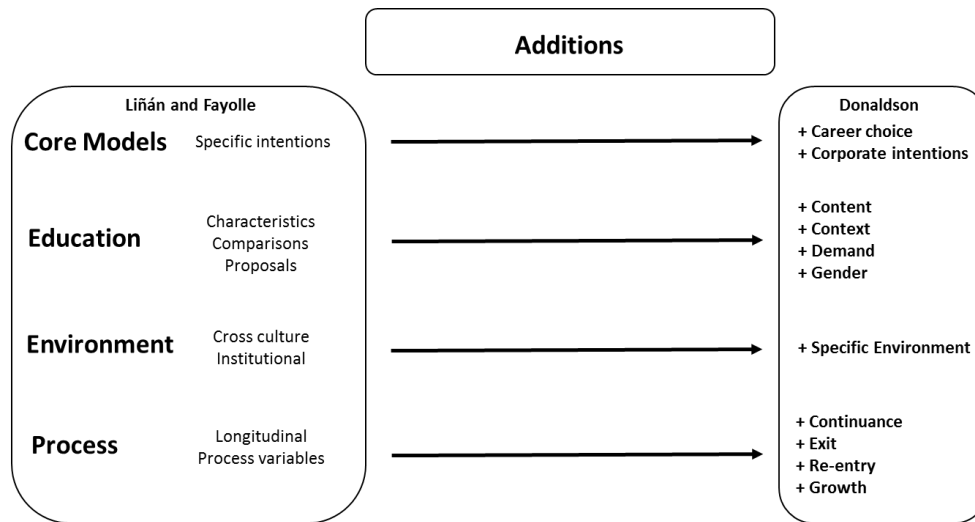


Figure 3.6 Key additions in priority themes extracted

Attempts at model integration have become visible through the introduction of Prospect Theory (Hsu et al, 2017) and Effectuation (Dutta, Gwebu and Wang, 2015) in ambition to fill theoretical voids however this process may become problematic if we fail to operationalise constructs and variables in a consistent manner whilst ensuring the applicability of inputting these theories in the EI domain. Through stretching the boundaries of EIs an apparent blurring of definitional divides with other related entrepreneurial constructs is being witnessed. For example, there is an increased prevalence in the interchangeable use of the more contemporary popular entrepreneurial concepts of identity and entrepreneurial passion.

Considering EIs in this way does not allow us to truly capture the uniqueness of the concept and its operating mechanisms leading to a path of reductionism. If this trend continues EIs are in grave danger of relinquishing their position of importance in entrepreneurial research. Indeed, some authors have conveyed that identity provides the true cognitive base for the measurement of intent (Jarvis, 2016) forcing us to rethink the focus that has been placed upon attitudes, perceptions and values. This is a problematic suggestion given that entrepreneurial identity is taken to be related to the meanings, attitudes, beliefs and evaluations that define an individual in an entrepreneurial role (Hoang and Gimeno, 2015). Therefore, through using the terminology of entrepreneurial identity it appears that we are substituting entrepreneurial expectancies and values with the very same concepts.

This like for like confounding of terms can also be viewed with entrepreneurial passion which is in fact deemed to have identity within its constituting features. Entrepreneurial passion is defined in

terms of strong inclinations towards an activity, deemed a motivational construct that leads to action (Cardon, Wincent, Singh and Drnovsek, 2009). Therefore, an individual with entrepreneurial passion is motivated to think and act like an entrepreneur, the same influence we accept EIs to have. Additionally, different forms of passion are beginning to be investigated under the premise that they may be more prevalent than that for entrepreneurship (Huyghe, Knockaert and Obschonka, 2016) something that is highly aligned with the notion of career choice and intentions for self- or wage-employment.

The issue of operational clarity and consistency needs to be attended to and has been raised previously (Krueger, 2017; Liñán and Fayolle, 2015). If we consider the explanandum here alone it is clear that definitional consensus towards the core phenomenon of EIs is not optimal. Building upon these thoughts Table 3 delves deeper than previous reviews into this definitional concern depicting general consensus in regard to what the term signifies with Thompson (2009); Bird (1988) and Krueger and colleagues (2000) affording the most widely cited definitions. Commonalities lay within the notion that EI is a conscious cognitive phenomenon related to the creation of a new business. However, subtle variations present themselves when they are viewed as transmission variables (Scholin, Boomé and Ohlsson, 2016); perceived likelihoods (Stedham and Wieland, 2017); propensities or states of readiness (Virick, Basu and Rogers, 2015).

Definition of entrepreneurial intent	Studies in which the definition is cited	Scope	Time
“The self-acknowledged conviction by a person that they intend to set up a new business venture and consciously plan to do so at some point in the future” (Thompson, 2009 p676)	Belló, Mattana and Loi (2018); Bönnte, Procher and Urbig (2016); Zampetakis et al (2016); Botha and Bignotti (2017); Bullough, Renko and Myatt (2014), Arrighetti et al (2016); Monllor and Murphy (2017), Padilla-Meléndez, Fernandez-Gámez and Molina-Gómez (2014)	Intermediate	Vague
“States of mind that direct attention, experience and action toward a business concept” (Bird, 1988 p442)	Saeed et al (2015); Stedham and Wieland (2017); Trivedi (2017); Zhang, Duysters and Cloodt (2014); Ahmed, Chandran and Klobas (2017); Dutta et al (2015); Fayolle and Gailly (2015), Fernandez-Pérez et al (2017); Hallam et al (2016); Karimi et al (2016)	Intermediate	No mention

“The intention of an individual to start a new business” (Krueger, 2017); “Intentions to start a new self-owned firm” (Krueger, Reilly and Carsrud, 2000); “Specific target behaviour of starting a business (Krueger, 1993); “The commitment of individuals to start a new business (Krueger and Carsrud, 1993)	Schlaegel and Koenig (2014); Sieger and Minola (2017); Biraglia and Kadile (2017); Zapkau et al (2015); Zhang, Duysters and Cloodt (2014); Botha and Bignotti (2017); Bullough, Renko and Myatt (2014); Fernandez-Pérez et al (2017); Joensuu-Salo, Varamäki and Viljamaa (2015); Bae et al (2014); Miralles, Giones and Riverola (2016)	Intermediate	No mention
“Essential transmission variables mediating between the act of starting a company and potential external factors” (Scholin, Boomé and Ohlsson, 2016)	Scholin, Boomé and Ohlsson (2016)	Intermediate	No mention
“A person’s perceived likelihood to engage in entrepreneurial activity” (Erikson, 1998)	Stedham and Wieland (2017)	Broad	No mention
“A person’s propensity to start a business” (Tsai, Chang and Peng, 2016)	Tsai, Chang and Peng, (2016)	Intermediate	No mention
“Intentions concern future goals and actions, and there is no conflict between intention and a lack of subsequent action, if acting on the intention was deliberately postponed, or if new constraints emerged of preferences changed that led a person to abandon the intention (van Gelderen, Kautonen and Fink, 2015)	Van Gelderen, Kautonen and Fink (2015)	Broad	Vague
“A cognitive representation of a person’s readiness to perform a given behaviour and an immediate antecedent of behaviour” (Virick, Basu and Rogers, 2015)	Virick, Basu and Rogers, (2015)	Broad	Vague
“A desire to create a business” (Zhang and Cain, 2017)	Zhang and Cain (2017)	Intermediate	No mention
“A conscious state of mind that directs attention (and therefore experience and action) toward a specific object (goal) or pathway to achieve it (means) (Finisterra do Paço et al, 2011)	Buli and Yesuf (2015); Espíritu-Olmos and Sastre-Castillo (2015); Liñan, Moriano and Jaén (2016)	Broad	No mention

“A process antecedent to entrepreneurial action that involves recognizing opportunities, looking for information, finding resources and establishing business strategies” (Henley et al, 2017)	Henley et al (2017)	Intermediate	Vague
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Table 3 Entrepreneurial intent definition “schools” employed within the literature

These scope conditions have a tendency to vary boundary conditions and indeed temporal dimensions (which as can be seen are seldom included in definitional portrayals) which due to a lack of agreed upon clarity and theoretical precision impact on consequent interpretation of findings (Suddaby, 2010). It is important for us to intervene at this point in preemptive fashion to ensure validity is maintained and a permanent issue is not created or even worse construct collapse in favour of the more “exciting” contemporary alternatives (Hirsch and Levin, 1999). The absence of temporality becomes more pronounced when we attempt to gain more fine-grained insights into EIs and their evolution which must move beyond implicit inferences. Even if we accept that there is a general agreement to the core constructs of EI, these must be clearly distinguished from those highly related and contemporary “hot” alternatives. Operational difficulties can arise as we transition into more specific process areas such as those associated with re-entry, continuance, growth and exit. Much extant literature has begun to diverge from traditional operationalisations of the antecedent constructs such as removing the popular interchange of PBC for ESE supposing this as an oversimplistic procedure (Sieger and Monsen, 2015; Tsai et al, 2016). It is imperative then that these semantic relationships are specified and definitions employed made explicit.

Given that entrepreneurship is embedded in context it is natural that this grouping is sustained, evolving from cross-cultural comparative approaches towards the study of particular environments that help to determine the integrative capacity of the models in differing circumstances (e.g. Virick et al, 2015). This is a novel area which has provided interesting contributions accentuating the heterogeneous and perceptual nature of specific settings in which EIs assemble and entrepreneurship occurs. Furthermore, advancements in terms of our understanding of more macro, meso and micro level cultural components has been revealed with distinct differences being observed at the national and individual levels (Liñán, Moriano and Jaén, 2016).

Psychological constructs remain steadfast as key “*Personal level/Individual*” variables with new and novel lines of investigation being pioneered such as those related to psychological symptoms. Educational articles have also continued in their evaluative efforts with focus on the specific types and participants, however a useful contribution of the present paper is their further and more parsimonious demarcation into means-ends relationships that affords recognition of the importance of explicitly differentiating inputs from outcomes. Lack of coherence regarding findings continues to permeate the discipline however movement in interest towards “means” concepts such as pedagogical content, context and demand, represents action in relation to the calls of Fayolle and Gailly (2015) and may well help to alleviate some disagreements given the large array of strategies and methodological idiosyncracies that present themselves. Indeed, the same authors even allude to a hysteresis effect that could be an interesting avenue for further research however this entails more sophisticated methods of study such as those that are longitudinal and process orientated.

The “*Entrepreneurial Process/Process*” group is recognised as the most challenging however is one that can propel the field forwards. Contemporary research is advancing in a promising direction with this category being the most highly studied however, and in resemblance of that forgone, a large portion of research on EIs has been predominantly directed by positive philosophies which have incorporated cross-sectional methodologies. This has left a void in explicating the dynamism of an unpredictable and ever-changing process which needs to be filled. Much remains unsolved and even with the admonishment of Liñan and Fayolle previously quality longitudinally based studies still remain under-represented. Fleeting glimpses of high-level contributions have been witnessed, the most notable being van Gelderen et al’s (2015) self-control focus and Gielnik et al’s (2014) finding that implementation intentions are required to be accompanied by action plans to have greater chances of resulting in action, however this is not nearly enough to scratch the surface of such a critical component to EI research. It seems we have become preoccupied with advancing co-variance percentages at the expense of a continual ignorance towards other impacting variables and mechanisms including commitment and the stability of these variables over time that can fluctuate in terms of strength and influence.

The present review deemed those previously termed as “*specific intentions*” worthy of dispersion into different sets based on the body of literature becoming more fine-grained and thus better fits

were considered to be located elsewhere. For example, corporate intentions and career choice were allocated a thematic group of their own due to the increasing interest on both topics further exposing the need for greater construct clarity to ensure theoretical and practical developments are anchored in common understandings. Additionally, continuance, growth, exit and re-entry intentions were also positioned into the process priority group under the logic that they each represent a key event within the entrepreneurial journey and if we are to gain deeper understanding then holistic approaches are required, however, for such a categorisation to be of any benefit process methodologies must prevail.

3.4 (RQ3) What are the suggested avenues for future research and the implications for research and practice?

3.4.1 IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

A substantive amount of diverse content forms the EI research arena and we have demonstrated the classification framework provided by Liñan and Fayolle to be sustaining and robust. Withstanding this we have also observed that the pace of progression towards recommendations is insufficient. It is worrying that items that serve as the foundation of EI research and that have the power to prevent fragmentation are not being attended to. There is a complex mix of variables, antecedents, moderators and mediators, that still no agreed upon combination can provide the ideal predictive model. This ever-expanding list of potential ingredients in quest of the ideal recipe needs to be taken with care as if not we are at risk of establishing a hodge-podge of contributions that stray away from the core of the discipline and abate the utility of practical, parsimonious conceptual frameworks. That is not to say that we give up on seeking to enhance the models through various additions and determining the interactive relationships however we must find better ways of integrating multiple variables and contexts that pre-dispose various different roles (Schlaegel and Koenig, 2014). This requires an explicit statement and clarity towards how we operationalise the constructs we are studying, clearly differentiating them from associated others which must, first and foremost, start with EIs themselves determining their scope and semantic relationships.

Entrepreneurship is without question contextually embedded and therefore our study of EIs must reflect the multitude of temporal interweaving “heterogenous rhythms” (Verduyn, 2015 p 645). This is vital if we are to produce the required depth of knowledge leading to much more relevant findings.

In pursuit, it is compelling that we engage in longitudinally based investigations that take into account the process or elements of the process from a holistic outlook. This perhaps entails venturing into more uncharted terrain of qualitative and mixed-methods approaches. We must overcome an implicit fear and aversiveness to such methodology, although the difficulties that we will encounter will be much higher so too will the rewards. This allows us to assume an encompassing perspective permitting the study of contextual variations, intentional stability, reverse causalities and the all-important complete intention to action link. Indeed, some scholars have postulated that the process is not as complicated as we think (Hopp and Sonderegger, 2015) making the rally cry for its study less daunting. This research can afford us with a more comprehensive verdict concerning the utility of the EI models we apply as extant research has suggested some antecedents may be beneficial in predicting intent such as the proxy of PBC however when actual PBC is considered time-frames may well create discrepancies in relation to action (van Gelderen et al, 2015).

There are also a number of key implications presented for a range of practitioners. To engage in process thinking departs from compressive statics allowing us to suggest how to successfully transition from intention to action. It was revealed that perceptions of both endogenous and exogenous variables assume an important position in the influence of EIs. It is therefore recommended that these are given full consideration when seeking to develop policies and strategies to promote entrepreneurship. Governments, educational institutions and providers should establish holistic approaches to entrepreneurship that start from the very beginning of the process coordinating in their provision of support and building awareness throughout. This can begin through embedding compulsory entrepreneurship education courses at a young age as those individuals who receive these courses have been found to be three times more likely to exhibit future engagement behaviours (Thompson and Kwong, 2016). A repetitive focus can help to entrench a pro-entrepreneurial mindset at all stages of development and it is important not to neglect specific demographics especially the senior population. Pedagogical methodologies should have an emphasis of educating through entrepreneurship as opposed to “of”, which necessitates a learning by doing attitude through which outcomes can be evaluated using intentional style models adapted to suit their specific cohort and context. All in all, emphasis should be afforded to intention as an evolving concept and thus must be maintained above critical thresholds for continued action to occur.

3.4.2 FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA

A wide range of gaps in the literature and directions for future research have emerged from the findings, however focus will be designated towards those perceived to be of increased importance. Firstly, we need to continue to integrate the intentional models in more specific contextual situations to gain insight into the main contributing variables and their range of effects given differing environmental demands. In so doing we can develop “best fit” models and assemblages of interactive capacities for given scenarios. This can be achieved through looking at cultures, sub-cultures, communities and industries or via the consideration of different demographics which will require the use of samples that go beyond the convenience of student populations (Roy et al, 2017). Secondly, models need to be tested in their entirety, i.e. the entrepreneurial process from intention to actual behaviour. In this regard it is important to consider the various outcomes which we want to track, for example one may wish to consider the link between intent and new venture launch, however, it may be more feasible and just as beneficial to investigate transitions into specific entrepreneurial behaviours. These behaviours may include, but are not limited to, the participation in entrepreneurship competitions, the development of a business plan, the creation of a prototype or minimal viable product, the acquisition of facilities, engaging in marketing activities or the acquisition of formal or informal financing. All of which may prove to be a more convenient mode of generating useful insights for both educational and practice-based researchers. This approach necessitates a longitudinal design systematically tracking individuals over a prolonged period of time, allowing stability and influencing latent variables to be determined, in addition to the ever-petitioned reverse causality (Krueger, 2017). Included within this process philosophy lay possibilities to consider more state-like cognitive and emotional components such as commitment and self-regulatory behaviours that may not follow linear trajectories (Van Gelderen et al, 2015).

Finally, focus should be designated towards the most effective operationalisations of a construct, in other words those that have the greatest predictive capacity. Therefore, research should remain attentive towards such developments and perhaps it may be more fruitful in this regard to, if possible, avoid more general research databases that although are highly useful do provide difficulties in concept operationalisation. Other more complex theories as alternatives to TPB and EEM can also be used, such as the Model of Goal Directed Behaviour as suggested by Schlaegel and Koenig (2014); Action

Phase Theory (van Gelderen et al, 2018); or Delanda's (2006) Assemblage Theory, in an effort to gain deeper understanding.

3.5 CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

This review was implemented in a rigorous, systemised and transparent manner to ensure replicability whilst also allowing the quality to be determined and externally scrutinised (Briner and Denyer, 2012). The literature selected was targeted in a manner that was not exhaustive however justified and manageable and it is recognised that this does create a possibility that some relevant articles have been inadvertently omitted. However, with the inclusion of the recognised top journals and those perceived most sympathetic towards the EI cause this served to limit this occurrence and as such a "fit for purpose" dataset was generated. With this, specific theoretical perspectives, traditions and methods may have benefited from a privileged selection. Caution should also be applied due to the inherent subjectivity of the review. Some decisions including the generation of priority themes and allocation of papers required a degree of individual judgement. It would have thus been a beneficial process to triangulate all groupings and decisions with other experts within the field. Where categorial placement was not clear, additional support was sought from prominent academics within the field. Furthermore, the time-period between the publication of the comparative review was relatively short which may help to explain limited publications addressing key concerns. However, the perceived differences of intrigue have been highlighted which have great potential for the advancement of the EI domain.

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APPENDIX 1:

Table 4 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion	Rationale
Topic	Focus on entrepreneurial intentions in all forms and encompassing variables: Multiple levels (individual, team and aggregate) and across all transitional phases of the entrepreneurship process (i.e. pre- and post-entry, transition from start up to new firm, in-firm intrapreneurship, corporate entrepreneurship, career intentions etc).	No focus on entrepreneurial intentions (perceived impacting and encompassing factors). Lack of interest in psychological and cognitive components of entrepreneurship. No exact wording or synonym related to intentions in the title or abstract.	Provision of sufficiently inclusive knowledge that enables the research objectives to be effectively met. Ensures that review remains grounded in intentional literature.
Source type	Academic peer-reviewed journal articles.	Books, book chapters, conference papers, theses, working papers, non-academic articles.	Displays information that is accepted, validated and of sufficient quality increasing the influence of generalisations that can be inferred.
Source* location	Only those outlets that provided an influential article in Liñán and Fayolle's (2015) review were included in the study. Sources must be located in the first quartile of Scimagos journal ranks.	All other journals.	Highly pertinent to the topic of study and allows for an effective follow on from the previous review. Ensured that the dataset was workable and also created an increased likelihood of relevant papers being included.
Time-period	Journal articles published either online or in print between the years 2014-February 2018.	Articles before this time-frame.	Manageable dataset size that builds upon, extends and checks progress of a prior review. Large quantity of articles published within these four years needing structure and ordering.
Language	Only journals written and published in English were included.	Non-english language journals	Native language of the author

*Upon acknowledgement of an expert anonymous reviewer it was suggested that the Small Business Economics journal should also be included. This process unearthed a further 42 articles that were deemed relevant over the time period.

