

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP, IDENTITY,
AND THEIR OVERLAP IN THE
SLUM**

An Ethnographic Study of the Mukuru Slum in
Nairobi, Kenya

Philip O'Donnell

Dublin City University Business School

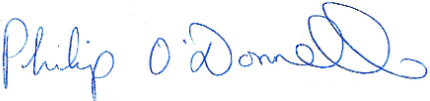
Supervised by Eric Clinton & Colm O'Gorman

Examined by Julio de Castro, IE Business School Madrid

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PhD

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List of Abbreviations

AUC	African Union Commission
BOP	Bottom (or Base) of the Pyramid
CBE	Community-Based Enterprise
HRW	Human Rights Watch
I-L; L-L	Illegal but Legitimate; Legal and Legitimate
LDC	Least Developed Country
MCA	Member of County Assembly
MNC	Multi-National Corporation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
ODT	Optimal Distinctiveness Theory
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PSED	Panel Study of Entrepreneurial Dynamics
SIT	Social Identity Theory
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
UN	United Nations
UNCDP	United Nations Committee for Development Policy
UNDP	United Nations Development Project
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
WTO	World Trade Organization

Abstract

Entrepreneurship, Identity, and their Overlap in the Slum: An Ethnographic Study of the Mukuru Slum in Nairobi, Kenya, by P. O'Donnell.

This study explores the relationship between entrepreneurship and collective identity in an informal, or 'slum', community in Nairobi, Kenya. In Nairobi, as in cities across the Developing World, slum communities stand out as islands of poverty and neglect amidst increasingly cosmopolitan urban surroundings. Extant research, much of which centres on the so-called 'Base of the Pyramid' (BoP), has shown that where social groups experience levels of social and economic disadvantage which are far in excess of comparable groups, entrepreneurship is often underpinned by a strong collective orientation. This can have a profound and wide-ranging bearing on the venturing process. Slum communities, however, have yet to be considered in this research and, moreover, they remain largely neglected within the broader literature on entrepreneurship at the BoP.

Drawing on ethnographic data collected during four-and-a-half months of fieldwork, I observed that collective identity was closely tied up with economic informality. Entrepreneurs believed that their community's marginal status afforded them a *de facto* right to circumvent the costs of registration and taxation, considerably reducing the barriers to market entry in an environment characterised by widespread and acute resource deprivation. However, for most entrepreneurs this was the only facet of the venturing process that was permeated by collective identity. Navigating the many challenges of their market context was seen as an individual rather than a collective concern.

This was observed to differ, however, among the slum's younger generation, who, for the most part, had grown up there or moved there as adolescents. This cohort exhibited a stronger proclivity towards collaboration in entrepreneurial venturing, and their ventures were firmly rooted in dense, close-knit friendship networks. This study extends current understandings of how entrepreneurship is affected by social-group membership, particularly in a BoP context.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Imperatives of relevance and impact dictate that the field of entrepreneurship research must cultivate a level of familiarity with its periphery that bears comparison with that of its centre. At its centre, entrepreneurship powers economic development amidst highly developed factor markets, Schumpeterian innovators, stable institutions, and frontier technologies. In comparison to the centre, the periphery is a place of apparent institutional disorder, where entrepreneurship is often confined to the explicitly second-tier ‘parallel’, or informal, economy and where it becomes entangled within a mess of “wicked problems” like poverty, voicelessness, and social inertia (Dorado and Ventresca, 2013). On a global level, the refocusing of scholarly attention from centre to periphery has been underway for more than a decade (Zahra and Wright, 2011; McMullen, 2011), leading to greater theoretical and empirical interest in Developing-World contexts characterised by high levels of poverty and informality (Sutter, Bruton, and Chen, 2019). On a more local level, however – meaning within countries and even within cities – the need for careful consideration of centre-periphery disparities has been widely neglected.

In Developing-World countries, the centre is often a place of privilege and opportunity, where the impotent nature of market institutions allows entrepreneurs to leverage political networks or flout labour regulations to achieve an ‘unfair’ advantage (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2011; Godfrey, 2011). But the strategies, resources, and opportunities that underpin entrepreneurship in market settings such as this provide a distorted representation of the general landscape for entrepreneurship in these countries (Chambers, 1997; de Soto, 2000), where the capital stock of the great majority of entrepreneurs – the financial, social, human, and political capital at their disposal – is desperately low (Alvarez and Barney, 2014; Bradley, McMullen, Artz, and Simuyu, 2012).