APPENDIX 2:**Table 5** Data coding nodes Nvivo 11 software

Node	Explanation
Research context	Research context served as a mechanism whereby the general purpose of the article could be ascertained through considering the research questions imposed and conveyed aims of the paper.
Theoretical perspectives	Theoretical perspectives were the identified through considering the main conceptual frameworks implemented within the papers used to guide the investigation.
Hypotheses and propositions	All hypotheses and propositions were coded to provide an overview of the topics of interest that were being investigated or suggested within the entrepreneurial intention research area.
Methodology	Methodology was coded on the basis of 5 sub-components, namely country of analysis, data analysis, data collection, measures, sample and finally unit of analysis which provided depth of understanding regarding approaches used.
Key findings and theoretical contributions	The main findings, both self-acknowledged and researcher determined were identified to shed light on how an article contributed to knowledge generation and expansion within the field.
Implications	The suggested impact that the research and research findings have on practical advancements to entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intentions.
Limitations	The self-perceived limiting factors and drawbacks of the research that need to be considered in interpreting results.
Future suggested research	Recommended lines of future investigations to build on the findings conveyed in order to advance knowledge and understanding of the field.
Key definitions	Key definitions were coded in relation to how entrepreneurship intention was being conceived to allow for cross-study comparisons.

APPENDIX 3:

Table 6 Example coding sheet

Title	Understanding the Dynamics of Nascent Entrepreneurship—Prestart-Up Experience, Intentions, and Entrepreneurial Success
Authors	Hopp, C. and Sonderegger, R.
Year	2015
Source	Journal of Small Business Management
Research context	Little research has addressed the antecedents to entrepreneurial organizing activities and the combined impact on founding success. Thus, we go beyond the existing literature on process research that focuses on the effect of the shape of the process on new venture creation but not on the antecedents. In this way, we contribute to a better understanding of the contextual antecedents of the shape of these processes and the way experience and intentions affect the successful creation of new ventures . The focus of our contribution is very much on the implementation, or nascent, phase.
Theoretical perspectives	The present research regards entrepreneurship as an economic behavior in which new venture organizing activities are contingent on characteristics of the nascent entrepreneur. We use three measures from complexity science to illustrate the temporal patterns of venture organizing activities, and prestart-up experience and intentions as their antecedents (Lichtenstein et al. 2007). “Rate” measures the average pace of organizing, “concentration” measures the extent to which the pace is unstable or constant, and “timing” is the degree to which activities are carried out earlier or later throughout the process. Consistent with this view, entrepreneurial commitment and ability expectations have been found to be predictive of progress in establishing an operational venture (Carsrud and Brännback 2011; Cassar and Friedman 2009; Krueger and Carsrud 1993; Townsend, Busenitz, and Arthurs 2010). During the process of founding a new venture, prestart-up experience interacts with the organizational context to create new knowledge and helps entrepreneurs to act in accordance with it (Argote and Miron-Spektor 2011) . Consequently, the initial endowments of nascent entrepreneurs influence their adaptability, and more experience subsequently gives more room to manoeuvre. In order to understand why and how entrepreneurs carry out their activities, one needs to bear in mind the role of entrepreneurial intentions in linking ideas and subsequent actions (Carsrud and Brännback 2011; Krueger and Carsrud 1993) . Drawing on goal setting and socio-cognitive theory (Bandura 1991; Bandura and Locke 2003; Locke and Latham 1991) , we suggest that nascent entrepreneurs with higher ability expectation and commitment will be more likely than others to be able to deal with the challenges ahead.
Hypotheses and propositions	<p>H1: The prestart-up experience of nascent entrepreneurs is positively associated with the number of venture organizing activities.</p> <p>H2: The ability expectations and the commitment of nascent entrepreneurs are positively associated with the number of venture organizing activities</p> <p>H3: The rate by which nascent entrepreneurial activities are completed is positively associated with successful venture foundation.</p> <p>H4: The concentration by which nascent entrepreneurial activities are completed is negatively associated with successful venture foundation.</p> <p>H5: The timing by which nascent entrepreneurial activities are completed is positively associated with successful venture foundation.</p>

Method**Country:** United States

Data analysis: We will therefore turn toward an instrumental variable (two-stage least squares) analysis to estimate our theoretical model (Bascle 2008; Block, Hoogerheide, and Thurik 2013).

Data collection: Nascent entrepreneurs were first identified through telephone interviews with a population-representative probability sample of 31,845 individuals in late 2005, of whom 1,214 individuals were classified as active nascent entrepreneurs. A second interview of these nascent entrepreneurs was conducted in early 2006, and then others followed yearly. The last follow-up interview was completed in January 2010. The PSED II thus provides longitudinal data on entrepreneurial activity over a time span of five years. Throughout the data collection process, nascent entrepreneurs answered a detailed set of questions about start-up activities designed to capture their progress in creating an operational venture. The five-year longitudinal data structure and the meticulous documentation of a large number of start-up activities make it possible to draw causal inferences among dependent and independent variables.

Measures: Completion of Entrepreneurial Organizing Activities; In the following, our point of reference is the occurrence of the first positive cash flow combined with a self-reported measure of being operational (versus still-trying or disbanding the venture); The **PSED II data set** lists 33 typical organizing start-up activities of nascent entrepreneurs as well as the respective dates when the activities took place; Rate is defined as the total number of start-up activities undertaken by the particular nascent entrepreneur divided by the duration of the gestation process of this new business; Concentration quantifies how closely entrepreneurial activities are undertaken in relationship to other start-up activities. As in Lichtenstein et al. (2007), concentration is operationalized in terms of the variance of monthly activity times multiplied by minus 1 and divided by 1,000; Timing is measured by the average event time divided by the duration of the gestation process. Thus, it quantifies whether the bulk of the organizing activities is accomplished earlier or later during the start-up process. For example, the average event time associated with the organizing activities {1, 5, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10} is 6. This figure is divided by a duration of 10 months, resulting in a timing of 0.6.

Independent Variables: prestart-up experience; Formal Education; Labor Market Experience; Entrepreneurial Experience; Commitment; Ability Expectation.

Control Variables: the age of the entrepreneurs, using the average over all team members as indicated in Wave A. We control for team size using all team members as indicated by the respondents to the questionnaire in Wave A. As the process of organizing a new venture can differ across industries, we parse out these effects by including industry dummy variables. To proxy for the innovative character, and therefore higher complexity, of the venture, we measure the perception of market newness by using the answer to the question whether the product is unfamiliar to all, some or none of the potential customers; the perception of innovation; competitiveness of the industry; the perception of competition; the early effort exerted.

Key findings and theoretical contribution

Overall, the entrepreneurs engage in **an average of 14 start-up activities**. With respect to the rate of start-up activities of 0.79, one can conclude that on average a nascent entrepreneur accomplishes almost one start-up activity per month. The concentration mean of -0.67 indicates that start-up activities are somewhat spread out over time. Table 2 reveals that two measures have a significant impact on new venture emergence. Rate ($\beta = 0.051$, $p < .01$) and timing ($\beta = 0.483$, $p < .01$) indicate that a higher speed of carrying out the activities and a later timing would increase the probability of

perceiving the venture as emerged. Both results support the arguments in H3 and H5. However, there is no evidence that higher levels of the concentration variable (more activities bunched together over time) have an impact on successful new venture foundation. **In the second column, we test our H1 and H2 and link nascent entrepreneurs' prestart-up experience and intentions with the number of activities they perform. We can fully confirm H1 linking prestart-up experience with the number of new venture organizing activities.** Labor market experience ($\beta = 0.107, p < .01$), formal education ($\beta = 0.511, p < .01$) and entrepreneurial experience ($\beta = 1.00, p < .01$) all are positively associated with the number of new venture organizing activities. Moreover, **we find support for the impact of intentions on the number of new venture organizing activities. Accordingly, the results reported in column 2 shed some doubt on the validity of the estimates reported in column 1, as the number of activities is clearly affected by prestart-up experience and intentions.**

In line with our arguments, **we find that both prestart-up experience and intentions affect the progress entrepreneurs make when organizing a new venture.** We find full support for our hypotheses that link the entrepreneurs' characteristics to the activities they carry out. In summary, **we report that prestart-up experience (H1) and prestart-up intentions (ability expectations; H2) have a positive effect on the number of new venture organizing activities carried out.** Our findings also show that when controlling for possible endogeneity of the number of activities carried out, only a later timing of the organizing activities enhances the probability of successfully founding. For the timing measure, we found the hypothesized positive influence on successful venture creation (H5). Contrary to our hypotheses (and previous findings), the rate (H3) and concentration (H4) of organizing activities has no statistically significant effect.

Implications	<p>Entrepreneurs should be concerned with engaging in general gestation activities, as indicated by the strong positive effect of the number of activities on the likelihood of successfully founding, rather than attempting to carry out entrepreneurial actions quickly, because the rate of organizing is statistically insignificant. Focus should therefore be on completing milestones, regardless of how much time these might take. once early success materializes, committing more resources and engaging in constitutive activities subsequently improve the chances for success, as documented by the strong positive effect of a later timing of activities. Thus, advice needs to be tailored carefully for the entrepreneur not to be overly obsessed with the organizing process itself (balancing between progress and concentration within and across time) but to realize that when early milestones are met, it might be best to commit more time and resources in order to benefit from previous efforts. We find that the entrepreneurial process features early activities that serve as prerequisites for later ones. This seems to be the case regardless of how much time is spent on each activity and how much time elapses between them. For this reason, what is most important is to actually follow through with the process once initial efforts show some success results suggest that the entrepreneurial process might not be as complex and iterative as previous research suggests.</p>
Limitations	<p>The nascent entrepreneurs' reports of their commitment and ability expectations were both collected in Wave A of the PSED II survey. This raises the possibility of common method bias affecting the reporting of both beliefs. Data limitations preclude direct tests of task complementarities. Although PSED II contains a variety of human capital measures on the individual level and information regarding tasks that need to be completed for venture emergence, it does not allow identifying the allocation of these tasks among partners.</p>
Future suggested research	<p>This leaves room for extending our results to later stages of the entrepreneurial process that go beyond the scope of this study and the data included in the PSED II repository.</p>

Key definitions

With the term **nascent entrepreneur**, we refer to teams and individuals who are intending to start a new firm, have already carried out some activity to help start the business, expect to own part of the firm, and do not already have an operational business. Nascent entrepreneurs are thus involved in an ongoing but not yet operational start-up. The term nascent reflects the current efforts to create a new (nascent) firm. However, nascent entrepreneurs might have experience as entrepreneurs from the creation of previous ventures. Hence, “nascent” reflects the current and ongoing effort to create a new firm. We distinguish between different variants of prestart-up experience in the empirical section and refer to it explicitly

Chapter 4

Processual lip service will not suffice: A case study into entrepreneurial intention transitions in the Spanish construction industry

ABSTRACT

Contemporary research has shown that entrepreneurial intentions have become increasingly popular given their accepted importance to the entrepreneurship discipline as a whole. This attraction is not surprising and is founded upon the belief that intentions can provide the missing link for the transmission of desires into action with the potential to create social, cultural and economic value. That-being-said, whereas the field of entrepreneurship is acknowledging its inherent dynamic and processual nature the same cannot be said of entrepreneurial intent. Variance and cross-sectional approaches to its study are perfuse which although are highly influential cannot possibly provide complete explanation towards the cognitive thought processes that are enacted throughout the entrepreneurial journey in its entirety. Indeed, cognitions unlike traits are typified by their time-variant characteristics that may change through contextual dependence in regard to form and intensity. As consequence, the current paper seeks to apply an emerging process framework in the form of Manuel DeLanda's Assemblage Theory in ambition to further explicate the stability of entrepreneurial intent. To achieve this a longitudinal case study method is employed which investigates intentional transitions of an entrepreneur located within the Spanish construction industry via both retrospective and real-time means.

4.0 INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurial intention (EI) literature is beleaguered by approaches for which causal explanations, for the greater part, are embedded in synchronic, compressive and comparative statics (Pettigrew, Woodman and Cameron, 2001) which are neglective of the true complexity of its inherent processual configuration. The fallible partialities of attributions grounded in cause-effect relationships from stationary capture of variables equates the entrepreneurial journey to one that is simplistic and reducible whereby one designates entitlement to a methodological individualism that only serves to ignore its equivocal and unpredictable nature. From this perspective the entrepreneurial agent in purposeful endeavour enacts their path towards goal achievement deliberately and in rational form taking decisions to sculpt the most apt course of action towards their desired outcomes. But what of chance, accident, fortuity, misfortune and serendipitous occurrences? Little is left for causal explanations in their current form to incorporate such probable although unforeseeable happenings within explications. Indeed, it is most likely that the intended entrepreneurial actions of agents upon interaction with unpredictable environmental circumstances lead to significant consequences that may or may not have been expected.

This is suggestive of a need for EI research to take greater heed of the chaotic dynamism of the entrepreneurial process that continuously evolves in a non-linear fashion (Tsoukas, 2010). Embracing these opportunistic and sporadic facets entails a research posture that is in acceptance of the notion of process, a term which is in frequent articulation however, more often than not lacking the scaffold of a strong and explicit theoretical and empirical base (Moroz and Hindle, 2012).

EI is widely accepted as the initiation point of the entrepreneurial process being deemed a precursory indicator towards future action based behaviours. This motivationally constituted construct has predominantly been accepted as stable and enduring, unsurprising acknowledging the a-temporal co-variance approach to its study and the merely perfunctory declarations of a pressing need for its longitudinal examination. Findings regarding the influence of EI remain dubious and contested from at least 3

perspectives, firstly, intentions do not always lead to action signaling influence of “otherness” and even when they do lead to action little is known regarding the potential recursive impact exerted. Secondly, their core constituent parts are often considered in regard to their plasticity and state-like dispositions logically leading to the presupposition that changes in these forerunners will be reflective of changes to the intentional whole. Finally, individuals may encounter more attractive alternatives to entrepreneurship as a career option along their path that permits reconsideration and readjustment of commitment in the entrepreneurial process. These lines of reasoning all suggest that EIs are not fixed entities however instead have the capacity to undergo alterations not only in relation to their intensity in a given temporal space but so too in directional and structural form. Their entanglement in a web of context, content and process (Pettigrew, 1990) ensures complexity ensues, and although withstanding methodological challenge the potential exists to not only identify sources of change but so too theorise the “how” and “why” this change has occurred.

There exists no less than 5 established thematic research streams of interest that reflect the study of an individual’s “self-acknowledged conviction...that they intend to set up a business venture and consciously plan to do so at some point in the future” (Thompson, 2009 p676) introduced to us by Liñán and Fayolle (2015). One of the most abundant and influential topics emanating from their review is the application of intentional-based models derived from the social psychological postulations of Ajzen (1991). These models whose foundations lay within variance theorizing provide the assumption that a number of proximal motivational constructs assume the function of not only influencers but so too as conduits of more distal supplementary variables.

Investigators have attempted to provide descriptions of variance through the addition (Roy, Akhtar and Das, 2017); and reconfiguration (Zhang and Cain, 2017) of a myriad of antecedents determining their potential to mediate and moderate intentional pathways (Schlaegel and Koenig, 2014). Their efforts have been highly worthwhile and successful given the observed increase in capacity to account for higher variance values (Zampetakis et al, 2016). However, there still remains a substantive amount of variance

unaccounted for arguably due to their linear causal tendencies and enhanced focus upon descriptions as opposed to the more pressing need for explanations as to how and why EIs evolve and develop.

Entrepreneurship is accepted as a contextually embedded process thus its study should reflect this (Krueger, 2017) with compressive statics failing to provide a true depiction of reality given their embracement of definite boundary conditions. To find solutions towards essential questions largely left unanswered, namely the intention to action link and the stability of entrepreneurial intent in the consideration of the influence posed by possible transient variables (Liñán and Fayolle, 2015), the inclusion of temporal oscillations and their observation over a prolonged period which has seldom been enacted in the EI domain is required.

In order to study this novel train of reasoning, i.e. EI as a processual concept that emerges and undergoes formational change, the current article extracts inspiration from an influential although relatively modest in number stream of literature that deals with specific issues of process and longitudinal study (e.g. Bansal, Smith, Vaara, 2018; Pettigrew, 1990; van de Ven 1995). With this, we convey the findings and implications of a single, diachronic and in-depth case study covering a contemporary temporal-spatial boundary from 1964 until 2018 (both via historical and real-time analytical techniques) of the founder and owner of a small to medium-sized enterprise operating within the Spanish construction industry. A case study method affords us the mechanism to reveal individual intentions whilst simultaneously yielding insight towards numerous highly pertinent temporal and environmentally embedded influencers whose shared boundaries may not be clearly delineated (Yin and Davis, 2007). This approach has been previously championed as the most suited when seeking to investigate interactions amongst context, structures, events and actions, that help in the explication of causal mechanisms (Ackroyd, 2010). An interesting and novel theoretical research framework in Delandian Assemblage Theory (AT) was identified and employed to generate more fine-grained knowledge related to EIs and their tendencies, or lack thereof, to change. Through this perspective a rejuvenation of EI research can be creat-

ed whilst simultaneously helping to resolve problematic dualities of cognitive study associated with materialism and subjectivism, ecological evolution and enactment; and finally, the issue of mind and body (Brown and Stenner, 2009).

4.1 THEORETICAL RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

To meet processual demands whilst not ignoring structural influence and provide the potential for non-linear causal explication the current paper assumed a posture espoused by the philosophical thinking of Manuel DeLanda. Delanda built upon the initial utterances of Deleuze and Guattari (2004) acting in counter to the totality associated with relationships of interiority⁶. In endeavor undergirded by the desire to introduce a coherency to fragmented contributions, the former of which advocating the irreducibility of the sum to its parts and the latter speaking more in terms of collective agency, Delanda acknowledges the importance of the idea of a part-to-whole relationship emphasising the need for interaction accompanied by experience thus accommodating both instability and consistent causal powers.

Herein, therefore lays an indication of emergence thinking whereby parts constantly interact and their capacities each have something to offer the emergent whole. If we were to relate this line of thought towards EI we may perhaps suggest that it could prove futile in attempting to isolate it's contributing antecedents without taking into consideration relationships with other environmental and contextual factors. By allocating a degree of novelty and immanency to the daily configurations that have the potential to occur assemblages of capacities (and not the properties of the parts themselves) can occur helping to assuage epistemological fallacies.

AT is defined as;

“a multiplicity which is made up of many heterogenous terms and which establishes liaisons, relations between them...assemblage's only unit is that of co-functioning: it is a symbiosis, a 'sympathy'...alliances, alloys...not successions, lines of descent, but contagions, epidemics, the wind” (Deleuze and Parnet, 2007 p69).

⁶ Wholes whose parts cannot survive in independence from the relations with one another. In relations of exteriority parts are relatively autonomous from the whole and can therefore be detached.

It is articulated along two-dimensional foci the first of which deals with functional roles that are defined by a concoction of material (spatial and objective) and expressive (signs, symbols, identities and desires) components that vary in regard to their respective concentrations. The second-dimension alerts us as to how entities emerge and are sustained, their identity is either stabilised into internal homogeneity (territorialisation) or destabilised affording new transformative functional capacities based on boundary alterations (deterritorialization) (Delanda, 2006). Through introducing us to parameters (Delanda, 2016) which also incorporates degrees of coding⁷ sensemaking is achieved in regard to both the possibility of ephemeral *mélanges* and stability of various entities somewhat negating more traditional binary conceptions.

It is deemed that relationships of interiority, or those in which the various constituents of a whole are fused to create identity, are incapable of respecting the heterogeneity associated with said parts. Emphasis shifts to external liaisons whereby different parts do not become homogeneously merged but instead co-function via exogenous means maintaining their own particular functional capacities. These contingency relations are vividly depicted in Deleuzian thinking through the biological example of cross-fertilisation, a process that requires the alliance but not the fusion of heterogenous species namely flower and insect. Delanda adds more meaning and clarity to the boundary concepts of internal and external relationships or strata and assemblages (Deleuze and Guatarri, 2004) discussing these in terms of parameters with “knobs”, the setting of which determines the degree of fixity or coding of a given ensemble.

Taken in this manner, problematic utterances of essences can be avoided and the form of EI is perhaps best expressed as state-like dependent upon the extent to which its particular contextual constituents are parameterised or coded along a continuum ranging from homogenised to heterogenous or, in the case of the former territorialisation and in the latter deterritorialisation (Figure 4.1). Interestingly, the composing parts of an assemblage are also considered to be characterised by this notion of parameters

⁷ In reference towards the function that language has in fixing the identity of a whole.

essentially resulting in what Delanda (2016 p3) specifies as “assemblages of assemblages”.

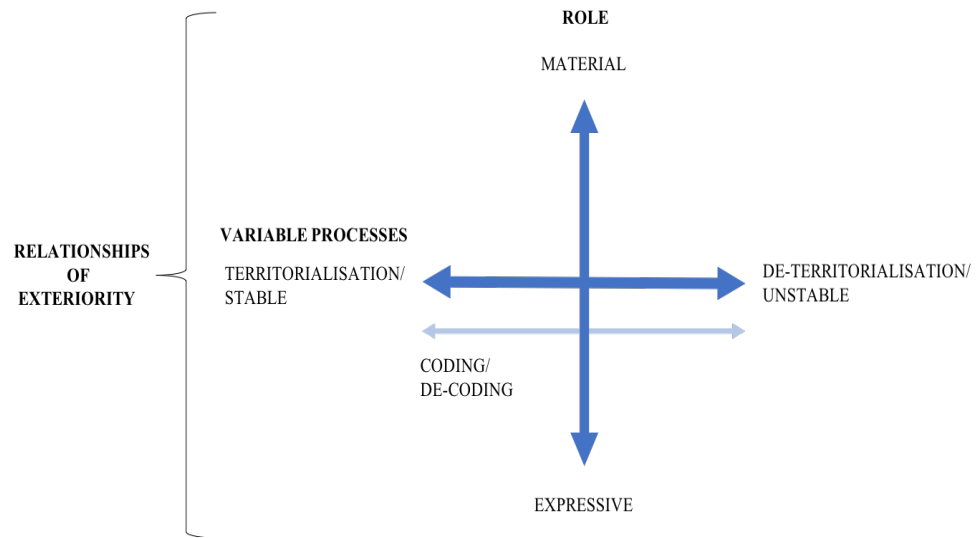


Figure 4.1 A schematical overview of Delanda’s (2006) Assemblage Theory

The potential and tendency of the particular combinations of assemblage components when realised allow for the manifestation of a capacity that could not previously be derived by the functions of any one part ultimately highlighting the irreducibility of the theoretical construct (parts may be detached and maintain their own capacity). If, however, this potential capacity does not manifest it is termed virtual creating a space of possibility from which to function (Delanda, 2016). There is an adamant refute to both the micro- and macro-reductionist postures that in the context of entrepreneurship either ebb in favour of the rational agent or social determination which is largely achieved through acceptance of emergence and relationships of exteriority. We are implored therefore to consider the individual and their own subjective and personal subcomponents in a serious manner (DeLanda, 2016).

AT in its full articulation by Manuel DeLanda, therefore provides the theoretical model to which process is addressed within this paper on the grounds that liaisons of associated groupings of heterogenous events and processes have potentials to, not only, evoke affects but also be affected by (i.e. from bottom up and top down causality), intentions considering both their materialistic and discursive elements. From this, individuals can

be perceived as assemblages of personal artefacts including their habits, skills and indeed intentions, that coalesce with one another and additionally so too, other human, social, institutional, regional and national assemblages. Greater explanations can be garnered as to what kinds of scaler combinations or relations are involved in the production and maintenance of intentions within particular contexts.

DeLanda's very much realist ontological view of the world is envisaged through a more critical perspective. The main way in which this is achieved is through the consideration of tendencies, a tendency being representative of the capacity of certain structural configurations to persist in given situational circumstances. In other words, EI may become stabilised or realised in certain contextual environments whereas in others the configurations may be unstable and more susceptible to fluidity of arrangement leading to other forms of intent or at worse intentional dissipation. This idea of situated intent reflects a critical realist posture however in combination with the transience of AT we are afforded with a bridging mechanism to account for both the causal influence of objects and the causal influence of process theory and its affiliation with unique configurations.

4.2 METHODOLOGY

Inspiration for the present article stemmed from the opportunity to gain high levels of access to an individual who at the time of study was currently involved in re-entering the entrepreneurship process and who had previously created his own successful business venture. Access was also extended beyond the individual to include unrestricted clearance to company archives related to firm history and opportunities being provided to converse with close family members. This afforded a unique and unusual occasion to collect both retrospective and real-time data in relation to the intentions this individual held before creation, how these changed over time in both experiencing great success and failure, and finally, their real-time evolution from the original point of contact. Initial communication was made with the owner, a 54-year-old Spanish male (throughout the paper referred to under the pseudonym "The Entrepreneur" due to privacy re-

quests), in the year 2012. Currently he is the owner of a small to medium sized enterprise (SME) situated in the Spanish construction industry. During the first period of contact he was in a phase of deep self-reflection having relinquished control of his first business largely due to the proximal and legacy effects of the 2008 economic downturn and had begun to consider new opportunities both within and outside of the industry.

At this stage there was no indication as to how events would unfold, how long the study would last and if intentions were, and would be, maintained, regenerated or altogether reborn. The approach to the case study was to therefore gain information on and longitudinally track EIs in a hitherto seldom touched manner. Intentions are perceived to continue and transcend the various phases of the entrepreneurship process, i.e. they are not confined to their traditional method of study within the pre-launch period only and therefore have a critical influence in guiding the individual and indeed business throughout the entirety of the entrepreneurial pathway (Dutta and Thornhill, 2008). It is therefore concerning that we have limited knowledge about how these intentions change making it important to study their evolution (Krueger, 2007). From this, potential generalisations towards theory (Yin, 2003) could be made to advance understanding and knowledge in the EI domain. As consequence to the overall ambitions of the study and ignorance towards what would transpire a range of data-collection techniques were implemented through both primary (semi-structured interviews) and secondary sources (informal discussions with family members, internal documents and national/industry level reports). This approach entailed constant iterations between knowledge held and observations enacted throughout (Van de Ven, 2007).

4.2.1 DATA COLLECTION

Over the time period covering June 2012 until May 2018 12 semi-structured interviews were conducted with the entrepreneur affording the opportunity to gain retrospective insights into his EI and also to capture their evolution in real time. Interviews involved a series of open-ended questions which are considered more effective especially in

dealing with retrospective recounts (Lipton, 1977) whilst concomitantly permitting development of previously unconsidered concepts (Birkinshaw et al, 2016). Each interview had an approximate duration of 45 minutes to 60 minutes. The interviews were chaired by the current author and were all digitally recorded and later transcribed verbatim. As the participant's native language was Spanish all transcripts were translated by a native Spanish speaker who was fluent in English. To ensure maximum accuracy English translations were back-translated into Spanish to alleviate any discrepancies that may have occurred (Brislin, 1970). Further to these interviews informal modes of contact were sustained through the use of face to face conversations with the entrepreneur regarding his intentions. A number of secondary data sources were also collected for triangulation purposes that accounted for the multi-faceted composition of reality and diminished the potential influence of biases entering the research process. This was accomplished through informal discussions with close family members, retrieval of internal company documents, country profiles and industry reports (Yin, 2003).

4.2.2 DATA ANALYSIS

The accumulated data from the interviews was collated and analysed through coding (Langley, 1999) using NVivo 11 software and the implementation of first and second order techniques (Balogun and Johnson, 2004). Wynn and Williams (2012) provided a useful complementary methodological framework as to which the current case study conformed (Figure 4.2). The first task was to develop an appreciation of the intentional journey through the elucidation of an in-depth and thick description set to the backdrop of the entrepreneurial process taking into consideration both cognitive decision-making processes and emergent tendencies of EI.

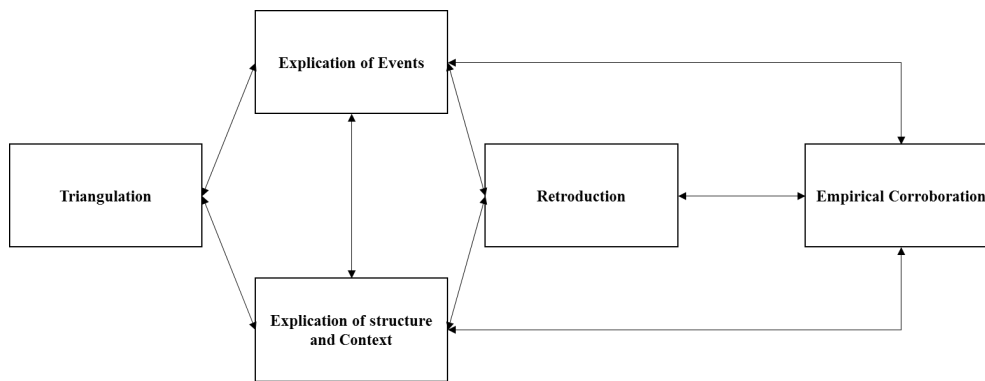


Figure 4.2 Methodological principles extracted from Wynn and Williams (2012)

In order to do so, as with previous research and upon recommendation (MacKay and Chia, 2013; Eisenhardt, 1989), first-order analysis involved the generation of a case history with focus on the individual, their environment and shared experiences. Through establishing a chronology and identifying key actions, events and outcomes, including their interactions, an extensive overview of the entire process was able to be established under the premise of critical realism’s notion of stratified and mediated knowledge. This provided the foundation for comprehension as to what really transpired in relation to the evolution of EI.

Secondary level analysis then explored structural elements from an open-systems perspective through scrutinising the entrepreneur’s responses in relation to the contextual conditions and those elements deemed composite to intent. This included the search for entities and explanation concerning the stability and changes in intentions concentrating on activities, perceptions and their interactions. Retroductive processes encouraged elaboration surrounding the tendencies of identified structures and their possible causal influence in the occurrence of given events with their resulting powers validated in relation to plausible alternatives.

4.3 CASE HISTORY: RETROSPECTIVE ACCOUNT

4.3.1 Direct experience and career choice intention

The entrepreneur was the eldest child born into a family of 2 other siblings in the year 1964. Brought up in the Valencian province of Spain his father co-created a business

venture in the construction industry during the 1960's. He attended primary school but an overwhelming disdain for all that was academic and an affinity towards working with his father saw him discontinue his studies before entry into what at the time was equivalent to secondary level education. Instead, at the age 13 he opted to serve as a construction laborer taking on the many mundane and arduous tasks working long hours with little economic return. This did not dampen his desire towards the world of employment and his attitude remained one that was positive and as he put it himself, "these tasks provided the necessary, although sometimes not pretty, experiences to learn". A clear preference was placed towards paid employment where he noted the importance of accumulating individual and social capital in what was a safe environment for him. The entrepreneur during this period was beginning to precipitate the capacity for entrepreneurship at a dilettante level considering a range of potential opportunities that the industry was currently not serving.

4.3.2 Idea generation and business creation intention

A number of years passed⁸ and in 1985 his father decided to sell the business due to personal reasons which signaled an important life event for the entrepreneur. He was faced with a decision that required a great deal of thought and deliberation, "do I continue working for someone else who I don't know or do I try to go it alone?". He had already identified a potential gap in the market (the need for housing restorations) and in the end decided based upon the realisation that he had the necessary skills and capabilities to succeed and with his preferences radiating towards self-determination to exploit this. The decision was heavily encouraged by many of his co-workers and indeed his family with the economic climate at the time very accepting of new enterprises, "if circumstances were different I am sure that I would not have made the transition, everything appeared to fit into place from getting financial support to the psychological support offered by my family and friends". Within the period of one month of his indication of intent to create his own business he had accrued and served his first customer,

⁸ In 1984 the entrepreneur also served one year of conscripted service within the Spanish military leaving his employment for this period. Upon his return he continued work in his previous position.

“at this moment my perseverance had paid off, I realised that the business was feasible; that my perceptions matched reality; and for me this is when my business was officially created”. This accomplishment was one that reinforced a strong commitment to making his business creation process a success but always within the bounded objective of establishing something that was “manageable”.

4.3.3 Continuance intention and business growth

During the period 1986 to 2007 the business continued to grow, the number employees had increased exponentially from one to approximately 100; facilities were amplified from having one small storage unit to having 2 different offices and a warehouse measuring 2000 square metres. This was not in the entrepreneur’s original plans and it appeared that little rational forethought or ambition preceded this evolution. As the entrepreneur stated “it is just something that appeared to happen, we did not plan for it and it was almost happening sub-consciously”. Chance meetings with various stakeholders, for example, an impromptu encounter with a business acquaintance of a friend in early 2000 led to the opportunity to substantially grow the business through investment projects and in this epoch favourable access to external finance was noted as a key exogenous facilitator.

Although, the entrepreneur did purposefully engage in behaviours during this period which was demonstrated through his realisation that accompanying such growth entailed a need for increased efficiency which he achieved via the integration of a business optimisation system. This was a stage in which he acknowledged the areas in which he was limited and began to develop more managerial oriented skills, a process that was enhanced through learning from contracted external providers. It was described as a “stable situation” for the entrepreneur who saw no better alternative than to continue what he was doing which was further supported by a positive attitude towards the industry and progress made.

4.3.4 The “bubble bursts”: Exit intention

In August 2007 distress signals began to amplify in the financial markets. However, the economic environment was perceived as one which based on tradition would not be overly affected by the exogenous shocks from international sources and instead this was a necessary evil towards economic dynamism. An ill-thought perception, one that would lead to the long and continuous protraction of the Spanish economy. The entrepreneur in these moments was in a state of disbelief having placed confidence within “those with a greater knowledge of the conditions” than he could ever have and “if they could not have predicted what was to come how could I have any chance?”. This was clearly an emotive time that had a severe impact on morale as long-term projects had to be discarded at substantial losses, assets were frozen, and an external protectionist environment had emerged.

Events contributed to diminished feelings of self-confidence in the capacity to complete given tasks that not only came from an internal self-doubt but so too based upon feasibility perceptions hindered by the external barriers posed from such uncondusive environmental conditions. Family support remained steadfast however this was not sufficient to maintain intentional behaviours above the critical continuance threshold and as consequence a decision that was “forced upon” the entrepreneur was taken to sell the business late in 2010. The entrepreneur’s reflection on this decision was fraught with negative emotions who commented, “It was a moment that I don’t like to relive, I was overwhelmed with emotion and above all fear and anger, anxiety also started to set in as I began to seriously question my desire to be an entrepreneur”.

4.4 CASE HISTORY: REAL TIME ACCOUNT

4.4.1 “No other options”: re-entry intention

A clear change of form and direction of intent had occurred as the entrepreneur had to adapt to the circumstances in which he was located which eventually lead to exit from the entrepreneurial process. The time period from 2011-2012 was one of deep self-reflection that was burdened by a plethora of influencing moods, feelings and affective

states. At times he spoke of a frustration towards what had occurred with the desire to “try something completely new” in the form of paid employment outside the construction industry, during other moments he indicated an affection and empathy towards those who he employed thinking about the circumstances in which they found themselves in light of un-predictable and un-predicted events. A number of months passed and based upon his “underlying passion” and the fact that there were “no other options” in his eyes and further augmented by the re-acknowledgement of his self-efficacy within the area a tentative intent was re-born.

This tentative intention was supported by the use of previously accumulated knowledge and experience with the social infrastructure already in place having been developed throughout the years. The economic environmental tides were beginning to show slight signs of change and opportunities, although few in number, began to present themselves. A clear change in mindset could be observed within the entrepreneur, one that was much more positive and in clear recognition of his own self-worth, “having spent long periods of time contemplating what my next move was to be, I finally realised that these events were simply a new period of learning in my life just as my time working for my father had been...external events were largely out of my control and what I can control I am good at”.

The new venture creation process began in 2012 located within the same industry however this time the entrepreneur was driven by conscious efforts to ensure that the business remained one that was manageable. This cautious approach was undergirded by a change in business strategy through the more secure sub-contracting of all employees. Such an approach sought to build upon past accomplishments but simultaneously avoid occasions where chance and unexpected occurrences could have catastrophic consequences both for the entrepreneur himself and employees. As the entrepreneur began engaging in entrepreneurial activities once again this appeared to have a reinforcing impact upon his intention, “the sensation of connecting with individuals again, is for me incredible, with each conversation I have my desire slowly grows”.

The entrepreneur at the close of study remains vigilant of the exogenous shocks that may present themselves and whose tentative intent has transitioned once again into one of continuance as his business becomes consolidated. However, on this occasion there is no inclination to let sub-conscious processes override those of conscious and thoughtful deliberation, “I will not let myself get carried away with circumstances and the promises of individuals, however each time I encounter business prospects these are dealt with in a pensive, rational and rigorous manner”.

4.5 INTENTIONAL STRUCTURES, CAUSAL MECHANISMS AND EMPIRICAL CORROBORATION

The sequencing of events composed of multi-level experiences conveyed the entrepreneur’s intentional journey unfolding across 5 conceptually important and interwoven events that evolved and experienced change over time (Figure 4.3). Following on from Wynn and Williams (2012) advice the next step having developed an explication of the main influencing events was to provide possibilities regarding structures and mechanisms that have the potential capacity to generate the observed occurrences. Therefore, this section strives to explain through a degree of judgmental rationality (Bhaskar, 1998) and iterative processes the causal mechanisms⁹ that can lead to the changes witnessed in the emergence and transitioning of EIs.

⁹ Each component part will be of benefit from their own internal capabilities or properties, for example the business has the capacity to afford employment, and these properties are of significant importance however, this is not a mechanism per se. The mechanism is emergent from liaisons between these capacities functioning within broader contexts.