Paying closer attention to the economic lives of those on the socioeconomic periphery of these countries is a challenge that must be met if entrepreneurship as a field of research is to engage seriously with the contextual ‘otherness’ of the Developing World (Sutter, et al., 2019; Welter, Baker, Audretsch, and Gartner, 2017). It is also necessary to recognise the many degrees and forms of peripherality that prevail within the Developing World, and to forge a stronger

understanding of the differences between peripheral environments as contexts for entrepreneurship (Welter, 2011; Zahra and Wright, 2011). Isolated rurality has been the quintessential representation of the socioeconomic periphery for most of history (Chambers, 1997), but rising levels of urban inequality has stripped geographical distance out of the centre-periphery equation (Davis, 2007; de Soto, 2000). Today, 880 million people live in urban slums, most of which exist within sight of – often literally in the shadow of – thriving centres of modern commerce.

Although slums are notoriously vibrant entrepreneurial settings (de Soto, 2000), the research attention that they have garnered has been scant. In the absence of direct empirical attention, what we know about slums as a context for entrepreneurship can only be extrapolated from studies conducted in ‘comparable’ contexts, including impoverished rural and downtown urban settings. As Table 1 outlines, these contexts are distinct from one another along several basic parameters, making the cross-context generalisation of insights and observations dubious.

Table 1: Dimensions of context and their contrasting manifestations in selected Developing-World settings

	Rural	Urban Downtown	Urban Slum
<i>Institutional</i>	Predominance of informal institutions developed over several generations; negligible political power	Predominantly formal institutions; levels of political power range from negligible (informal street vendors and hawkers) to high (large company executives)	Informal institutions in an emergent, dynamic state; negligible political power
<i>Social</i>	Severe poverty; ethnolinguistically homogenous with highly suffused network ties	Highly variant levels of poverty; ethnolinguistically heterogenous with moderately or poorly suffused network ties	Severe poverty; ethnolinguistically heterogenous with moderately or poorly suffused network ties
<i>Spatial</i>	Population is small, stable or declining, and sparsely distributed	Population is large, gradually rising, and concentrated	Exceptional rates of population growth with unparalleled (and still-rising) levels of population density
<i>Temporal</i>	Community has existed in relatively stable form for several generations, possibly centuries	Community has existed for a long time, but has experienced significant change	Community has typically come into existence within the past 50 years, and has been a large settlement for only 25
<i>The four dimensions of context set out above are specified and described by Welter (2011).</i>			

Motivation to undertake this study was therefore grounded in the apparent need to gain a deeper insight into the slum as a context for entrepreneurship, which in turn feeds into the wider effort to direct entrepreneurship research towards the ‘grand challenges’ currently facing global society (George, Howard-Grenville, Joshi, and Tihanyi, 2016).

1.2 Study Design and Methodology

Data for this study was collected by ethnography, which involved two phases of immersive, full-time fieldwork – spaced one year apart and totalling four-and-a-half months – in a slum community in Nairobi, Kenya. Ethnography was deemed to be an appropriate methodological approach for three broad reasons. First, ethnography is oriented towards rich, granular detail, meaning it is well-suited to study contexts which are interesting and unfamiliar (Wolcott, 2008). Second, I had the experience and connections, as well as the time, necessary to conduct a study of this type. Working in a volunteer capacity in the research community some years prior (see Chapter 4: ‘Methodology’ for more detail) meant that I would not be starting completely from scratch, and negated much of the uncertainty that might have otherwise caused a study of this type to be adjudged, either from an epistemic or personal perspective, excessively risky (Marx, Stoker, and Suri, 2013). Third, ethnography does not hinge on the ex-ante formulation of research questions in the manner of, say, a survey or a set of once-off interviews. Instead, it allows for a more flexible and exploratory approach in which issues of importance are revealed as fieldwork proceeds (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). Given the dearth of entrepreneurship research in this domain and the consequent difficulty of making accurate judgements about the topics and issues that matter most, such empirical openness was especially valuable. The research questions that I outline in the next section were not formulated from a position of detachment in advance of data collection, but instead emerged during the iterative processes of data collection and analysis. The purpose of this approach – apart from helping to ensure that the study was not underpinned by research questions that were theoretically sound but had no relevance in the world of practice – was to expose themes that, from a distance, would have been obscure or invisible but, when subjected to up-close observation, offered lines of worthwhile and interesting inquiry.