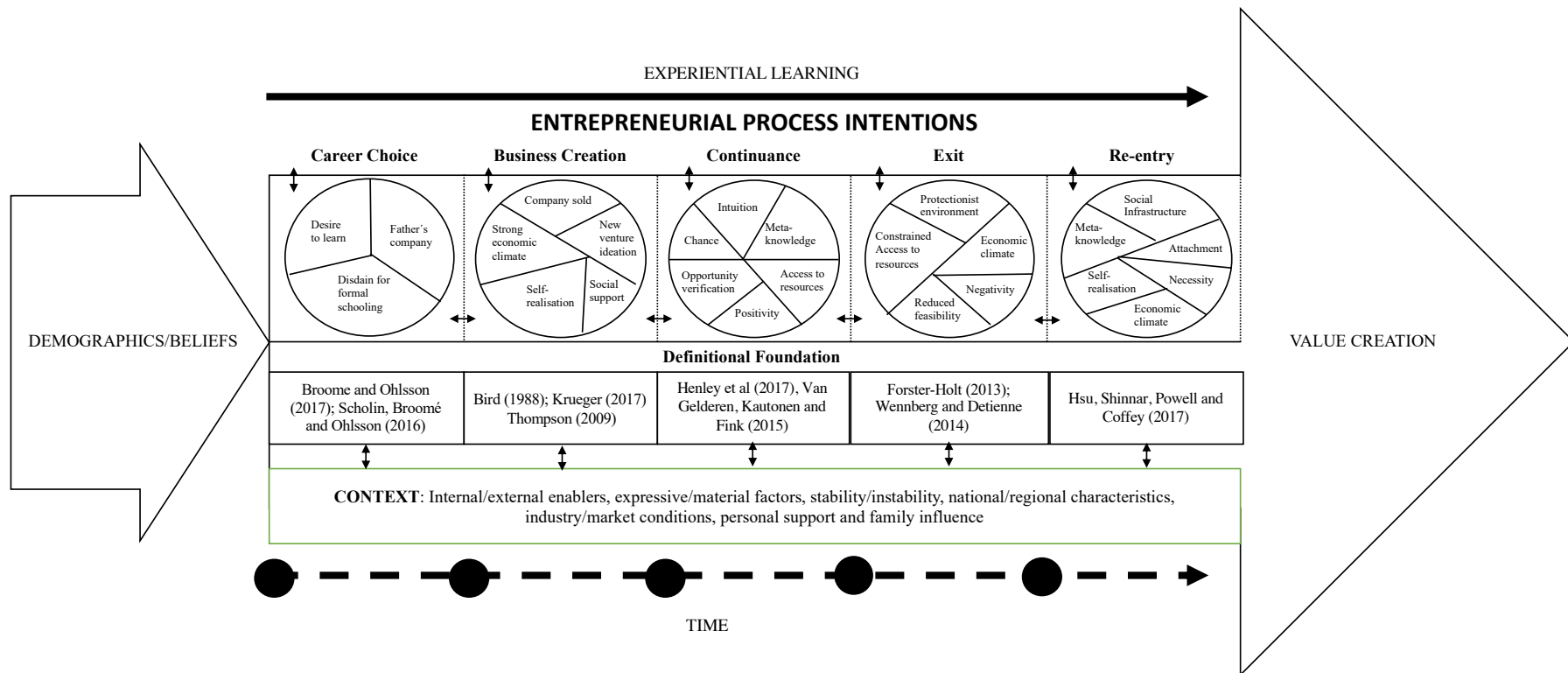


Figure 4.3 The entrepreneurial intention process: Assemblages of socially and contextually situated intent (this is an open system that will continue to emerge and change)

Due to the complex and open nature of the entrepreneurship process a myriad of unobservable causal tendencies have the potential to be activated with focus in this instance centred upon those that have emanated in their prominence in this particular case. Throughout the case history each event or assemblage of experiences can be further decomposed into its constituent parts each exhibiting its own capacity that when combined uniquely contributes to the “resultant” or perhaps more apt “emergent” eventual whole (Delanda, 2006). Upon the emergence of a paid employment intention (career choice) in operation is the individual’s desire to learn through doing, his disdain for formal schooling and finally the opportunity provided from his father being in possession of his own company. These three facets in isolation may not have been enough to create the intention for the entrepreneur to engage in formal employment, for example a disliking for the school environment does not automatically translate into one wanting to embark on the pathway towards wage employment as other more extreme possibilities exist such as the transitioning into the category of neither in education or employment. However, it is the tendency interacting with the opportunity to learn through doing within his father’s company that provides a material external enabler through which the actor’s or this case entrepreneur’s expressive desires could be generated, channeled and satisfied. An irreducibility is created as the properties of the causal mechanism cannot simply be reduced to the sum of its parts.

This assemblage became relatively well territorialised with identity acceptance enduring over a period of years until the external destabiliser of the company being sold influenced its subsequent functioning. A deterritorialisation occurred from the possibility of not being able to work under his father that caused the disassociation of the infrastructure facilitative towards employment intention wherein the company, or the absence of the entrepreneur’s father, assumed the alternate role of promoting a business creation intent. Indeed, this in combination with the emergents that transpired from the learning processes engaged in and the material effects of the physical labour endured which had been converted into more expressive means, namely the impression of self-realisation associated with augmented levels of self-efficacy and entrepreneurial com-

petence, contributed to such change. Thus, the initial components of the first assemblage enabled the new business creation intention that followed and the transfer of thinking into action. The entrepreneur had already identified a number of potential opportunities representing an exercised tendency, however, a strong intention to create was only conveyed and acted upon (therefore the tendency was actualised) when a certain compositional threshold of necessary internal individual capacities and external facilitating circumstances including a strong economic climate embracing the creation of new businesses and the encouragement of significant social others commingled.

The causes of creation intention if taken at a given time point as is the case with variance models may have been confounded as the individual's level of human capital, social support and entrepreneurial knowledge in the form of identified opportunities. Approached in this manner we are resigned to a world of the empiricism that can only provide a superficial account of events bypassing the many underlying mechanical intricacies involved (Mingers, 2002). Consider what has gone before, the particular historical path and the accumulated experience during the entrepreneur's earlier years which have served as a potential energy that has been stored within. We can clearly distinguish between competences that the entrepreneur has acquired as opposed to those that are dispositional, something that variance theorising through a single-time study would not permit (Gregoire, 2016). Although the identified causes are in operation they are not in determination they act as a trigger to the process of creation intention and are supported by the underlying impact of past occurrences (Bunge, 2017). In the parlance of Delanda (2012) the individual and his thought processes have actualised their capacity to affect but also been affected by what has gone before and indeed the external enabler observed.

In this particular scenario the temporal lag between creation intention and perceived conversion was of a relatively short duration suggesting an ephemeral fluidity of composition. This short delay may perhaps be required for an effective and efficient transition into actual behaviours as we have been informed previously of longer durations significantly reducing likelihoods of business creation (Gielnik et al, 2014). Of conse-

quence, if the assemblage of creation intention is more susceptible to deterritorialisation then we must act quick in attempts to establish homogeneity. We observe a symbolic and successful engagement with entrepreneurial based behaviours that resulted in the acquisition and serving of the entrepreneur's first customer that generated the perception of feasibility. This event has important implications regarding the intentional process as it emphasises the idiosyncratic and subjective composition of each individual's unique journey whilst also highlighting the potential self-regulatory effect of expectation beliefs and lived experiences. The entrepreneur had his beliefs verified confirming initial expectations that stimulated an intention to continue within the process, a recursive mechanism in that initial intention has been reified through subsequent actions and outcomes. Thus, created was a relatively more stable and homogenous intent to continue.

Continuance intention was largely fueled by an assemblage of an external environment conducive to the appropriation of resources such as finance and human capital, one that was open to collaboration and infused with social interactions. This created a scenario whereby the entrepreneur was able to act, in his own, words sub-consciously and in routinised fashion, to meet the needs and wants of the context. These experiences upon interaction with the positive attitude that emerged from such encounters and a continual desire to learn, embedded in the recognition of areas for improvement, served to once again in mutual reciprocity increase the entrepreneur's commitment. We witness a territorialised and homogenous grouping including a material augmentation in facilities underpinned by successful interaction with a stable environment that stimulated positive attitudinal responses.

However, as before the uncontrollable and unpredictable nature of exogenous occurrences lead to an offsetting of assemblage equilibrium. The onset of the financial downturn of 2008, an external stimulus acting upon the individual, activated a given response in the generation of negative emotions. These negative emotions contingently coevolved with decreased expressions of self-efficacy, increases in self-doubt, a protectionist social environment and reduced perceptions of feasibility. Interestingly, such

relations diminished the impact of social support that had previously served to ignite creation intent conveying the importance of context and openness when examining the concept as what was once a key component to the process was now inhibited by the intensity of other experienced parts. Complete closure of the intentional process is therefore not desirable as the stability of construct intensity and significance cannot be assumed especially considering that in variance modelling all impacting factors cannot possibly be included (Mingers, 2002). This is predominantly consequence of ignorance towards factors and further augmented by the difficulty encountered in capturing particular constructs.

The fifth event observed was the assemblage of experiences leading to the formation of re-entry intent that was preceded by a lengthy period of self-reflection. A number of constituent parts re-appeared contributing to the emergent whole including the entrepreneur's meta-knowledge of himself and the situation, self-realisation of his own capacities and a more favourable external environment both social and economic. On this occasion however, it is a motivational attachment to being an entrepreneur coupled with a necessity driven mindset that seems to spur the establishment of a re-entry intention. It is recognised that motivations are sculpted by the nexus of the individual and their environmental context (Bird, 2016) and the relations identified in this particular situation appear to have influenced this decision. This specific intention was driven by a necessity, one that was founded upon the belief that the entrepreneur was secure in the skills that he had to be successful within the industry undergirded by a strong knowledge. This perhaps has contributed to a reduction in more opportunistic based behaviours as he now seeks to avoid many of the mistakes made before in efforts to curtail the effects of any future external destabilisers.

4.6 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This case study set out with the ambition to answer the question of how and why EIs develop over time. This was addressed from a process perspective guided by the premise that EI cannot be confined to static examination however emerge in different shapes

and forms with corroboration sought via the longitudinal examination of one individual's journey throughout the entrepreneurial pathway. The approach was designed to enhance EI research by taking into consideration both the micro and the macro in the form and presence of individual and socially situated tendencies with their recursive relations that can influence emergence, a somewhat divergence from binary conceptions through acknowledging middle ground between agency and environmental impactors. Findings indicated that differences in intentional forms can lead to a variety of subsequent behaviours providing both external and internal conditions are conducive to specific configurations and that there is a reciprocity in functioning between compositional parts of the resultant assemblage. It was also discovered that affective and emotional variables recognised as state-like and episodic have both exercised and actualised tendencies to alter a given form.

Given that statistical modelling has assumed a position of prominence in intentional research the novel approach of a critical realist perspective that incorporated Delanda's theorising on assemblages has shown that the situated relations and exchanges between endogenous and exogenous assemblages are perhaps better examined through more qualitative and in-depth methods. Variance models and quantitative techniques should not be overlooked altogether however as, although they cannot uncover underlying causal mechanisms, they do have the potential through correlative analysis to provide superficial and descriptive representations with quasi-artificial closure of boundaries that can help in identifying common properties of given constructs (Sayer, 2010).

From a qualitative perspective identification of more complex mechanisms is afforded of external spatial-temporal circumstances, nonetheless, caution in interpretation is urged as contingencies do exist due to the composition of open structures such as those observed in the present study through both situational and historical contexts. It has become clear that EIs are contextually defined and therefore incorporate process. This processual approach has important repercussions on future research as we must be clear about and recognise the artificial boundary conditions that we are setting. I feel that it

is now not sufficient to speak in terms of EI as a definitional obscurity results in so-far-as what specific transitional form are we dealing with exactly?

Throughout the entrepreneurial process this case study has identified 5 different forms of intent and it is quite plausible that in the domain of the real there exists many more. It is imperative therefore that we accept EIs as operating within a possibility space whereby different forms may emerge dependent on multiplicities of heterogenous ensembles operating across both the micro and macro scales. It is these multiplicities that determine an individual's propensity to act and as witnessed in the current paper assemblages can be short lasting due to heterogenous fluidity as was the case with creation intent or more homogenous and stable. If considered in this manner perhaps we should be referring to "*entrepreneurial process intentions*" as an all-embracing concept that can account for the dynamism of entrepreneurship through its delineation into a specific form dependent upon its spatial and temporal location. This parameterisation of sort can then allow intentions to be considered as functioning through phases operating within a continuum of hybrid mixtures of expressive (such as affections, emotive responses and desires) and material (as in physical bodily processes, physical premises and other human) components.

This reframing is much more in agreement with the dynamic process of intending whose assemblages not only work from a bottom-up trajectory but so too from the top down as each intentional form or whole has both a facilitating and constraining impact that works recursively on its constituent parts. For example, continuance intention was upwardly fueled by perceptions of feasibility which concomitantly reified these perceptions from the top down as more activities were permitted to be accomplished.

There have been recent calls to action for the study of cognitive and affectual variables and their interactions with specific social situations (Mitchell, Randolph-Seng and Mitchell, 2011). Given their high susceptibility to change emotive responses were pervasive throughout the entrepreneur's journey exerting impact on self-perceived capabilities to complete entrepreneurial tasks both positively in encouraging continuance and negatively by allowing self-doubt to influence behaviour which eventually led to a

decision to exit the process. Applying our process philosophy located between agency and the environment we have identified another potential regulatory mechanism that if managed appropriately can stimulate continuance, a key area for future entrepreneurial scholars to consider. Here we can gain insight from emotional regulation literature that can inform us as to the most effective methods for an individual to control their emotional states especially when confronted with what we referred to here as external destabilisers (Heilman et al, 2010) something that perhaps the entrepreneur is currently trying to enact through remaining conscious to events that have the potential to impact upon his emotions.

4.7 LIMITATIONS

This study was not without its limitations and these should be made clear. Firstly, only a single case was used that focused upon highly specific contextual circumstances that has consequences in attempts to draw generalisations. However, the driving ambition of the study is theory development and not its empirical testing therefore this particular case proved valuable for gaining insights into the relationships between individual and socially-situated variables (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). Perhaps a multiple-case study approach could be considered in future efforts for comparisons and clarifications. Secondly, intentions involve both inner and outer processes that are difficult to identify and collect empirically. The use of interviews allowed for the extraction of information regarding an individual's intent which relied both on retrospective and real-time data collection. This reliance on verbalisation of thoughts does have a number of potential drawbacks as individuals may suffer from various biases through either conformance responses or simply through forgetting various pieces of information through fallible recall. This was partially abated through the use of a triangulation of methods that helped to support given statements and reveal previously unencountered data. Finally, the longitudinal nature of the study provided a wealth of information and data. Thus, it was imperative that key facets were extracted which ultimately entailed high degrees of

subjectivity which generates the possibility of relevant data being deemed irrelevant with the opposite also ringing true.

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APPENDIX 1

Table 7 First order quotes and second order themes

Representative First Order Quotes	Second Order Theme
<p>“I realised that the formal educational system was not for me although I enjoyed learning I wanted to gain actual work experience as soon as possible, this was the most important learning for me”</p> <p>“I hated the idea of staying in school”</p> <p>“deep down I always had a positive view of working and knew I would leave school at a young age, it was normal in those times”</p> <p>“My father had created his own successful company from nothing”</p> <p>“I had a strong desire to work with my father and get paid, this is what I chose to do”</p> <p>“these tasks provided the necessary, although sometimes not pretty, experiences to learn”</p>	<p>Career Choice Intention</p>
<p>“A key event happened when my father decided to sell the business in 1985, it put me in a very difficult situation as I had to make a very important decision at the age of 21, do I continue working for someone else who I don’t know or do I try to go it alone?”</p> <p>“Although there were various potential opportunities that I felt the market was not serving such as the lack of restorative firms I never saw myself filling this need, certainly in the short-term”</p> <p>“I said to myself that you have developed all the skills you need to do it yourself so maybe now is the right time”</p> <p>“I honestly didnt know how I would cope under a different boss, I felt a need to be self-dependent. This way I wouldn’t have to rely on anyone else”</p> <p>“I consulted with my work colleagues and of course my close family. They all encouraged me to create my own firm”</p> <p>“I would be telling lies if I didn’t tell you that if circumstances were different, I am sure that I would not have made the transition, everything appeared to fit into place from getting financial support to the psychological support offered by my family and friends”</p> <p>“Yes, at this moment I had a strong willingness, or intention to create my own business”</p>	<p>Business Creation Intention</p>

<p>“One of my main concerns was whether anyone would want the service I was going to provide however within a month of beginning my journey I had already ha done customer and at this moment my perseverance had paid off, I realized that the business was feasible; that my perceptions matched reality and for me this is when my business was officially created”</p> <p>“I knew this was not a signal of my success but it did show me that it could work and from this I could créate a manageable business, which was my ultimate goal at the time”</p>	
<p>“business growth surpassed my expectations, the company grew to around 100 people, imagine that, who what have thought from the start”</p> <p>“No, the growth wasnt planned, it is just something that appeared to happen, we did not plan for it and it was almost happening sub-consciously”</p> <p>“I had developed contacts and business came from a lot of these. Even when meetings were not planned I would still meet individuals that offered me contracting projects and of substantial size”</p> <p>“I never thought of anything else than continuing within the business, I had a strong willingness to keep going”</p> <p>“To improve and remain competitive we needed to educate ourselves. At this point I hired specialists to optimise the business processes and I also tried to develop my own managerial skills”</p> <p>“The business was becoming stablized and the external environment was very friendly, I had generated a lot of resources and those I didnt have could be easily found. It was positive and as a result I was positive”</p>	<p>Continuance Intention</p>
<p>“It is a topic that I dont really like to discuss. There are certain things that are out of our control and this was one of them”</p> <p>“I just wanted to get out”</p> <p>“I wasnt sure if I had the ability to carry out my job anymore. Was it really for me? Things were no longer working out the way the were before, honestly, i began to question myself”</p> <p>“Everyone disappeared, the contacts I had generated had vanished, resources were no longer there. Everybody was looking out for themselves which is normal really”</p> <p>“Was the business viable in the climate that was created, the answer was a clear no and a decision was forced upon</p>	<p>Exit Intention</p>

<p>me to sell”</p> <p>“those with a greater knowledge of the conditions got it wrong and if they could not have predicted what was to come, how could I have any chance?”</p> <p>“It was a moment that I don’t like to relive, I was overwhelmed with emotion and above all fear and anger, anxiety also started to set in as I began to seriously question my desire to be an entrepreneur”.</p> <p>“My close friends and family continued in their strong support and for that I am truly thankful”</p>	
<p>“What a learning experience, looking back to where I was and where I am currently is worlds apart. I know that I have the ability, my experience has shown this. Why I ever questioned myself I will never know. I have an underlying passion for the industry”</p> <p>“having spent long periods of time contemplating what my next move was to be, I finally realized that these events were simply a new period of learning in my life, just as my time working for my father had been...external events were largely out of my control and what I can control I am good at”</p> <p>“At this moment I can confirm that I have a strong intention to re-enter the industry and create another company”</p> <p>“The environment is beginning to turn, slowly, but it is becoming a little bit more favourable again”</p> <p>“the sensation of connecting with individuals again, is for me incredible, with each conversation I have my desire slowly grows”</p> <p>“Yes the changing climate has had a very big effect on the way I think, I am much more positive and optimistic about the future”</p> <p>“I thought, was it better to try something completely new or do what I know and what I am good at. I chose the second option and yes you could say out of necessity and the fact there were no other options”</p> <p>“I will not let myself get carried away with circumstances and the promises of individuals, however each time I encounter business prospects these are dealt with in a pensive, rational and rigorous manner”</p>	<p>Re-entry intention</p>

APPENDIX 2

Sample interview script (Interview 1 RQ: How do EI evolve?)

Introduction

Good afternoon *ENTREPRENEUR*, as you know my name is xxxx xxxxxxxx and I am currently carrying out research into the evolution of entrepreneurial intentions and how these develop over time. It is interesting for me as it gives an insight into the starting point of the entrepreneurial process and why people want to become entrepreneurs. If we are able to answer these questions, then we can promote this as a feasible career choice among many young people who perhaps do not see it this way. This is a very important challenge, so thank you for agreeing to participate in the study. The interview will last no longer than 45 minutes and any information you provide will be treated as highly confidential with your anonymity being assured per your request. Do you give permission for the interview to be recorded? This will only be used for transcription purposes and will be discarded when this process is carried out.

Questions

1. Could you please tell me about yourself? (**Background**)
 - I. Age
 - II. Family/Marital status/Children→ Were parents entrepreneurs or what was their profession? Does any of your family work, if so what profession?
 - III. Educational Experience→Secondary school/degree level
 - IV. Working background → First job, different types of job, main tasks, number of years, industry.
 - V. What socio-economic group would you classify yourself as? Has this changed over the years?

2. Thinking more about your early childhood how do you think your experiences have affected your decision to become an entrepreneur?
 - I. **Attitude** → Desirability of becoming an entrepreneur, liking/disliking various aspects, were there any other options that were more desirable? Why? Was there an intention from the start? Did you have an idea first? Were you happy with what you were doing? Why a specific area/industry?
 - II. **Subjective Norms** → How do others around you feel when you made this career choice? Were they supportive or did they prefer you to follow a different path? How did you value their opinion? Were some more valued than others? Why?
 - III. **Self-efficacy** → How capable did you see yourself when engaging in different work related/entrepreneurial tasks? Was there a perception of control? Did this develop over time? What did you see as your main strengths/areas for improvement? How did these affect your intentions?

3. How would you describe your **entrepreneurial intentions at the current time**? Consider probing into emotions, sensations, feelings, future outlooks etc (with sensitivity!).
 - I. How have prior experiences impact upon this? What are the most important for you? Do you consider yourself to be an entrepreneur at the moment? What do you see for your entrepreneurial future over the next year?

Close: Thank you for your time. Over the next number of weeks, I will transcribe the interview, analysing the data and will share this with you to check that you are in agreement or if there is something pertinent you feel I have missed.

APPENDIX 3

Table 8 Interview timeline

Month	Year	Interview Number
June	2012	1
May	2013	2
June	2014	3
January	2015	4
July	2015	5
January	2016	6
April	2016	7
August	2016	8
January	2017	9
July	2017	10
December	2017	11
May	2018	12

Entrepreneurial Intent's tendency for change: The temporal stability of constructs and relational patterns

ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurial intentions assume a fundamental role in the entrepreneurship process as they are not only seen as its initiator but so too as a director of behaviours thereafter. Traditionally they have been investigated cross-sectionally and therefore we are not fully addressing their true utility. In order to do so the current paper longitudinally examines their tendency for change based upon exposure to entrepreneurial behaviours within entrepreneurship modules/workshops. The two overriding research questions are, (RQ1) is there a change in an individual's levels of entrepreneurial intending over time? and secondly, (RQ2) are there differences in the relational configurations of it's antecedents? To answer these a sample of postgraduate masters students is taken across the business schools from 2 universities in Ireland. Results conveyed that entrepreneurial intentions undergo change over time and that initial and sustained exposure influences the trajectory and intensity of such change. A number of implications for theory and practice are presented based upon these findings with new lines of research opened.

5.0 INTRODUCTION

Attitudes, subjective norms and an individual's entrepreneurial self-efficacy, either directly or indirectly, act as cognitive antecedents towards the level of intent that one displays toward engaging in entrepreneurially based behaviours. Research has revealed and reified their importance in this regard however much of this work has been enacted through cross-sectional methodology that only offers a "snapshot" of the complete picture which although affords the ability to impart correlational inferences it does not allow for those that are causal. In other words, data is collected at a single point in time and as consequence anything that happens before or after is largely, if not completely, neglected (Sniehotta, Presseau and Araujo-Soares, 2014). Thus, through such a static approach although outcomes may be predicted and variance studied one cannot possibly provide sufficient explanation as to the how, why and what has happened in relation to observed transformations or lack thereof.

Given that we constantly and experientially modify cognitions throughout our life course the three aforementioned determining constructs could quite plausibly undergo change at various stages of the process fluctuating in terms of value, significance or combinative complexity. Considering that particular pathways and patterns are followed (Zahra, 2007) idiosyncratic spatial-temporal requirements will present themselves dependent upon one's own experience, personal beliefs and value systems. Thus, the multiplicative foundation upon which intent is built would imply multiple situational dependencies amongst its formative constructs that can produce differentials and inconsistencies both within and across relationships over time. This contextual framing (Chandler, DeTienne, McKelvie and Mumford, 2011) in the parlance of the effectual school of thought would facilitate divergence from, and adjustment of, original intentional levels to co-align with current situational demands (Miralles, Giones and Gozun, 2017).

Outcome variations or realignments of entrepreneurial intentions (EI) themselves may impact upon the subsequent intensity of feelings that one conveys. Intentions have strength related properties that emerge from their level of stability that can help expli-

cate a dearth of findings in which intention leads to action. This transition period located between conscious thought and behaviour will unquestionably be turbulent, fraught with challenges and result in exposure to a plethora of new experiences and information. Arguably, stability of EIs has a highly influential role to play when perceived as one's capacity to direct attention and behaviour over time, thus stability acts as an important pre-condition towards the intention-behaviour relationship (Ajzen, 1996).

Of interest, through engagement in more proximal nascent actions and new knowledge generation (such as participation in entrepreneurship-based modules and workshops (EP)), the capacity to alter subsequent perceptions, behaviours and desires is realised as one learns and becomes more aware of the true extent of what is required providing confirmation or disconfirmation to our originally held expectations (Ahmed, Chandran and Klobas, 2017). At the same time if exposure is constrained after original contact we may not be able to evoke stability in directing our behaviours and therefore observe a consequent reduction in EI. If temporality is taken into consideration through continuous observation carried out often changes and emergent influencers can be identified and empirically tested.

Of requirement is a pragmatism that allows for the continual remodelling, revision and in some scenarios total reversal of our commonly held beliefs based on contextual circumstances. To capture such facets and as a starting point beneficial potentialities may lay in a shared attention towards both variance and process. Study via means of process permits the examination of events at a greater frequency in search of more comprehensive explication that can extend beyond mere conclusions as to whether or not change has occurred. This moves us toward inferences regarding more intricate features including, facilitators, inhibitors and potential feedback mechanisms (Carsrud and Brännback, 2011). Simultaneously maintaining the inclusion of a plurality of methods allows for greater depth of understanding and it could well be argued that entrepreneurship contains characteristics of both variation (e.g. personality types, entrepreneurial traits, types of action etc.) and process (state-like responses, duration of entrepreneurial

phases, frequency of landmark activities, completion rate of critical events, organizational emergence etc.).

However, in both contrast and complement this study seeks to answer the call of numerous scholars (Ahmed et al, 2017; Hessels, Grilo, Thurik and Zwan, 2011; Kautonen, Van Gelderen and Tornikoski, 2013; Laspita, Breugst, Hebllich and Patzelt, 2012) whom highlighted the pressing need for knowledge generation on time-based elements that lead to action. Thus, dynamism is introduced, something that has seldom been enacted within the field and that can not only help to further explicate the accepted antecedent variables but also give consideration to new emergent constructs and their role in the development of associated temporal patterns of entrepreneuring.

Following on from this the purpose of the present paper can be more clearly represented by two overriding research questions. Firstly, (RQ1) Is there a change in an individual's levels of entrepreneurial intending over time? Secondly, (RQ2) Are there differences in the relational configurations of its antecedents? The paper proceeds as follows; the next section provides overview to the main theoretical drivers of the investigation analysing related EI research. Leading on, hypotheses are presented and the methods used to empirically test these are outlined. Next, results are conveyed and discussed in regard to the two research questions with the final section drawing conclusion to the study highlighting the implications for both practice and research.

5.1 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

EIs are a representation of previously concealed latent potential (Broomé and Ohlsson, 2018) acting as a causal precursor to more observable individual actions (Dimov, 2007). Contemporary interest in the construct has encouraged a proliferation of studies in the area undergirded by the theoretical foundations of social psychology which display high applicability through derivative intentional models. In their suggestions to advance this stream of research Fayolle and Liñan (2014) instruct us of the need to provide a clear and precise operationalisation towards the meaning we apply given that as the field evolves theoretical mismatches are becoming increasingly prevalent. Although

many variations exist, irrespective of their own idiosyncratic inputs there appears to be consistencies that can be drawn upon to negate definitional challenges such as the inclusion of cognitive, goal directed and behavioural components (for example Thompson, 2009). In consideration of this, I extend this definition through the inclusion of a more processual and time-derived component open to the possibility of non-rational chance. In the present context intent is conveyed as a mindful willingness to engage in deliberative processes that both affect and are affected by context, directing future entrepreneuring, and thus value emitting behaviours (e.g venture creation) within a specified period of time. Importantly, this is perceived as an evolving construct whose intensity and form has the capacity to fluctuate depending on compositional ensembles of individual and situational components.

As noted, efforts to explicate the phenomenon have historically been embedded in variance theorising. In other words, intention has been conceptualised as a property that, at a specified point in time has a state varying from low to high, which scholars have attempted to predict through a number of formative properties or states. Assuming this posture has permitted the identification of precursory causes that through acting as a necessary and sufficient condition are deemed adequate to lead to or predict intent and by proxy behaviour. Intentional models, the most widely-used of which is Azjen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), are constituted from a number of similar conceptually independent composites or states including attitudes towards entrepreneurial behaviours (evaluative processes via which an individual makes either a favourable or unfavourable assessment of a particular entrepreneurial target behaviour), subjective norms (concerned with key reference groups within society that have the potential to exert cognitive pressures of conformity dependent on stylised beliefs) and perceived behavioural control (a self-appraisal of capability to successfully complete a given entrepreneurial behaviour or in other words entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE)) which are deemed causative either via direct or indirect means.

Although investigative endeavor through usage of the TPB and such variants has proved fruitful an inflection point has occurred within the broader entrepreneurship

domain guided by the belief that entrepreneurship is best understood through its processual makeup, one of which that unfolds over a temporal period (Gartner and Shane, 1995) and whose origins can be discovered long in advance of the perceived entrepreneurial outcomes (García-Rodríguez, Gil-Soto, Ruiz-Rosa and Sene, 2015). This change of scope from the gifted individual to the complexity of numerous intertwining psychosocial variables has elected to promote or encourage explanation through more process-oriented approaches enacted through longitudinal investigations to better accommodate its intricacy which if transferred to intentional literature may have the potential to increase the explicative percentages of these heavily used models.

The spill over into the niche of contemporary EI research has appeared mainly through verbal means with numerous advocacies of longitudinal measurements by way of future recommendations or suggestions to help alleviate perceived methodological limitations. However, as of yet, it has failed to materialise into a standalone stream of empirical investigation perhaps suggestive of the delicate nature of such research protocols (Galloway, Kapasi and Whittam, 2015). There are a number of researchers that have attempted longitudinal designs. For instance, Gielnik et al (2014) alert us to the declining impact of goal intentions on new venture creation whose significant effect weakens after approximately 12 months whereas Fayolle and Gailly (2015) uncovered no short-term effect on intentions from an entrepreneurship education programme. Interestingly, Kautonen, van Gelderen and Fink (2015) were able to verify implicit assumptions that the TPB is a robust predictor of action through longitudinally depicting its capacity to explicate 31% of variance in subsequent behaviour realised.

Withstanding such limited density this embryonic research stream has produced useful inputs and areas for further investigation including the fact that intentions must be acted upon relatively quickly (Townsend, Busenitz and Arthurs, 2010); significant differences exist in intentions over time (Mosey, Noke and Binks, 2012); and intriguingly initial intention levels do not appear to influence future intentional development (Joensuu, Viljamaa, Varamaki and Tornikoski, 2013). All of these are based upon the underlying premise that intending evolves and suffers from variation throughout time.

In specific reference to EP a number of studies have also highlighted this capacity for change however results often remain conflicted perhaps as direct consequence of their cross-sectional design. The expectancy would be that due to their capacity to augment levels of antecedent variables they would exert a positive impact on EI (Zhang, Duysters and Cloudt, 2014). Therefore, the first hypotheses presented is:

Hypothesis 1: Entrepreneurial participation over time will have a positive influence on entrepreneurial intending

5.1.1 ATTITUDE TOWARDS ENTREPRENEURSHIP (ATT)

Attitudes are viewed as evaluative judgements towards an object which in this instance are those entrepreneurial behaviours that contribute to the desired outcome of new value creation. Attitudes have been previously discussed in terms of stable entities stored within our long-term memory or conversely as momentary judgements that are established in reference to available information in a given situation (Gawronski, 2007). It is the latter version that provides more interest for the current paper as from this perspective we can reason that a multitude of meanings dependent upon associative processes and circumstantial contexts preclude construction and thus they may be characterised by the notion of a time-dependent state (Conrey and Smith, 2007) as opposed to their conceivment as an enduring or dispositional trait.

As such, attitudes become reliant upon information accessibility and interpretation. As an individual engages in entrepreneurial based modules and workshops accessibility to useful information is likely to increase through entrepreneurial learning. In parallel, an awareness is gained into real requirements through actual completion of entrepreneurial tasks and it is reasonable to suggest that as more direct experience is accumulated and as we transition from more abstract construals to those that are concrete our attitudes are likely to become more susceptible to change due to observed discrepancies.

Hypothesis 2: EP over time will lead to an increase in ATT.

5.1.2 ENTREPRENEURIAL SELF-EFFICACY (ESE)

This contextual variability perspective regarding accessibility of, and exposure to, information and the subsequent evaluative judgments that can be made will largely be co-dependent upon motivation levels and ability (Bohner and Dickel, 2011). With this in mind, perceived behavioural control or ESE is considered to be a key motivational construct that involves cognitive appraisal of one's capacity and has the potential to influence both the decision-making process and the emotional responses that we elicit. Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) purports that the efficacy expectations we hold towards objects can impact on our decisions to engage in various activities including entrepreneurial behaviours, the effort we will expend to complete these and finally our levels of persistence if confronted with difficulty. In this regard, changes in the formative constructs of ESE, i.e. our efficacy beliefs, are likely to impact upon our intent. This adds increasing importance towards the postulation that ESE has a plasticity influenced by learning processes, experience and the feedback that we receive (Gist and Mitchell, 1992).

Enactive attainments are a prime example of how these influencers can combine to cause variations in ESE. These mastery experiences are direct indicators of one's capabilities and are proposed to afford an invaluable source of information that can alter perceptions of our abilities as when we experience success we are more likely to perceive higher levels of ESE. However, the reverse is also true in that if we fail or our anticipated expectations are not met ESE is lowered (Bandura, 1982). It is therefore plausible to suggest that as an individual accumulates greater experience through EP, once again progressively receiving more relevant and specific stimuli that can either confirm or diverge from original efficacy expectations, then their levels of ESE could well vary. If one experiences success in the performance of entrepreneurial behaviours they are therefore more likely to convey higher levels of entrepreneurial ESE. At the same time, failure, reduced performance, or reduced exposure, may cause perceptions of ESE to lessen. Consequently, the following hypotheses are presented:

Hypothesis 3: EP over time will lead to an increase ESE.

5.1.3 SUBJECTIVE NORMS (SN)

As behaviour is heavily affected by what we see and hear from others (Cialdini and Goldstein, 2004) social relationships assume an integral role in the learning processes that can occur and thus serve as a key source of information. Individuals will learn from the previously discussed enactive attainments but also through less direct means including arousal levels, vicarious experiences and verbal interactions. Information received is often communicated via the propagation of cultural or social norms that represent what a given society or key reference groups consider acceptable. In this way, perceived SN refer to largely uncodified perceptions at the individual level of common behaviours or practice.

Norms are a contextually dependent and dynamic phenomenon both affecting and being affected by the actions of individuals (Rimal and Lapinski, 2015). From this outlook, individuals can be selective as to which norms to comply and may exhibit differentials in terms of the value they attribute to these and their source. There are two ways in which people can confront SN, firstly they can conform to or deviate from, the common practice, or secondly, if they conform, they can do so at various levels (Miller and Prentice, 2016). Conformity appears to be the common course of action deemed a favourable heuristic to inform decisions (Cialdini and Goldstein, 2004).

In-so-doing the need to engage in timely and thorough deliberation regarding potential consequences is circumvented. That one does not fully evaluate decisions to act may well create a fixed action pattern that can result in undertaking activities based on communication of information that may not be accurate or relevant to the self. However, in some scenarios the recommended actions to take may not be clear and as a result ambiguity ensues predominantly a consequence of behavioural or situational novelty. In more familiar contexts and with greater experience of behaviours and their significance decisions can be made based on personal judgements (Arrow and Burns, 2004).

From this I can posit the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: EP over time will diminish the direct influence of SN on entrepreneurial intending.

5.1.4 RELATIONAL PATTERNS

Entrepreneurship is socially situated and therefore will require different demands dependent upon the specific context. Although one would expect a stability in regard to the relationships between each variable and its temporal counterpart it is quite plausible to infer that variations in regard to the configuration significance of the precursory antecedents may well exist. That is to say, attitudes may be more predictive of EI in the early stages when desires are being developed but perhaps as enhanced exposure to actual behaviours is realised ESE will assume greater predictive power due to its significance in success or feasibility determination. With this the last hypothesis to be tested is as follows:

Hypothesis 5: The relational pattern between antecedents across time-points will remain stable however the predictive power of these will vary.

5.2 METHODOLOGY

5.2.1 DATA COLLECTION

The initial dataset comprised of 124 post-graduate master students from Ireland all located within the business school of their respective university. This targeted approach has been one that has been previously advocated with sample appropriateness justified on the grounds that the students will encounter important career decisions in their very near future (Bae, Qian, Miao and Fiet, 2014). Data was collected in an accelerated manner over a total period of 4 months with similar temporal durations being observed elsewhere in intentions-based studies¹⁰ through the use of a combination of an adapted version of Liñan Moriano & Jaen's (2016) Entrepreneurial Intent Questionnaire (EIQ) and the shortened version of Luthans, Bruce, Avolio and Avey's (2007) Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ-12) distributed electronically. Within the introductory section of the survey students were informed of its purpose and were made aware that participation in the study was completely voluntary with those who did take part as-

¹⁰ For example Soutaris, Zerbinati and Al-Laham (2007) covered a period lasting 5 months with time-ranges being quoted in the range of 2 weeks to 12 months in other research fields (Kellar and Hankins, 2013),

sured anonymity. Contact details were gathered for all those whom completed the questionnaires for follow-up purposes at the subsequent measurement occasion.

Two different time-points during the year 2018 were used to survey students separated by an invariant temporal distance of 4 months, the first in January (t1) and the second in May (t2). Missing data did not pose any problems due to the inclusion of required questions ensuring that motivated participants whom completed the instrument always provided all the necessary information. However, due to the longitudinal design attrition did occur, 124 questionnaires were collected at t1 and 92 at t2 (74% response rate). Therefore, only individuals who had provided information at both time-points were accepted with this restriction the final dataset amounted to 92 individuals with 2 matched responses.

The average age of participants was 24 (± 2.00) and values ranged from 21 to 31 years. There was an even spread in relation to gender with only a slight majority of females (n=49, 53%) than males (n=43, 47%). Individuals who had no previous employment experience accounted for 52% (n=48) and just under half of the sample 49% (n=45) noted an entrepreneurial role model within their lives. Comparisons were made between these students and those that dropped out of the study based on demographic details such as, age, experience, gender and role models, with no statistical differences being observed. The final sample is deemed sufficiently representative of the demographic profile of postgraduate students found in Ireland.

5.2.2 MEASURES

The EIQ (associated scales included in the appendix) was used to assess EIs and their precursory antecedents having previously been validated and examined in relation to its psychometric properties elsewhere (Liñán et al, 2016). EIs represented the dependent variable and they are operationalised in accordance with a 5-item measure (7-point Likert Scale) adopted from the EIQ. This composite sub-scale consisted of both behavioural intention and desirability statements that have been previously validated in terms of their predictive capacity (Armitage and Conner, 2001; Kautonen et al, 2015). Items

were adjusted slightly to include a temporal component as can also be observed in the study of Van Gelderen, Kautonen and Fink (2015). For example, the item “My professional goal is to become an entrepreneur” subsequently read “I have the professional goal to become an entrepreneur within the next 12 months”. This is deemed as a reasonable frame of reference given that the students are studying at postgraduate level and therefore are ever-closer to the world of work. One item, (item 3) was negatively worded and results gained for this were subsequently rescored meaning that a 0 rating was equal to 6 and vice-versa.

A multiplicative measurement of ATT was implemented through the use of an unmodified version of the EIQ sub-scale. Two sets of six different items across a 7-point Likert Scale were provided. The first required the participant to convey the beliefs that they had towards performing an entrepreneurial associated behaviour. Next, the second set of 6 items were used to address evaluations of performing this particular behaviour as attitudes are largely dependent upon the belief that the behaviour is desirable. To alleviate the potential occurrence of collinearity 3 was subtracted from the desirability value meaning that it operated on a scale from -3 to 3. Therefore, the resultant ATT value was a product of beliefs and desires (minus 3).