Thus, before concise research questions were articulated, the guiding aim of fieldwork was to pursue a more fine-grained, contextualised understanding of ‘what it’s like’ to be an entrepreneur in the challenging environment of an urban slum. The overarching contribution of this study centres on this general empirical aim. Specifically, the cross-level nature of the study, incorporating micro (individual), meso (close relational groups like family and peers), and macro (community) levels of analysis, helps to provide insight into the magnitude of the sociodemographic upheaval that is being brought about by Developing-World urbanisation, and how this upheaval is manifest in patterns of entrepreneurial organising.

1.3 Overview of Research Questions and Theoretical Contributions

This continuous effort to contextualise field observations demanded that substantial attention be devoted to the relational and emotional connections that linked entrepreneurs to the study community. Slums are unusual in the sense that their inhabitants are, to a large extent, closed off within a unique set of economic, physical, and political circumstances, yet most of those inhabitants are not born into those circumstances. Instead, most arrive to the slum as adults or adolescents and, to them, the city environment is a foreign one (Portes, 1972) where the certainties of rural living – ethnic homogeneity, interdependence and mutuality, social norms and institutions that have been formulated over generations and are backed by strong enforcement mechanisms – no longer hold.

Understanding this tension between competing feelings of ‘togetherness’ and ‘otherness’ among inhabitants of the slum, and the implications for entrepreneurship, became the central theoretical concern of the study. I employ the theoretical lens of collective identity, which refers broadly to consensual notions of ‘who we are’ held by members of a recognised social group, to investigate this issue. Themes of collectivism have been highly prominent in extant literature on entrepreneurship in poor and marginalised settings (e.g., Barrios and Blocker, 2015; Peredo, 2003; Peredo and Chrisman, 2006; Slade Schantz, Kistruck, and Zietsma, 2018), providing a firm theoretical basis for the present study. However, it is possible that by focusing purely on manifestations of collectivism, scholars have failed to fully account for the factors that negate it. In other words, there are many intuitive reasons why poor and marginalised groups might be prone to collectivism, but very little research has been directed to the factors that might undermine or inhibit collectivism within such groups. As a result, a strong collective orientation has come to be associated with social groupings that experience acute levels of hardship and disadvantage. Scholars argue that this can confer valuable social resources on entrepreneurs that belong to that grouping, helping them to overcome the structural disadvantages that they and other members of the group face (Webb, Tihanyi, Ireland, and Sirmon, 2009). An identity approach, predicated on how people and groups see themselves in relation to referent others, is amenable both to social environments where collectivistic attitudes dominate and to social environments where individuals feel a sense of ‘otherness’ that overshadows ‘belonging’.

Two research questions were posed to investigate this issue:

‘Do members of the study community feel bound by a collective identity and, if so, what is it predicated upon?’

‘At the level of the individual venture, what bearing does collective identity have on the entrepreneurship process?’

These investigations delivered important new insights for research at the intersection of entrepreneurship and collective identity. Prior work in this area has theorised that entrepreneurs who belong to social groups that are marginalised or otherwise disadvantaged, and who therefore share in the emotional ‘we-ness’ of the in-group, can derive unique benefits from their social position (Mathias, Huyghe, Frid, and Galloway, 2018; Webb, et al., 2009). Empirical studies have shown, for example, that entrepreneurs that belong to a given social group – especially one that exists at or near the margins of society – are well-placed to serve the commercial needs of other members of that group, since they have an intimate, first-hand understanding of the circumstances, tastes, and economic means that prevail therein (Branzei, Parker, Moroz, and Gamble, 2018; Viswanathan, Echambadi, Venugopal, and Sridharan, 2014). The range of benefits that entrepreneurs can derive from membership in an acutely disadvantaged social group, and the reasons why that range might differ from one group or context to another, are still in question.

This study observed that, because of its entanglement with economic informality, collective identity helped to make entrepreneurial opportunities – in a purely “realist” sense – more abundant. Stemming from their socioeconomic exclusion, community insiders considered as a *de facto* ‘right of citizenship’ the freedom to initiate entrepreneurial ventures on a purely informal basis, that is, having undergone no registration procedures nor paying tax of any kind on commercial income. The pervasiveness of informality had become self-reinforcing, enabling entrepreneurs to capitalise on the increasing consumption capacity of the community’s quickly growing population by engaging in economic activities that yielded extremely marginal returns, effectively re-ifying their reliance on the cost advantages of informality. In the absence of accessible livelihood alternatives, informal entrepreneurship was integral to the economic lives of most households, and State efforts to register and collect taxes from businesses within the slum met strong collective resistance.

These observations serve as an important complement to earlier work that has highlighted the importance of the community as a level of analysis in assessing entrepreneurs’ inclinations towards (in)formal modes of venturing (De Castro, Khavul, and Bruton, 2014). The present study advances this stream of literature by situating informality within the normative domain of collective identity. Informality was a part of a larger institutional order which distinguished ‘us’ (community insiders) from ‘them’ (outsiders). This institutional order was to some extent imposed on the community by virtue of its marginal social and economic status, but aspects of it were also embraced and actively preserved by the community itself. Entrepreneurs that were situated on the territorial periphery of the community, that is, the outer fringes of the slum, were

subject to frequency interference from formal institutional agents like tax inspectors and, as such, were required to make carefully considered value judgements as to whether the risks of remaining informal (frequent fines and maintaining a constant readiness to evade) outweighed the benefits (circumventing registration and taxation costs) (De Castro, et al., 2014; Siquiera, Webb, and Bruton, 2016). In the interior of the slum, however, informality was viewed as part and parcel of ‘who we are’ and ‘how things are done here’. In this sense, the pervasiveness of informality was less a function of conscious, individual-level decisions, and was instead a reflection of the collective notion, held at the level of the community, of the institutional arrangements that best served the collective interests of those belonging to that community.

However, exploiting the opportunities that membership of this community conferred – that is, by initiating and operating market ventures – was seen as a predominantly individual pursuit, despite the ubiquity of entrepreneurship and the eminent precarity that it entailed. Building from these empirical observations, I argue that collective identity is likely to have the strongest bearing on those aspects of the entrepreneurial process which invoke *intergroup* relations. However, when an out-group ceases to be readily identifiable, the collective identity which underlies in-group solidarity loses salience. As a result, those aspects of the entrepreneurial process that rely on *intragroup* solidarity, but which do not invoke a referent out-group, are least impacted by collective identity.

The theoretical contributions that derive from these investigations can be specified as follows:

1. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first study to link collective identity to the nascent literature on external enablers (Davidsson, 2015; Davidsson, Recker, and von Briel, forthcoming). This link was inductively derived and provides novel and interesting avenues for the future development of the external enabler construct. In particular, it raises questions relating to the types of economic action that are likely to be spurred by different external enablers. In this case, economic action was spurred by the preservation of an institutional status quo that allowed for non-capital intensive, informal venturing. Like most subsistence-level entrepreneurial activity (Alvarez and Barney, 2014), these ventures were ‘unproductive’ (Baumol, 1990) in that they created minimal surplus value and gave little priority to innovation, yet being able to engage freely in economic activity of this type was seen to be critical for the viability of the community and the survival of its inhabitants.
2. The interaction of institutional systems – as occurs, for example, when formal and informal institutional systems come into contact or when one set of formal institutions takes the place of another – is known to be fertile ground for entrepreneurship (Ritter, 1998; Webb, et al., 2009; Williams and Vorley, 2014). The notion of ‘insulating’ –

referring to the use by some entrepreneurs of identity capital forged by a wider populace of entrepreneurs as a buffer between themselves and the enforcement authorities which is developed in the empirical chapters of this thesis – represents a novel development for this under-examined topic. Building on this idea, I argue that entrepreneurs play an important role in shaping the emergent 'rules of the game' when formal and informal institutional frameworks come into conflict. The logic of intergroup relations (an identity perspective) upon which this argument is based represents a novel complement to the more orthodox lens of actor-network theory (networks perspective).