In similar fashion to ATT, SN were determined by multiplicative variables, using a 7-point Likert Scale, extracted directly from the EIQ instrument. The product of 2 sets of 3 items designed to capture a participant’s beliefs about how significant others feel about their engagement in entrepreneurship and the participants’ motivation to comply with these beliefs composed this scale. Once again, in order to contend with any potential collinearity issues, the motivation to comply value was recalculated to represent a scale of -3 to 3.

Three items used in composite were considered to determine an individual’s level of ESE. These items were a modified (upon permission) version of three questions extracted from Luthans et al (2007) PCQ-12. The items included “I have a lot of confidence in my ability to represent a business idea and new business strategy”; “I have a lot of confidence in my ability to keep the entrepreneurship process under control”; and

finally, “I have a lot of confidence in my ability to present information about the entrepreneurship process to peers/colleagues”. For ESE, ratings were made across a 6-point Likert Scale in alignment with the original instrument.

Three control variables in relation to demographic details were included due to their potential capacity to lessen any miscalculation of effect sizes as consequence of associated biases. These were all measured in binary form, firstly, with literature instructing us that males are more likely to exhibit positive EIs (Shinnar, Hsu, Powell and Zhou, 2018) gender was accounted for through the coding 1 for male and 2 for female. Next, work experience or human capital experience was coded as 2 for having previous experience and 1 for not having. Finally, socially based role models are seen to impact upon valuations of entrepreneurship (Liñan, Urbano and Guerrero, 2011) and were thus coded as 2 as knowing a role-model and 1 not knowing.

Participation in Entrepreneurship Modules/Courses (EP) also acted as a control and was coded as a binary variable, 2 representing participation and 1 having not participated. Importantly, an entrepreneurship module/workshop was operationalised as one that had the majority of focus on practical-based activities as opposed to greater concentration towards theory. As such, a one item measure was developed which read, “In the last four months, have you participated in an entrepreneurship module/workshop that had a practical focus? For example, having to physically engage in entrepreneurship related activities such as organising resources, networking, creating a business plan etc?”. The same question is asked again within the subsequent wave of data collection, however the beginning of the sentence re-worded to read, “Since completing the last questionnaire, have you participated ...?”

5.2.3 DATA ANALYSIS

EI and antecedent stability, in general, has been measured in past research via a range of methodological approaches. Common occurrence has been the implementation of more than one measure and the consequent development of average derived stability indexes. As example, Davidson and Jaccard (1979) used a classification strategy

through the dichotomisation of stability whereby participants were positioned into corresponding groups depending upon their given response. Groupings were demarcated through those who were “intenders” (scoring above the mid-value); “uncertain” (scoring on the mid-point); and “non-intenders” (scoring below the mid-point). Three measurements were enacted and any participant who moved grouping in subsequent measurements was considered as having less stable levels of intent with the converse also being accepted as true.

Conner, Norman and Bell (2002), on the other hand, and based on prior work by Campbell (1990), considered three measures of stability which included the total absolute difference at the temporal measurements, the total absolute difference between item totals at each measurement occasion, and finally, the number of items who’s score changed between time-points. Variations in scores can largely be determined through sum differences in items, scale differences and number of items that change. A number of variations and combinations using similar calculations have also been observed in a selection of different investigations (for example Cooke and Sheeran (2004)). However, in specific reference to studies focusing on the stability of EI, of which only 2 are identified, Liñan and Rodríguez-Cohard (2015) and Liñan, Rodríguez-Cohard and Guzmán (2011) adopted a similar approach to that of Sheeran, Orbell and Trafimow (1999) through examining differences in relative within-person correlation coefficients and also absolute values.

Irrespective of the method implemented, it is clear that stability has largely been estimated via within-participant correlations between items or via the calculation of score variation. It is the latter method that will be used in the current investigation, i.e. the absolute difference between the sum of items that compose variable levels at the prior time-point that is then subtracted from the subsequent time-point (t_2-t_1) (Godin, Gagnon, Lambert and Conner, 2005). This strategy is adopted grounded in the belief that the restricted number of measurement points have the potential to incur losses of data due to the possibilities of reduced variation at any one measurement occasion (Conner et al, 2002).

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) (which has previously been postulated by Liñan and Rodriguez-Cohard (2015) as an appropriate method to assess the stability of the relationships) is then used to examine relationship patterns between the different constructs of the conceptual model. Multi-variate analysis was implemented based on partial least squares (PLS) using Smart PLS 3 (Ringle, Wende and Becker, 2015) an approach that is particularly suited to smaller sample sizes and exploration analysis (Fornell and Bookstein, 1982). PLS is a technique used in the modelling of latent variables and is becoming ever-more present in the entrepreneurial research domain (Kautonen, Tornikoski and Kibler, 2011; Liñan and Chen, 2009; Shinnar, Giacomini and Janssen, 2012). As a form of SEM, PLS attempts to determine relationships amongst a set of latent variables that are reflective of one or more different indicators. A two-step procedure of analysis is enacted, the first is associated with reliability and validity which assesses the measurement model through observing relationships between identified items and latent variables, and the second, with the structural model considering power evaluation and path coefficients through the analysis of relationships between the latent variables themselves (Sosik, Kahai and Piovoso, 2009).

5.3 RESULTS

5.3.1 DIFFERENCES IN MODEL ANTECEDENTS

Descriptive statistics highlighted that participants held strong EIs at t1 (10.86 ± 2.88) with 60 (65%) demonstrating EP within the preceding 4 months prior to measurement. Levels of EI increased significantly at the second occasion (EI: 12.17 ± 2.26 , $p < 0.001$) supporting hypothesis 1 and indicated that there was a positive predisposition towards entrepreneurial behaviours. There was a clear susceptibility for intentional change given that from t1 until t2 77% ($n=71/92$) of respondents had demonstrated absolute change and of which 50 (54%) were in a positive direction (supporting H1) and 21 (23%) in a negative one. This meant that based on our measure of stability only 21 (24%) individuals exhibited no variation in EI. At t2 EP displayed an overall decrease

(61%, n=56). In observation of EI antecedents (Table 1) significant and notable positive changes were found from t1-t2 in all constructs, ATT (3.65, $p<0.005$), SN (12.89, $p<0.001$) and ESE (.79 $p<0.005$) verifying H2 and H3.

To examine the impact of EP the sample was split based on those that had participated in entrepreneurship within the preceding 4 months and those who did not. Pairwise comparisons based on estimated marginal means for the repeated measures were determined for both groups to examine the stability of the key variables (Table 9). Independent-samples t-tests showed that those who had participated at t1 had significantly higher values at baseline and t2 in EI ($p<0.001$), ESE ($p<0.001$), ATT ($p<0.001$), and SN ($p<0.001$) than those who did not. Exposure and non-exposure at t2 also saw significant differences in EI levels (1.98, $p<0.001$) and in two antecedent variables (ATTt2 $p<0.05$; ESEt2 $p<0.005$) with participation more favourable, however the difference was insignificant for SN at t2. Given that significant change was only demonstrated in SN ($p<0.001$) within the EP group from t1-t2 in order to gain more intricate insights the group was further split to check the impact of sustained and increased exposure versus decreased or sustained lack of exposure (Table 10) with results depicting that those in absence of EP at t2 having previously been exposed at t1 significantly decreased in EI from t1-t2 (-1.44, $p<0.005$) whereas those who sustained or increased EP significantly improved their levels of intending further confirming H1 (1.54 and 4.62 $p<0.001$ respectively).

	t1		t2		Stability t1-t2
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Absolute
Combined Group					
Entrepreneurial Intention	10.86	2.88	12.17	2.26	1.31***
Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship	22.19	11.67	25.84	10.33	3.65**
Subjective Norms	14.71	3.84	27.60	7.64	12.89***
Entrepreneurial Self-efficacy	9.57	2.35	10.36	2.40	.79**
Entrepreneurial Participation t1					
Entrepreneurial Intention	12.61	1.68	12.73	1.83	.46
Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship	26.27	9.63	28.58	8.61	2.31
Subjective Norms	16.07	3.14	29.05	7.89	12.98***
Entrepreneurial Self-efficacy	10.55	1.91	11.02	2.05	.47
No Entrepreneurial Participation t1					
Entrepreneurial Intention	7.57	1.39	11.11	2.63	3.54***
Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship	14.54	11.44	20.71	11.43	6.17**
Subjective Norms	12.16	3.77	24.88	6.44	12.72***
Entrepreneurial Self-efficacy	7.72	1.95	9.12	2.55	1.40**
Entrepreneurial Participation t2					
Entrepreneurial Intention	10.01	2.75	12.94	1.33	2.93***
Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship	20.17	11.54	28.31	7.63	8.14***
Subjective Norms	14.16	4.00	28.05	7.46	13.89***
Entrepreneurial Self-efficacy	9.18	2.38	10.99	1.93	1.81***
No Entrepreneurial Participation t2					
Entrepreneurial Intention	12.18	2.60	10.96	2.84	-1.22**
Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship	25.33	11.32	22.00	12.70	-3.33
Subjective Norms	15.56	3.46	26.89	7.98	11.33***
Entrepreneurial Self-efficacy	10.16	2.19	9.37	2.74	-0.79*
P<0.05* P<0.005** P<0.001***					

Table 9 Pairwise comparisons based on estimated marginal means of the stability of Entrepreneurial Intentions and its antecedents

	EP t1/No EP t2			No EP t1/EP t2			EP t1/EP t2			No EP t1/No EP t2		
	Mean	SD	Stability t1-t2	Mean	SD	Stability t1-t2	Mean	SD	Stability t1-t2	Mean	SD	Stability t1-t2
Entrepreneurial Intention	11.85	2.28	-1.44**	12.19	1.56	4.62***	13.54	.66	1.54***	7.29	2.00	-.28
Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship	26.10	9.78	-2.23	25.05	7.58	10.05***	30.94	6.68	6.61***	5.20	9.27	-7.70
Subjective Norms	28.03	8.32	11.37***	25.64	6.84	13.16***	30.00	7.46	14.48***	22.14	3.98	11.14***
Entrepreneurial Self-efficacy	10.20	2.35	-0.69	10.00	2.10	2.12***	11.78	1.35	1.54***	5.95	.95	-1.19*
P<0.05* P<0.005** P<0.001***												

Table 10 Key variable mean values at t2 and their stability based on EP groupings

5.3.2 DIFFERENCES IN RELATIONAL PATTERNS

Given that clear change was discovered amongst EIs and its antecedents to test H4 and H5 variations in relational patterns and predictive capacities were considered through SEM (Liñan and Rodriguez-Cohard, 2015). Factorial analysis was used to assess the mixed measurement model revealing a number of indicators positioned below the minimum conventional outer loading threshold of 0.7 (Hair, Sarstedt, Hopkins and Kuppelwieser, 2014) with others displaying an unacceptably high level of multicollinearity. This resulted in problems with model fit and therefore they were removed from the model, more specifically, 3 indicators from ATT, 2 indicators from EI and 2 from SN.

The two indicators removed from the ATT construct revealed that within this specific cohort EIs were preceded by attitudinal beliefs based upon facing new challenges, being creative and innovative, and the independence of being one's own boss, a somewhat altruistic notion of entrepreneurship that has been viewed elsewhere (Salmons, 2014). This meant that students did not place value on the pecuniary benefits of a high income or the creation of jobs for others. Additionally, risk-taking was not reflective of EI which is in accordance with an Irish cultural conservatism and aversiveness towards failure (O'Farrell, 1986). Although postgraduate students are expected to possess the qualities and knowledge to exert a higher impact the current form of EI in this specific context appears to be much more non-ambitious. This emphasises the care that needs to be taken in the projection of assumptions concerning entrepreneurship and intentions upon distinct cultures and environments (de Pillis and Reardon, 2007).

Interestingly, removing two indicators from SN (those associated with the perceptions of friends and colleagues) meant that it was now a latent variable reflective of only one measurement item concerned with close family members therefore a combined indicator was constructed and although collinearity was successfully dealt with factor loadings remained critically low. As consequence, the one-item solution was kept which can potentially pose a validity issue as measurement error cannot be removed (Ringle et al, 2015). However, Diamantopoulos et al (2012) inform us that although not ideal

single-item measurements can be considered with smaller sample sizes and highly-homogenous scale weightings. Furthermore, close family members have been shown to assume an important position in the development of perceptions related to the feasibility and desirability of entrepreneurial endeavours (Shapero and Sokol, 1982).

The resultant model had a better fit with the data (SRMR = 0.08) and benefited from increased levels of construct reliability and validity with no problems being identified in regard to discriminant validity using the Fornell-Larcker Criterion. All factor loadings were above the suggested minimum threshold of 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978) and convergent validity was affirmed through the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values exceeding the 0.5 limit (Chin, 1998) meaning the model displayed a satisfactory measurement structure (measurement model indicators are shown in the appendix). The next step was to enact a bootstrapped path analysis (1000 sub-samples) allowing for the examination of path coefficients and p-values (Figure 1).

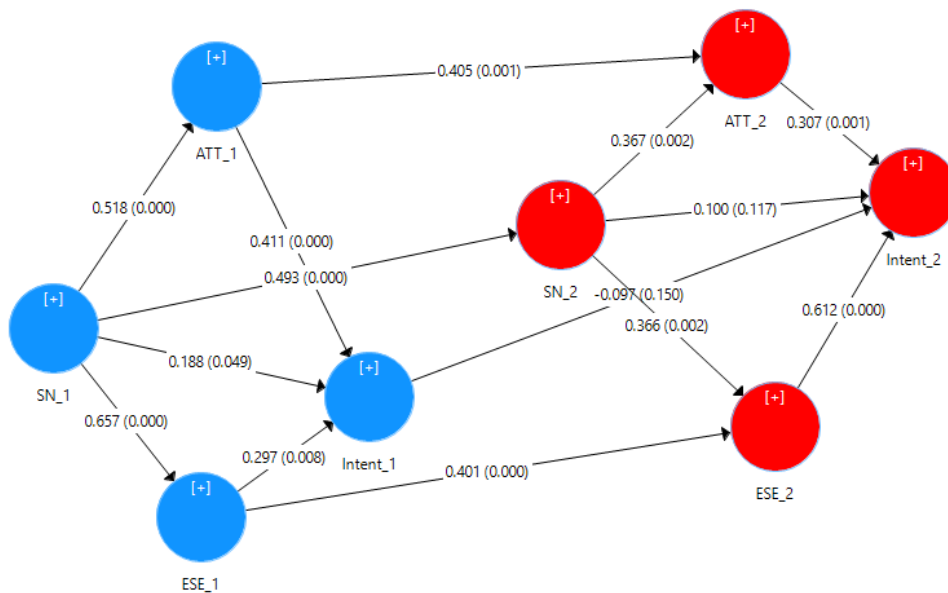


Figure 5.1 Entrepreneurial intentions and relational patterns over time

Results highlighted a robustness to the TPB constructs capacity to predict EI with r square values increasing from 0.63 at t1 to 0.78 at t2, very similar increases to those viewed by Liñan and Rodriguez-Cohard (2015) over a longer time-period. Path coefficients also continued in their significance, all except for SN at t2 taken to be explanatory of the augmented influence of ESE. Each EI antecedent was a significant path regressor of their temporal counterpart contributing to the increase in outcome variance explication and therefore suggesting that relational patterns are stable supporting H5. However, EI at t1 was not a significant regressor of EI at t2 despite being significantly correlated (.32 $p < 0.001$) with the aforementioned significance of paths leading from t1 variables to their equivalent at t2 providing reason for this.

The SEM results highlight that although relational patterns benefit from an apparent robustness the influence exerted from each antecedent varies over time which is in accordance with H5. This is an important realisation as we have witnessed a decrease in the predictive capacity of ATT whilst a concomitant and substantial increase in ESE. This is to be expected given that the individual is engaging in actual behaviours and thus direct mastery of tasks can provide a crucial indicator of entrepreneurial potential and feasibility. SN also lost direct significance perhaps as consequence of diminished reliance upon others when making decisions as through experience knowledge accumulation allows us to make our own informed judgements through heuristic processes (lending support to H4). This finding is also more in alignment with findings related to the TPB in entrepreneurship research that considers the influence of SN to be indirect (Liñan and Chen, 2009).

5.4 DISCUSSION

In this paper, there was a desire to examine entrepreneurial intending longitudinally through a mixture of both process and variance-based methodology. In particular, it sought to determine the stability of EI and its preceding antecedents investigating how exposure to entrepreneurship through various modules and workshops could have a potential regulatory and relational impact. The study makes a novel and relevant con-

tribution to the associated literature in many ways, none more so than introducing a temporal component to take account of process and in-so-doing providing additional insights to the many cross-sectional studies in the area.

In relation to the research questions posed findings have indicated that first and foremost there are significant changes in levels of intending overtime from EP running in counter to similar research (Fayolle and Gailly, 2015; Oosterbeek, Van Praag and Ijsselstein, 2010). This intentional change is largely derivative from preceding fluctuations in the stability of model antecedents and their combinative contributions. It was also discovered that those that had benefited from EP at baseline measurement exhibited higher levels of EI at both time-points and those who participated at t2 also conveyed greater levels of intending. Of interest however is the finding that those who had no EP at t1 and EP at t2 displayed steeper trajectories in their increases which is agreement with past findings (Fayolle and Gailly, 2015; Souitaris, Zerbinati and Al-Laham, 2007). This is perhaps partly consequence to higher intending levels having less capacity to increase signalling an intentional threshold that when surpassed sees limited increases thereafter and partly due to the novelty of confronting entrepreneurship for the first time or after a prolonged period of in-exposure wherein students focus on positive cues from the modules/workshops.

As a cognitive construct modifications can be made to EI through its precursory elements with ambition to decrease levels of dissonance and fine-tune cognitions to current situations (Gollwitzer, 2012). Taken as momentary evaluations (Gawronski, 2007); time-dependent states (Conrey and Smith, 2007) and circumstantial cognitive appraisals (Bohner and Dickel, 2011), these antecedents have varied through the accessing of more information via exposure to actual behaviours which have exerted influence upon individuals' underlying beliefs (Westaby, 2005). Literature affirms the important role of entrepreneurial experience in intentional development (Peterman and Kennedy, 2003) however it is important to bear in mind that such information can lead to a duality of outcomes i.e. the individual either accepts the new knowledge gained and uses it to form feasibility and desirability beliefs or contrarily the knowledge pre-

sented may run in counter to what is already known and accepted thus resulting in little or no change (Politis, 2008). Within specific student cohorts however Miralles et al (2017) have reasoned that this experience serves to augment their base of knowledge due to limited prior experience and as consequence acts to modify the TPB components which has been reified in the current paper.

Interestingly, and arguably the most pertinent contribution of the current paper was the discovery that stimulation of EIs is derivative from increased and sustained exposure. Those individual's that benefited from a continual or increased contact displayed significantly enhanced levels of EI and corresponding antecedents, with the reverse also being true, contrasting with results articulated by Fayolle and Gailly (2015). In search of potential explications towards this finding it may be useful to look towards the idea that constant interaction with a given stimulus can in fact enhance our perceptions towards it. In particular, Zajonc (1968) in his seminal article suggested that a "mere exposure effect" results in a positive evaluation of the target outcome when a stimulus towards such an outcome is made accessible. Although the idea that providing perceptive access to relevant stimuli has been verified within other fields of research, such as advertising, it has yet to materialise within the EI domain. From such a perspective it is suggested that a perceptual fluency in cognitive processes can be generated through participation in entrepreneurial behaviours made possible via frequent experiential encounters and contextual cues (Jacoby and Dallas, 1981).