3. A wide body of research has established that identification occurs on a 'situational' as well as a deep-structured basis (e.g., Rousseau, 1998). But despite gaining widespread acceptance in the area of social identity (concerned with individual-level identification processes), this point remains poorly addressed in the literature on collective identity. Intuitively, it would appear to be of at least equal pertinence here: if situational cues cause individuals to disidentify from a collective – which is the core premise of the situational identification construct – then collective identity is a hollow quantity. I address this shortcoming by illustrating that the salience of collective identity can ebb and flow, and explore the conditions under which collective identity might or might not have a bearing on the entrepreneurial process. Overall, I argue that collective identity is likely to have the strongest bearing on those aspects of the entrepreneurial process which invoke *intergroup* relations. However, when an out-group ceases to be readily identifiable, the collective identity which underlies in-group solidarity loses salience. As a result, those aspects of the entrepreneurial process that rely on *intragroup* solidarity, but which do not invoke a referent out-group, are least impacted by collective identity.

Included in my empirical sample were two ventures that had been initiated by groups of friends, all of whom were aged in their late-teens to mid-twenties. Data analysis suggested that the structure and composition of these ventures held important clues as to how the collective identity/entrepreneurship nexus might be evolving within this rapidly emerging community. Additionally, and in spite of the extremities of their social and market context, the emergence of the ventures themselves links the literatures on collective identity and entrepreneurship teams to yield insights with potentially broad application. As such, these groups, which I refer to in this thesis as 'entrepreneurial collectives' (or 'collectives' for short) were analysed separately from the rest of the sample, and the research questions were reframed to reflect the obvious differences in form between them and the other ventures. The following questions were posed in respect of the entrepreneurial collectives:

‘Why did the entrepreneurial collective, defined here as a group of like-minded friends pursuing economic profits through self-initiated, market-based ventures, emerge as an organisational form?’

‘How did collective identity and entrepreneurship co-evolve within the collectives, particularly in respect of the pre-existing and multi-faceted ties that underpinned them?’

‘How was individual agency enacted within the identity confines of the collectives?’

‘Teams’ and ‘collective identity’ have both enjoyed increasing prominence in entrepreneurship research, but there has been surprisingly little crossover between the two. Studies concerned with the formation, expansion, and actions of entrepreneurship teams have predominantly been predicated on means-ends frameworks that are unambiguous, profit-centric, and minimally affected by the nature and content of relationships among members (Forbes, Borchert, Zellmer-Bruhn, and Sapienza, 2006; Ruef, 2010). This perspective is fundamentally grounded in the logic of marginal gains: teams emerge and expand when the marginal gains that accrue from collaboration – resources, knowledge, and/or legitimacy – exceed the marginal costs of collaboration, like divided earnings, the risk of expropriation, and so on. Identity-based approaches have been highlighted as a necessary complement to this more rationalistic and socially decontextualized view, as a means to better understand the role played by relationships and shared experiences, crystallising in a collective understanding of ‘who we are’, in the emergence of new ventures (Fiol and Romanelli, 2012; Ruef, Aldrich, and Carter; 2003; Santos and Eisenhardt, 2005).

The emergence of the entrepreneurial collectives illustrates vividly how economic objectives can be heavily conditioned by issues of identity that stem from pre-existing and multi-faceted relationships. These observations are especially noteworthy when viewed in the context of the general tendency towards individualism in entrepreneurship that I described earlier. Despite sharing the same social and market context, those who were born into the slum or moved there at a young age exhibited patterned differences from those who moved to the slum as adults in their approach to entrepreneurship. In general, those in the latter cohort saw themselves as atomistic and isolated in most facets of entrepreneurial venturing; by contrast, the entrepreneurial activities of those in the younger cohort were situated within dense relational networks characterised by mutuality and solidarity. The basic condition of belonging to one of these collectives was, in and of itself, something to which their members ascribed considerable emotional value. Aside from leading lives that were largely invisible to the State (their communities, as well as their economic activities, were informal and effectively off-radar, and many youths did not have birth certificates or other forms of personal documentation), many of the slum’s young people, lacking the security that is ordinarily afforded by family, had been navigating the imperatives of self-reliance since

their adolescence. For them, involvement in the collectives was not only valued for its instrumental value – that is, as a means to a greater end (earning money to improve their personal circumstances) – it was also seen as an end in itself (by providing for them a sense of belonging and self-worth).