Perceptual fluency is perceived to be consequence of various subjective and objective interactions, for example the objective content of the modules/workshops delivered interacting with the more subjective perceptive responses towards this content from the receiver. Building upon the heuristically based discrepancy-attribution theory (Whittlesea and Williams, 2000) that stipulates that when the ease of processing new information is higher than original expectations a discrepancy occurs that causes an individual to make an attribution. Importantly, when differences are attributed to prior experiences such as modules/workshops previously participated in familiarity is generated within one's own personal reference frame which is then used for comparative

purposes. However, external referents would also appear to be in operation as various elements including content, clarity and the duration of EP are all important relative considerations in the determination of ease of processing.

Interpretations of exposure effects prompt approach-oriented behaviours through reducing uncertainty towards entrepreneurship due to a perceived familiarity and reduction in cognitive conflict. Such reasoning certainly appears plausible given the current samples apparently culturally derived risk aversiveness and entrepreneurship classification as incorporating novel and uncertain behaviours.

In consideration of the final research question concerning the stability of relational patterns it was found that both EIs and each antecedent variable was significantly predictive of the same construct at the second measurement occasion leading to increases in the portion of variance explained. Although this is suggestive of a stability in the relationship between variables across time and a robustness of Ajzen's (1991) TPB, if we consider configurational differences this is not the case as predictive capacities vary. The main differences were seen in relation to a decreased predictive power of ATT at t2 with the concomitant and substantial increase in ESE.

Through the lens of Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) individuals learn through direct experience that if successful positively reinforce behaviours providing incentives for future involvement. Thus, if the consequences of EP were deemed favourable these mastery experiences will build a heightened belief in a person's ability to be successful in other entrepreneurial behaviours whilst also stimulating positive psychological and physiological responses (Zhao, Hills and Seibert, 2005). There is the additional reinforcing capacity of social persuasion that may have occurred through probable feedback mechanisms throughout the modules/workshops serving to mobilise sustained efforts towards task accomplishments. The increased predictive capacity of ESE at t2 can similarly be partially justified through the repeated exposure effect as continual participation in proximal behaviours allows for an adjustment against one's reference frame with perceptual control beliefs being made more fluent thus signalling increased feasibility. In these more familiar contexts and with greater experience of behaviours

and their significance decisions can be made based on personal judgements explicating the hypothesised diminishment in the predictive power of SN at t2 as well (Arrow and Burns, 2004).

5.5 THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Several theoretical and practical implications can be drawn from the findings. Theoretically these build upon the expanding body of scholarship that focuses on EI and their connection to behaviour. The research has shown the TPB to be a robust predictor of EIs over time and affords an important contribution as the model is coming under increasing scepticism within different fields due to its perceived static nature (Sniehotta et al, 2014). Therefore, it has been demonstrated that it can be effectively employed over a temporal period in order to study oscillations within associated variables. There is also heed to the call that entrepreneurship is a process and its study should reflect this (Moroz and Hindle, 2012). In this investigation tentative steps have been made towards this through acknowledging EI as a processual concept through accepting their capacity to change over time. With this we maintain relevance and ensure that EI remains a key variable of value in the domain. This has important implications for future research as it will no longer be sufficient to provide cross-sectional results if we wish to truly explain how intentions impact upon the entrepreneurship process.

Contribution is also made to the entrepreneurship education domain that is synonymous with mixed and inconsistent findings. In this particular case EP had a positive impact over a shorter duration of 4 months. It would appear that continual exposure is key to generating a familiarity within students that can enhance levels of intending through ease of processing effects. The heterogenous nature of developments also suggest that a threshold exists which if surpassed only sees minimal levels of increase. Perhaps it is best to envisage continuous exposure as operating within an inverted 'U' trajectory with the existence of a zone of optimal functioning, signalling a need to take great care in management of repeated stimulus provision given that some entrepreneurial courses have been seen to have negative impacts (Fayolle and Gailly, 2015; Lima,

Lopes, Nassif and da Silva, 2015). More research is needed over a longer temporal duration across multiple measurement occasions to test this proposition.

At a more practical level the findings are of benefit as policy makers and practitioners must ensure that individuals benefit from a continued entrepreneurial exposure effectively managed to prevent “too much of an entrepreneurial thing”. It becomes imperative to encounter a balance between under-exposure and over-exposure which could potentially lead to detrimental effects. This is particularly important in the educational sector whereby they are often confronted with longer and more frequent breaks for vacations and examinations. Therefore, it is recommended that strategies be developed to help diminish the degradation of intentional levels. This may be achieved through summer programmes and competitions that are becoming ever more popular or perhaps via work experience related initiatives. Importantly, an alternative mode of exposure can be made by more implicit or subliminal means through developing institutional entrepreneurial cultures whereby the students are completely immersed at the unconscious level.

As we seek to make meaningful positive contributions to policy and become more efficient in entrepreneurial promotion the current study suggests that a great deal of care is needed in pedagogical provision and entrepreneurial support. Given socially situated configurational differences in antecedents support must correspond to the stage of development the individual is within. The task therefore becomes much more intricate requiring a concerted effort overtime in which many more difficulties arise. Indeed, intentional models can provide an effective mechanism a priori to assess such needs and also provide formative means to track the evolution of intending. From this adjustment can be made to pedagogical content and delivery in alignment to an individual’s idiosyncratic needs.

5.6 CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Venturing beyond static interpretations of EI this study sought to examine them longitudinally and as operating within a process requiring insights into their stability. Find-

ings demonstrated that intentions undergo change overtime in response to entrepreneurship exposure through participation in various modules/workshops. Initial levels of intending determined the intensity of changes with the TPB providing a robust tool for intention assessment. Intentional antecedents were found to evolve also both in terms of absolute values and predictive capacity. Withstanding these inputs it is important to acknowledge and make explicit the limitations and in light of these present ideas that may provide opportunities for future research.

Firstly, the small sample size confined to a particular demographic makes the generalisation of findings limited. Additionally, culturally derived factors have been discovered to influence beliefs (Shinnar, Giacomini and Janssen, 2012) and in this sense as aforementioned caution is advised in the projection of assumptions concerning entrepreneurship and intentions upon distinct cultures. Studies are encouraged across different sectors and countries making use of larger (and perhaps more diverse) sample sizes to test the robustness of the results. Second, although the study was longitudinal data was only collected over two measurement occasions with a temporal spacing of four months. This is not ideal as a greater number of points would allow for more profound analysis however given the difficulty associated with such approaches and participant attrition this time-period provided an appropriate distance that not only kept participants interested but also allowed for notable changes. Thirdly, techniques used for the analysis and operationalisation of variables such as stability are broad and varied within literature. This may mean that different methods could potentially provide more fine-grained insights. Specifically, participation in entrepreneurial modules/workshops acted as a proxy for entrepreneurship exposure with a number of drawbacks associated with this including not having any indication as to whether it was compulsory or optional, what content was included, duration, or the perceived quality of these experiences. This has great importance given that variances in the means through which they are created and the ends which they seek to achieve will have a significant influence on individuals beliefs and perceptions. Research is therefore required on more specific aspects seeking to establish further intricate links between pedagogy and intending.

Highly related to this is the fact that beyond the four months prior to the study the only indication of entrepreneurial involvement was from stated work experience. It would have been beneficial to gain information related to EP over a longer duration. Finally, a number of indicators had to be deleted from the statistical model due to the failure to meet required thresholds the most important of which being SN as it was reduced to a one-item construct. This may have affected subsequent findings and future research is required to confirm this.

One potentially significant recommendation is the use of multi-method, mixed-model approaches that allow for both group and individual changes over time (Raudenbush and Bryk, 2002). This permittance of idiosyncratic tracking of trajectories in relation to the group as a whole could prove highly insightful. Such methods could also allow for the incorporation of macro-micro, individual-school, individual-course, and other cultural and institutional influencers as to which new theoretical models could be tested. Given that context influences the decision to be an entrepreneur (Minola, Criaco and Obschonka, 2015) one worthwhile theory is Acs, Autio and Szerb's (2014) National Systems of Entrepreneurship framework that abridges both the individual and contextual divide.

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APPENDIX 1

Table 11 Measurement Scales

A. Entrepreneurial Intentions

CONSTRUCT		SOURCE
Entrepreneurial Intentions		Liñan Moriano & Jaen (2016)
1.0	Please state your level of intention with respect to the following statements (0 being no intention, 3 being a moderate intention and 6 being a strong intention)	
1.1	It is very likely that I will start a venture at sometime within the next 12 months	
1.2	I am willing to make any effort to become a successful entrepreneur over the next 12 months	
1.3	I have serious doubts whether I will ever start a venture over the next 12 months	
1.4	I am determined to start a business in the next 12 months	
1.5	My professional goal is to be an entrepreneur in the next 12 months	

B. Motivational Antecedents

Subjective Norms		Liñan Moriano & Jaen (2016)
2.0 A	Please, think now about your family and closer friends. To what extent would they agree if you decide to become an entrepreneur and start your own business? (with 0 being highly disagree, 3 being somewhat agree and 6 being highly disagree)	
2.1	My immediate family (parents and siblings)	
2.2	My close friends	
2.3	My colleagues or mates	
2.0 B	... and how do you value the opinion of these people in this regard? I think it is... (0 being not at all important, 3 being somewhat important and 6 being very important)	
2.4	That of my immediate family (parents and siblings)	
2.5	That of my close friends	
2.6	That of my colleagues or mates	

Entrepreneurial Self-efficacy		Luthans, Bruce, Avolio and Avey (2007)
4.0	Please state to what extent that you agree with the following statements in describing how you feel about yourself right now (1=strongly disagree and 6=strongly agree)	
4.1	I have a lot of confidence in my ability to represent a business idea and new business strategy	
4.2	I have a lot of confidence in my ability to keep the entrepreneurship process under control	
4.3	I have a lot of confidence in my ability to present information about the entrepreneurship process to peers/colleague	

Attitude Towards Entrepreneurship		Liñan Moriano & Jaen (2016)
3.0 A	For you, starting a new business (being an entrepreneur) would involve (with 0 being highly unlikely, 3 being somewhat likely and 6 being highly likely)	
3.1	Facing new challenges	
3.2	Creating jobs for others	
3.3	Being creative and innovative	
3.4	Having a high income	
3.5	Taking calculated risks	
3.6	Being my own boss (independence)	
3.0 B	Now please state to what extent these are desirable for you generally in your life (with 0 being not at all desirable, 3 being somewhat desirable and 6 being highly desirable)	
3.7	Facing new challenges	
3.8	Creating jobs for others	
3.9	Being creative and innovative	
3.10	Having a high income	
3.11	Taking calculated risks	
3.12	Being my own boss (independence)	

D. Entrepreneurial Participation

Entrepreneurial Participation		Self-developed
6.0	In the last four months, have you participated in an entrepreneurship module/workshop that had a practical focus? For example, having to physically engage in entrepreneurship related activities such as organizing resources, networking, creating a business plan etc.	

Table 12 Bootstrapped paths

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
ATT_1 -> ATT_2	0.405	0.414	0.111	3.642	0.001
ATT_1 -> Intent_1	0.411	0.411	0.071	5.803	0.000
ATT_2 -> Intent_2	0.307	0.315	0.097	3.165	0.001
ESE_1 -> ESE_2	0.401	0.415	0.112	3.582	0.000
ESE_1 -> Intent_1	0.297	0.297	0.108	2.741	0.008
ESE_2 -> Intent_2	0.612	0.606	0.089	6.917	0.000
Intent_1 -> Intent_2	-0.097	-0.095	0.064	1.516	0.150
SN_1 -> ATT_1	0.518	0.527	0.068	7.584	0.000
SN_1 -> ESE_1	0.657	0.660	0.052	12.713	0.000
SN_1 -> Intent_1	0.188	0.187	0.092	2.049	0.049
SN_1 -> SN_2	0.493	0.484	0.101	4.890	0.000
SN_2 -> ATT_2	0.367	0.365	0.109	3.372	0.002
SN_2 -> ESE_2	0.366	0.355	0.117	3.115	0.002
SN_2 -> Intent_2	0.100	0.093	0.067	1.477	0.117

Table 13 Factor loadings

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
ATT_1_1 <- ATT_1	0.767	0.763	0.057	13.354	0.000
ATT_1_5 <- ATT_1	0.874	0.873	0.036	24.429	0.000
ATT_1_6 <- ATT_1	0.876	0.876	0.024	36.138	0.000
ATT_2_1 <- ATT_2	0.780	0.780	0.051	15.367	0.000
ATT_2_5 <- ATT_2	0.860	0.855	0.046	18.880	0.000
ATT_2_6 <- ATT_2	0.910	0.909	0.019	48.173	0.000
ESE_1_1 <- ESE_1	0.949	0.949	0.009	104.743	0.000
ESE_1_2 <- ESE_1	0.928	0.926	0.015	60.093	0.000
ESE_1_3 <- ESE_1	0.940	0.940	0.012	80.031	0.000
ESE_2_1 <- ESE_2	0.943	0.943	0.011	82.301	0.000
ESE_2_2 <- ESE_2	0.939	0.939	0.016	57.356	0.000
ESE_2_3 <- ESE_2	0.931	0.932	0.012	76.553	0.000
INT_1_1 <- Intent_1	0.947	0.948	0.008	125.735	0.000
INT_1_3 <- Intent_1	0.928	0.929	0.016	56.591	0.000
INT_1_5 <- Intent_1	0.954	0.954	0.009	111.627	0.000
INT_2_1 <- Intent_2	0.926	0.926	0.019	48.688	0.000
INT_2_3 <- Intent_2	0.938	0.939	0.024	39.035	0.000
INT_2_5 <- Intent_2	0.946	0.945	0.015	64.858	0.000
SN_1_1 <- SN_1	1.000	1.000	0.000		
SN_2_1 <- SN_2	1.000	1.000	0.000		

Table 14 R squared values

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
ATT_1	0.268	0.260
ATT_2	0.394	0.380
ESE_1	0.432	0.425
ESE_2	0.411	0.398
Intent_1	0.629	0.617
Intent_2	0.784	0.774
SN_2	0.243	0.235

Table 15 Reliability analysis

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Re- liability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
ATT_1	0.792	0.807	0.878	0.707
ATT_2	0.809	0.824	0.887	0.725
ESE_1	0.933	0.936	0.957	0.882
ESE_2	0.932	0.932	0.956	0.880
Intent_1	0.938	0.939	0.960	0.890
Intent_2	0.930	0.930	0.955	0.877
SN_1	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
SN_2	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000

Table 16 Discriminant validity analysis

	ATT_1	ATT_2	ESE_1	ESE_2	Intent_1	Intent_2	SN_1	SN_2
ATT_1	0.841							
ATT_2	0.521	0.851						
ESE_1	0.749	0.360	0.939					
ESE_2	0.331	0.741	0.546	0.938				
Intent_1	0.731	0.425	0.729	0.359	0.943			
Intent_2	0.262	0.767	0.345	0.857	0.292	0.937		
SN_1	0.518	0.322	0.657	0.425	0.596	0.318	1.000	
SN_2	0.312	0.495	0.396	0.525	0.402	0.533	0.493	1.000

Table 17 Collinearity analysis

	VIF
ATT_1_1	1.401
ATT_1_5	2.272
ATT_1_6	2.037
ATT_2_1	1.469
ATT_2_5	2.133
ATT_2_6	2.359
ESE_1_1	4.391
ESE_1_2	3.574
ESE_1_3	3.895
ESE_2_1	4.197
ESE_2_2	4.045
ESE_2_3	3.418
INT_1_1	4.637
INT_1_3	3.469
INT_1_5	5.038
INT_2_1	3.201
INT_2_3	4.098
INT_2_5	4.425
SN_1_1	1.000
SN_2_1	1.000

Table 18 Model fit statistics

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.081	0.148
d_ULS	1.386	4.602
d_G	1.157	1.785
Chi-Square	554.859	676.889
NFI	0.738	0.681

General Conclusions

6.0 INTRODUCTION

This thesis has afforded us the opportunity to actively engage with entrepreneurial intentions (EI) from a processual perceptive lens that involved multiple methodologies conceptually providing an analytical and critical assessment of the domain, qualitatively and fundamentally re-positioning EIs in terms of their transitional tendencies, and finally empirically evidencing their stability through quantitative examination. This approach allowed for their study across a number of sectors and demographics, namely, an individual entrepreneur located within the construction industry and a small targeted cohort of university students studying at the postgraduate masters level that has helped in the provision of a broadened outlook towards the proposed forthcoming conclusions. With this, the thesis has challenged more traditional and commonly found approaches within most of the field that has mainly followed quantitative cross-sectional methodology embedded in the attempted empirical closure of an inherently open phenomenon. It also goes some way in providing enlightenment to the ephemeral nature of EI that stimulates a number of difficult and indeed intriguing questions. In EI research timing is oft neglected and although a complete overture is not witnessed here in terms of social ontology a tentative posturing into process through the medium of a critical realist and a quasi-closure has ensured more extant, novel and intricate insights have been generated through their longitudinal study.

Importantly, in search for means as to how we can effectively support and nurture EI it is highlighted that both exogenous and endogenous factors exert influence and thus a one size-fits-all stance to the promotion of entrepreneurship is not recommended. EIs can be stimulated and suppressed in many ways due to their socially situated composition and it has been demonstrated that consistent exposure to self-perceived positive external enablers such as success and participation as well as the augmentation of positive internal enablers, including ESE, can ensure their maintenance. Critical intentional thresholds have been theorised as a possible explanation as to why an intention to create a business blossoms into one to continue or perhaps on the contrary fades into a desire to exit. This thesis therefore suggests the introduction of entrepreneurial process

intentions as a conceptual umbrella whereby more nuanced and beneficial contributions can be realised.

In this chapter, overall conclusions are drawn in consideration of the three articles that structure the main body of the thesis with the objective of providing the reader with a clear vision of the presented studies and their proposed contributions to the EI domain. In order to achieve this, each article's conclusions will be conveyed by means of a brief summary. Following this, theoretical contributions and practical implications will be allayed as a collective whole. In drawing the thesis to a close limitations are exposed and prospects for future lines of research are suggested.

6.1 Chapter 3 Conclusions (Article 1): Intentions Resurrected: A systematic review of entrepreneurial intention research from 2014 to 2018 and future research agenda

A proliferation of EI research over the past two decades has created a substantial canon of articles, each of which making their own unique contributions and advancements to the field. Beneficial as this outcome may appear we are at risk of being confronted with an accumulation of a heterogenous body of literature underpinned by fragmentation, little collective direction, and one which at best can only narrowly serve a broad range of idiosyncratic research needs. As consequence, a myriad of variables have presented themselves due to the distinct and disjointed approaches adopted making it increasingly difficult to affirm EI as a robust contributor to entrepreneurship research that could well result in its devaluation as a theoretical and conceptual construct in the area.

Three questions undergirded the review with findings providing substantial answers towards these. The first of which was concerned with identifying the main trends and interests emerging from the extant publications. Eight different priority theme groupings were extracted that were further demarcated into secondary level topics as to which each of the various research articles could be designated. Thematical coverage proved to be broad and varied covering an expansive range of topics with "Process", "Educational", and "Intention Models" the most popular. This was to be expected given the fundamental articulation of entrepreneurship as a process, the influential role

which the adopted psycho-social models assume in the prediction of behaviours (Schlaegel and Koenig, 2014), and the supposed capacity for EI to be fostered via pedagogical and experiential involvement (Balan, Maritz and McKinlay, 2017).

A “Means-ends” framework was introduced to contend with those educational articles focused more on the design components of educational provision and those concentrating on impact. This is a novel and important distinction given the inconclusiveness of findings related to EI in the educational environment (Honig, 2004). It was also discovered that contemporary protocol sees the reconfiguration of intentional model antecedents in search of moderators and mediators. Interestingly, we are bereft of studies investigating the potential effects of the stability of intent itself which is becoming popular in other fields in which the models are applied.