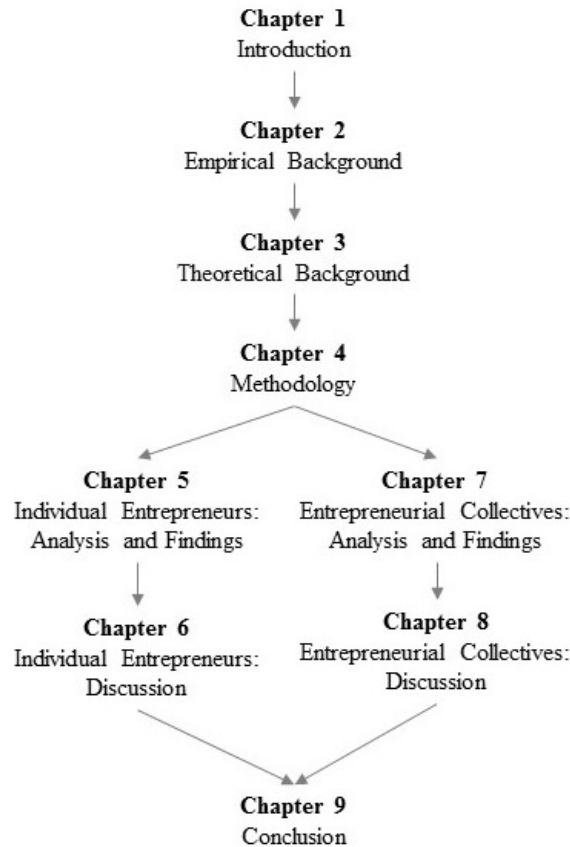
My investigations into the collectives and their emergence yielded the following theoretical contributions:

1. I provide new insights on the nature of entrepreneurial embeddedness (Jack and Anderson, 2002; Uzzi, 1997), particularly by attending to the under-researched area of friendship ties as a precursor to entrepreneurship teams (Francis and Sandberg, 2000). Using the idea of identity-based organisational boundaries, I illustrate that ventures served a broad suite of purposes besides income generation. They also filled the void created by severed family ties and provided a much-needed recreational outlet for young people experiencing acute existential stresses like persistent hunger, stigmatisation, social isolation, and widespread criminality. This 'what else' aspect of entrepreneurial ventures was central in determining who participated in them and what their goals were.
2. Recent studies have shown that entrepreneurship – and specifically the performance feedback that it engenders – has a transformative effect on a person's identity (Newbery, Lean, Moizer, and Haddoud, 2018). My findings suggest that this transformation unfolds in a different way in the context of team-based entrepreneurship, particularly where entrepreneurial teams emerge from strong, pre-existing ties. Rather than extant micro-identities becoming jettisoned or losing salience, I observed that these identities were infused with new meanings and were used as a basis for positive distinctiveness. I also draw attention to the practical implications of these findings, with a particular focus on how the retention of these extant micro-identities was observed to have important and lasting implications for venture boundaries.
3. An additional contribution to the entrepreneurship teams' literature is made in the form of 'negotiated' personal agency. Teams literature has not fully addressed the issue of members 'having one foot in and one foot out'; that is, where they undertake lone venturing whilst continuing to engage in the entrepreneurial activities of the group. My observations indicate that this engenders identity tensions which must be addressed in such a way that personal agency is neither crowded out by group belonging, nor that it undermines group belonging. A key tactic in resolving these tensions was to allow the group to capture some of the value that was created by the lone venture.

1.4 Thesis Structure

Figure 1 (below) provides a snapshot of the overall sequence and structure of this thesis.

Figure 1: A graphical overview of the structure and sequence of this thesis



The two chapters following this introduction set out the empirical and theoretical background (respectively) to this study. In *Chapter 2: Empirical Background*, I account for why poverty and inequality persist – in some regions more than others – and place the phenomenon of rapid urbanisation and slum growth in the Developing World in historical context. *Chapter 3: Theoretical Background* describes the development and relevant usage of the construct of central interest in this thesis, collective identity, and establishes the conceptual linkages between it and other concepts and theories that are employed in the empirical sections of the thesis. *Chapter 4: Methodology* outlines the ontological underpinnings of this study and details the processes of data collection and analysis.

Chapters 5 to 8 encompass the findings and theoretical development that stem from empirical data. These chapters are best approached as two dyadic or paired ‘blocks’. Chapters 5 and 6 make up the first block and deal with the general sample, which is referred to in the first set of research

questions and theoretical contributions that are detailed above. The ventures which are the focus of these chapters were predominantly ‘own-account ventures’ which were initiated and managed by individuals (though a minority were partnerships or family enterprises), and I collectively refer to this cohort of my sample as ‘Individual Entrepreneurs’. Analysis and findings pertaining to this cohort is set out in *Chapter 5* and theoretical discussion follows in *Chapter 6*. The second block, consisting of Chapters 7 and 8, is concerned with the entrepreneurial collectives and encompasses the second set of research questions and theoretical contributions set out above. It follows the same order as the previous block, whereby *Chapter 7* comprises analysis and findings and *Chapter 8* details the theoretical discussion.

Chapter 9: ‘Conclusion’ re-states the main findings and contributions of this study, identifies some central limitations, and offers some suggested lines of future research inquiry.

CHAPTER 2

Empirical Background

2.1 Introduction

The research field of entrepreneurship has much to contribute in the effort to overcome, or at least alleviate, global poverty (Naudé, 2010). For these contributions to be actualised, however, further research is needed which attends to the economic, cultural, and institutional particularities that affect entrepreneurs in Developing-World contexts (Bruton, 2010; McMullen, 2011). Appreciating the full extent of contextual plurality is an essential facet of this research (Welter, 2011; Zahra and Wright, 2011); many poor countries exhibit socioeconomic extremes which are unparalleled elsewhere, and arguably this is not well-reflected in the emerging body of literature concerned with entrepreneurship in the Developing World (Branzei and Abdelnour, 2010; Welter, Smallbone, and Pobol, 2015). I explore some of these extremes in this chapter, and finish by outlining how the present study aims to bring greater balance and depth to these discussions.

This chapter is organised into four sections. The first section (2.2, “Differential Development”) details the highly distorted nature of the world’s poverty distribution and provides an historical overview for why poverty and inequality have been more persistent in some regions than in others. In the second section (2.3, “Urbanisation and the Proliferation of Slums”), I provide an in-depth account of the slum context, explaining how slums have become an indicative feature of acute socioeconomic inequality that warrant targeted empirical attention. The third section (2.4, “Enterprise and Entrepreneurship in Contemporary Africa”) introduces the growing role played by trade and commerce in African development and explores the facets of this trend which have caught the attention of the entrepreneurship research community. In the fourth and final section (2.5, “Study Objectives and Research Questions”), I set out the research questions and empirical objectives of the present study and explain how they add to the existing body of knowledge.

2.2 Differential Development

In 1990, 36 per cent of the world’s population lived on a daily income of US\$1.90 or less. By 2015, that number had fallen to ten per cent, meaning that, despite unprecedented population growth in developing nations in the intervening years, the absolute number of people living in

extreme poverty was 1.1 billion less in 2015 than it was in 1990. The Millennium Development Goal target of halving extreme poverty by 2015 was therefore achieved with considerable headroom – instead of decreasing by half, the rate of extreme poverty fell by almost three-quarters (World Bank, 2019a).