From this first question the main finding was the limited quantity of studies focusing on context and, although growing, insufficient attention towards quality process studies based on primary data collection techniques. This comes with great concern given that entrepreneurship is frequently described as a process that is contextually embedded. Context is commonly studied by cross-sectional methodology and a significant portion of those classified as process unfortunately fail to adopt a required longitudinal approach. The second question moved on to compare the current composition of the field with a previous review conducted by Liñan and Fayolle (2015) with findings confirming the robustness of the framework they provided, however, a number of key differences were identified. For instance, new categories at the macro level have been introduced such as Career Choice, Corporate Intentions and so to at the micro, for example, in the Process category continuance, exit, re-entry and growth intentions were all incorporated. More nuanced examination revealed that general testing of models had advanced to more fine-tuning activities perhaps suggestive of a consolidation of suitability that is now moving towards integration with other concepts.

Although, integration is proposed as a mechanism to enhance our understanding it is cautioned that effective construct operationalisation is a prerequisite of such progress. It was shown that EIs, the core phenomenon, themselves are not consistently or comprehen-

sively defined across studies however small definitional schools exist amongst groups of scholars. It is emphasised that scope, boundary conditions and temporal dimensions (Suddaby, 2010) should all be explicitly included in an agreed upon conceptualisation. The third and final research question aimed to determine how we can progress the field in consideration of its present structural composition. A main concern needs to be addressed in the mix of variables that are being used that can inhibit the search for parsimonious explications of EI, how they function, and their evolution. We therefore must seek ways in which a complex mix of endogenous and exogenous variants can be effectively and indeed efficiently combined (Schlaegel and Koenig, 2014). It is recommended that longitudinal studies become the normative practice as through the examination of temporal facets via multi-methodological founded practices not only can we gain greater understanding of contextual influencers and intentional stability we can also garner a more comprehensively informed verdict on the utility of the intentional models we so frequently employ.

6.2 Chapter 4 Conclusions (Article 2): Processual lip service will not suffice: A case study into entrepreneurial intention transitions in the Spanish construction industry

In the second article, groundwork is set in motion to abridge a clear research gap with EIs theorised as operating within a process which was examined through a qualitative case study methodology longitudinally tracking the evolution of an individual entrepreneur's EI in the context of the Spanish construction industry. Findings encouraged a reconsideration of EIs in their more traditional trait-like form and instead perceiving them as ephemeral with tendencies to transition into different functional forms dependent upon the interaction of various contextual and endogenous factors. If viewed in this manner it becomes imperative to ensure that they do not get lost and as consequence relinquish their place in entrepreneurship research through the potential blurring of boundaries with other entrepreneurial concepts such as identity and passion.

Thus, to atone for this, the notion of entrepreneurial process intentions is put forth as an all-encompassing umbrella term that can be further divided into different configura-

tions that are phase and configurational dependent. These intentional forms can lead to a variety of subsequent behaviours provided both internal and external conditions are conducive to a reciprocal functioning between compositional parts of a resultant assemblage (in this case a given intentional form). An intriguing input was the regulatory function of what appear to be episodic affective and emotional variables that have the tendency to alter these intentional configurations.

The application of Manuel DeLanda's (2006) Assemblage Theory conveyed the entrepreneur's intentional journey as composed of a number of multi-level experiences that were postulated to operate in a possibility space and unfold across five conceptually important interwoven events that evolved and experienced change over time. The complexity and open nature of entrepreneurship ensured that there was a myriad of unobservable causal tendencies that had the potential to be activated through both material and expressive components that assume important roles through acting as both external (Davidsson, 2015) and internal enablers. These assemblages were discovered to operate at micro-macro, macro-micro levels and as such exert influence both from a bottom-up and top-down trajectory that has the potential to facilitate or indeed constrain intentional wholes from recursivity effects. This can either lead to a stabilisation or destabilisation of a given EI structure and therefore increase its susceptibility to change or lack thereof.

6.3 Chapter 5 Conclusions (Article 3): Entrepreneurial Intent's tendency for change: The temporal stability of constructs and relational patterns

The final paper that completes the thesis was a quantitative investigation into the capacity for EIs to exhibit change over time. This included longitudinal analysis of their compositional and configurational stability whilst also considering the contextual impact of entrepreneurial exposure through participation in entrepreneurship-based modules (EP). Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991) provided a theoretical framework through which change in EI and its composite antecedents were studied. EIs are at somewhat of an inflection point in entrepreneurship literature as a

whole with large numbers of studies taking advantage of their ease of access and beneficial practical applications especially in educational environments. However, studies rely heavily on cross-sectional methodology that at best provide a partial insight into the phenomenon, and at worst, risk its devaluation from a quick, and at times loose, route to publish.

This study therefore sought to build upon a strong foundation of cross-sectional studies through the introduction of time as a key component that positioned EIs as operating within a process of intending. The premise was based upon the belief that the motivational antecedents of the TPB as cognitive constructs are susceptible to change as evaluative and momentary judgements can cause a fluctuation in precursory beliefs due to situational circumstances and contingencies.

The paper was grounded in two over-riding research questions. Firstly, ambition was present to determine if entrepreneurial intending changed over time. The answer was quite conclusive with 77% demonstrating change from baseline to time 2. These changes as hypothesised were consequent to the changing intensity of motivational antecedents, namely, attitude towards entrepreneurship (ATT) and entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) upon EP. It is posited that EP lead to increases in information, knowledge, and experience that influenced beliefs through increasing desirability and feasibility perceptions, which has been found to be particularly prominent in student cohorts (Miralles, Giones and Gozun, 2017). To gain more nuanced insights the sample was split into those whom had participated at baseline and those who had not. This entrusted us with the finding that the EP group conveyed higher levels at both measurement occasions. However, the degree of change was much more pronounced in those individuals that had no EP at t1 but EP at t2. This was viewed to be of consequence to an intentional threshold that when surpassed leads to limited increases thereafter due to capacity constraints. It is also an apparent symptom of attending towards positive cues of what is a new and novel stimulus leading to greater levels of positive change. Results further depicted that those in absence of EP at t2 having previously been exposed at t1 significantly decreased in EI from t1-t2 (-1.44, $p < 0.005$) whereas

those who sustained or increased EP significantly improved their levels of intending (1.54 and 4.62 $p < 0.001$ respectively) further confirming the proposed hypothesis that EP over time would have a positive influence on entrepreneurial intending.

The second research question advanced knowledge surrounding how the configurational relationships of the antecedents evolve over time. Results highlighted a robustness to the TPB constructs capacity to predict EI with r square values increasing from 0.63 at t1 to 0.78 at t2. Path coefficients also continued in their significance with the exception of subjective norms (SN) at t2 taken to be explanative of the augmented influence of ESE. Each EI antecedent was a significant path regressor of their temporal counterpart contributing to the increase in outcome variance explication. However, EI at t1 was not a significant regressor of EI at t2 despite being significantly correlated (.32 $p < 0.001$) with the aforementioned significance of paths leading from t1 variables to their equivalent at t2 providing reason for this. Results highlighted, that although relational patterns benefit from an apparent robustness the influence exerted from each antecedent varies over time. There was a decrease in the predictive capacity of ATT whilst a concomitant and substantial increase in ESE. This is to be expected given that the individual is engaging in actual behaviours and thus direct mastery of tasks can provide a crucial indicator of entrepreneurial potential and feasibility. SN also lost direct significance perhaps as consequence of diminished reliance upon others when making decisions as through experience and knowledge accumulation ambiguity is reduced allowing us to make our own informed judgements through heuristic processes.

The study moved beyond static interpretations of EI through their longitudinal examination and as operating within a process. Findings demonstrated that intentions undergo change overtime in response to entrepreneurship exposure and that initial levels of intending determine the intensity of changes. The TPB provided a robust tool for intention assessment and although intentional antecedents were found to be predictive of their temporal pairs variations in absolute values and predictive capacities were observed.

6.4 CONTRIBUTION AND IMPLICATIONS

This thesis has afforded important contributions to both the general entrepreneurship and more specific EI research fields at an academic (conceptual and empirical) and practical (policy making, educational practitioner, governing body etc) level. The following section will articulate some of the most pertinent of these whilst considering the implications of each.

Firstly, the main theoretical contribution emanating from the thesis is perceived to be the reconceptualisation of EI as a dynamic construct that undergoes change dependent upon both contextual and experiential circumstances. Grounded in a processual perspective the term *intending* is used to highlight the capacity for intentions to vary in regard to strength and indeed direction. Taking a step towards state-like perceptive interpretations and beliefs, whilst moving away from more traditional trait perspectives, this new theoretical lens ignites academic debate within the specific EI domain perceiving fluctuations in intensity and the directional influence of motivational antecedents as common place. These constant changes lead to varied degrees of *intending* which we must seek to track their evolution over time.

Secondly, to ensure that the complexity and dynamism associated with entrepreneurial *intending* does not add to fragmentation already observed in the field the notion of entrepreneurial process intentions has been suggested that was derivative from the novel framing of EIs in terms of Delanda's (2006) *Assemblage Theory*. The *intending* process through critical realism's contention of mediated knowledge was found to lead to various intentional forms that transition through phases dependent upon how far along the entrepreneurial journey an individual has travelled or their current cognitive and emotive states. Entrepreneurial process intentions can be viewed to operate at both the same and also at a higher level than *intending* which deals with more direct and specific behaviours.

Third, entrepreneurial process intentions encompass combinations of the material and expressive, the codified and uncoded, components that can impact upon *intending* and also act as stabilisers under particular conditions. It therefore becomes imperative if

we are to abridge the intentional-behavioural divide that we identify those specific variables and importantly their optimum configuration that results in high levels of intending and seek to stabilise these into a particular intentional form. These intentional forms work recursively from both bottom-up and top-down trajectories so continual exposure to entrepreneurial behaviours meeting expectations positively can act as a key mechanism to reinforce an intent and stimulate engagement in further behaviours.

Fourth, nascent literature (Lerner, Hunt and Dimov, 2018) is beginning to propose different perspectives on action suggesting it is not as completely intentional as once thought, conveying that an assortment of logics may well operate be them rational or without reason. Through the process perspective taken in the second paper of this thesis a mixture of these logics can be accounted for. For example, we have saw the disinhibition of the entrepreneur who intuitively oversaw the growth of his business without much thought but at other times through a much more reasoned approach he allocated a great deal of deliberation to his future path. This adds to the belief that perhaps not all entrepreneurial behaviours are intentional and this should be given due consideration as the present thesis does. This insight is not confined to the world of entrepreneurship and may also further knowledge within the strategic management field as a whole. All in all, this theoretical contribution helps maintain the relevance and value of EI as a research construct and key variable in the entrepreneurial process whilst accepting that other explanations may exist, but in supplement to and not at the detriment of, intent.

The fifth contribution is the application of the TPB over time which is oft neglected by those who adopt it. It's robustness has been identified and potential regulatory variables such as EP have been supposed. Its application has been advanced in the entrepreneurship domain through considering the role that stability plays towards our intentional levels. Through longitudinal implementation over 2 time-points a greater relevancy towards the realities of decision-making and cognitive processing is realised that is arguably more reflective of entrepreneurship as a whole. This thesis has added to the small but growing body of research that is making a significant advancement to knowledge on EIs through studying them over time. It is recognised that longitudinal

study is no longer a suggestion but instead a necessity to increase the knowledge we can generate on how EIs are stimulated, optimised and maintained. Therefore, the study has acted upon the calls of many scholars within the area (Ahmed, Chandran and Klobas, 2017; Hessels, Grilo, Thurik and Zwan, 2011; Kautonen, Van Gelderen and Tornikoski, 2013; Laspita, Breugst, Heblich and Patzelt, 2012) to ensure progress in knowledge developments. As a complement Entrepreneurship Education has been advanced as it was discovered that EP had a positive impact over a shorter duration of 4 months. It would appear that continual exposure is key to generating a familiarity within students that can enhance levels of intending through ease of processing effects. With this, new theoretical frame-works are suggested in search of further explication of EI and education. More specifically, an inverted 'U' trajectory with the existence of a zone of optimal functioning is postulated based on an undergirding premise of the mere-exposure effect (Zajonc, 1968). Finally, from a theoretical perspective the contemporary field has been brought to a structured and ordered whole helping to evade a disjointed, fragmented and an ill-directed body of research (Liñan and Fayolle, 2015). Through a systematic review of literature various themes have been identified and prioritised that can be of great benefit to not only new scholars entering the discipline but so too for those that are more seasoned seeking new lines of research and of course those from other research disciplines.

Various contributions towards practice can also be elucidated. If we firstly consider education policy makers whom operate in a discipline as to which great clarity towards the influence of various policies and programmes have on entrepreneurial intending remains inconclusive. In this regard, it is suggested that the particular outcomes that are desired must be made clear. These may come in different forms including the development of entrepreneurial specific skills, the increasing of entrepreneurial awareness, the nurturing of high or low ambitions, the creation of a new venture or additionally the realignment of beliefs that can act as a potential filter to those that have high versus low capacity for change.

There is a need to be much more realistic and astute in how we engage with entrepreneurship education with recent insights allaying that our pedagogy can have unintended outcomes, benefiting some, and detrimentally impacting others (Brentnall, Rodríguez and Culkin, 2018). This makes it imperative therefore that we not only assess baseline levels before implementations but also when determining the “ends” we need to ensure that the “means” are an appropriate mechanism to fulfil these. For example, and related to current findings, one must consider how to overcome or attenuate the influence exerted by periods of reduced exposure to entrepreneurial behaviours and information that can reduce levels of crucial antecedents and in turn EIs. On the contrary this must be balanced with potential cognitive overload that can result from the consequent over-exposure, all of which needing to be considered in relation to idiosyncratic levels of intent.

Of use for educational practitioners at a formative level measurement scales such as the Entrepreneurial Intent Questionnaire (Liñan and Chen, 2009) may be used, not just summatively but so too continuously, to track intentional variations over time allowing for adjustments to provision as the student requires. Here, context specific streamlined variations of the questionnaire will need to be developed to align to the specific “means-ends” frameworks and temporal durations followed. Such tracking could potentially act as a reflective pedagogical evaluation tool for both student and educational facilitator.

Government policy in light of current findings and discursive inputs is urged to take caution in relation to “betting” on all those individuals whom display high levels of EI as these can be momentary and influenced by specific contexts. These contexts may change over time, some changes may be predictable and others not, ensuring that expected outcomes may not meet prior predictions. Promotion of entrepreneurship should therefore be taken as a long-term policy objective and instead of wagering on short-term quick gains investment should be directed in efforts to promote, and more importantly maintain, intentional levels over time. Support must not stop when action is taken, such as when the venture is created, however should aim to shift focus onto the

promotion of a different intentional form. Governments should also seek to expose entrepreneurship to younger ages at primary and secondary levels. Although gaining traction not nearly enough is being done to increase base-line levels through stimulating interests whereby students can transition into higher education with firm entrepreneurial values and beliefs already established, again investing in the longer term and avoiding the current myopism.

As an entrepreneur or potential entrepreneur it may be useful to consider various strategies that can allow for positive perceptions towards various situations, for instance, positive self-talk that can encourage entry, the use of meta-cognitive practice to allow for more informed decisions, or seeking continued involvement in entrepreneurship that will permit realistic assessment of feasibility diminishing any potential negative impacts stemming from an illusion of control.

6.5 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH LINES

It is important to consider the work and findings of this research piece in relation to its limiting factors. Specific limitations have been addressed in each individual study and this section will strive to provide a more holistic outlook. Firstly, although many advantages exist from the use of mixed-method approaches including their ability to allow for triangulation, the high degree of completeness, the offsetting of weaknesses and the capacity to answer varied research questions (Bryman, 2006), disadvantages do exist. For example, the prior mentioned interpretation of the incompatibility of both quantitative and qualitative methods. Purists would argue for the reinforcement of the dichotomous divide and their clear separation, however, a pragmatic approach in the current thesis proves useful as the research question was able to be studied from different perspectives with each approach supporting the other thus providing a more enriching contribution (Greene, Caracelli and Graham, 1989). As two distinctly different sectors were studied, namely construction and education, a degree of caution is advised towards the interpretation of findings. More research is required to determine comparisons and the idiosyncratic variables operating within each context.

Specifically, considering the qualitative paper the use of a single case can be perceived as a potential drawback. However, due to restrictions related to resources and access this single case provided a unique opportunity to gain a retrospective recount of intentional development whilst simultaneously in real-time track their evolution. The driving ambition of the study was theory development and not its empirical testing therefore this particular case proved valuable for gaining insights into the relationships between the individual and socially-situated variables (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). Single cases are not an uncommon occurrence and have been successfully applied in entrepreneurial research elsewhere (Alvarez, Young and Wooley, 2015). In order to build upon the knowledge developed a multiple-case study approach should be considered in future efforts for comparisons and clarifications that can be realised across industries, cultures and in consideration of entrepreneurial types. For example, are there similar evolutionary development patterns observed between those entrepreneurs that are highly ambitious and those that are not? Are transitional forms dependent upon industry? Are transitional sequences and temporalities influenced by culture? Do necessary or sufficient transitional forms exist?

Caution should be erred given the retrospective and prospective components of data collection. EIs are an abstract cognitive construct that are not easily measured and therefore entail the solicitation of responses to various question items that are reflective of the concept. Prospective biases that stem from recalibration of responses due to questions being interpreted differently over measurement occasions, priorities changing, and individual conceptualisations of the focal construct changing, all have the potential to introduce measurement error (Schwartz and Sprangers, 2010). Retrospectively, recollection errors may mean that interpretations of prior states and events may be inaccurate, over-estimated or under-estimated with the current state of the individual perhaps influencing reconstructions based upon present affect and moods (Golden, 1992). Particularly with EIs there can exist substantial amounts of self-justification biases (Carter, Gartner, Shaver and Gatewood, 2003) that can undermine reasoning.

In consideration of the third study, a low sample size and use of self-evaluation may pose certain limitations. Self-reports are commonly used in entrepreneurship, management and organisational research to obtain a wide range of data from demographics to behaviours. However, problems can arise through the incapacity to verify participants responses via other means, common method variance, consistency motif and social desirability (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986). In this respect these effects were reduced through the use of a widely used and validated and refined measurement instrument in the Entrepreneurial Intent Questionnaire (Liñán, Moriano and Jaen, 2016). Questionnaires were designed in alignment with previous extant literature whilst cross-referencing Ajzen's (1991) model to heighten construct validity. With this, the questions were structured in consideration of Ajzen's (2002) methodological suggestions. Respondents confidentiality was assured and maximum honesty in responding was petitioned with questions ordered randomly and some questions being reversed scored. The reduced sample size was symptomatic of the longitudinal nature of the investigation with attrition expected and at 74% was similar to that witnessed in previous studies (for example Fayolle and Gailly (2015) reported a 66% response rate and Kautonen, van Gelderen and Fink (2015) 70% and 58% respectively). In this regard it is recommended that the study be replicated with a larger sample to see if generalisations can be made and results hold. Longitudinal study must also be developed in consideration of new and innovative ways to ensure minimal attrition. It would be an easy suggestion to propose the use of new social media platforms and communication technologies however this has been proven to be of less use than expected (Galloway, Kapasi and Whitam, 2015). Therefore, rigorous planning is advised and research should consider the specific samples we choose to investigate given that the motivation of students may be particularly difficult to sustain. For EI's it may be more fruitful to engage in qualitatively based longitudinal study as research can become more personalised and connections can be made between both participant and phenomenon (Suddaby, Bruton and Si, 2015).

Finally, future research may benefit from the development of more specific contextual models to gain insight into the main contributing variables and their range of effects given differing environmental demands. Here, a great deal of care needs to be taken as to how EI is defined and operationalised. As aforementioned “best fit” models can then be established and assemblages of interactive capacities for given scenarios postulated. To do so and as a point of embarkment we must look at cultures, sub-cultures, communities and industries and how these different components interact with Acs, Autio and Szerb’s (2014) National Systems of Entrepreneurship framework ideally positioned to do so.

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