Yet the global distribution of development in the course of these decades has been highly unequal. Latin America, much of Asia, and the transitioning states of Eastern Europe have witnessed large declines in extreme poverty and account for the majority of progress that has been realised in this area. In Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), meanwhile, the number of extremely poor actually *rose* – by nine million – in the two-and-a-half decades to 2015. More than half of the world’s extreme poverty is now concentrated in this region and, at current trends, it is forecasted that, by 2030, nine out of ten people living in extreme poverty will live in SSA (Barne and Wadhwa, 2018; World Bank, 2019a).

This section aims to provide some historical context for Africa’s ongoing social and economic difficulties. Since empirical fieldwork for this study was conducted in Kenya, I will pay particularly close attention to the Kenyan case. No single African country reflects in perfect microcosm the evolution of the continent as a whole (O’Toole, 2007); however, several of the social and economic problems afflicting contemporary Kenya are borne from geographical and historical circumstances that are relatable to many other African countries. The strong parallels between the Kenyan story and that of its regional neighbours has given Kenya a kind of portentous status, as Wrong (2010: 8 & 11) describes: “Kenya is one of a handful of African nations which have always possessed a significance which is out of keeping with their size and population, whose twists and turns are monitored by outsiders for clues as to which direction the continent itself is taking ... From the increasingly strained relations between the country’s tribes to the rising anger of its prospectless youth, Kenya exemplifie[s] many of Africa’s most intractable problems.”

2.2.1 A Background to Colonialism in Africa

It is wrong to attribute all of Africa’s present-day ills to nefarious European colonisers. Prior to the onset of colonialism, economic development in Africa was stymied by disadvantages of climate and topography, as arid or semi-arid lands that were poorly suited to productive agriculture covered vast swathes of the continent. Drought, famine, and tropical diseases like malaria, coupled with wars – sometimes prolonged, sometimes sporadic – between ethnic or ‘tribal’ groups, kept Africa’s population low and far more geographically dispersed than that of Europe (Collier and Gunning, 1999), a disparity that was compounded as industrial revolution

drove population growth, urbanisation, and prosperity in the latter (Landes, 1999). Neither did systematic social injustice arrive in Africa with colonialism. The slave trade, for example, was established as far back as Egyptian times, with the Nile facilitating trans-Saharan slaving conquests into the heart of Africa (Collins and Burns, 2008). At the other end of Africa (and much later – c. 1816-1820), the expansionist project of the fearsome Zulu state, undertaken with an army of 40,000 men, brought displacement and subjugation to neighbouring tribes on the eastern coast of present-day South Africa (Collins and Burns, 2008; Landes, 1999).

Furthermore, the time period in which SSA found itself under colonial rule was a relatively short one. Although European conquest in SSA dates back almost 600 years, it was not until the late nineteenth century that European nations staked any kind of earnest claim to the African heartlands; up to that point, they had been content to trade with (and pillage) the many centres of commerce on its coast, which served as important waypoints on the maritime trail to more bountiful lands in the East, like India and the Spice Islands. Most of SSA has now been free of colonial rule for more than half a century, but many of its nations, despite substantial natural resource endowments, have descended into aid-dependent, economic pariahs ravaged by political in-fighting or plundered by a tiny, hegemonic circle of domestic elites (Collier, 2007). Set against the recent economic progress of South-East Asia – most of which was colonised by the same imperial powers as Africa (predominantly Britain, France, and Portugal, although the latter was quickly ousted in Asia by the Dutch) – Africa’s economic stagnation is stark. 33 of the 47 nations on the UN’s list of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) are in Africa, as are 19 of the 20 lowest-ranked countries on its Human Development Index (UNCDP, 2018; UNDP, 2018).

But despite the relative brevity of colonial rule in Africa, the cultural and institutional legacy left behind by colonialism has proven far more poisonous in Africa than elsewhere. Scholars agree that the poor standards of governance, widespread political instability, and heightened incidence of civil war that has plagued Africa in the post-independence era can be traced to colonial policy.

2.2.2 The Colonial Era – 1880s to mid-1960s

Mainland Africa is a continent of 48 nations whose territorial boundaries were determined by a handful of European nations and superimposed over a dynamic mosaic of around 1,000 indigenous or ‘tribal’ societies (Moyo, 2009).¹ “The scramble for Africa” (see Pakenham, 1997)

¹ Some writers on Africa have argued against the continued use of terms like “tribe” on the grounds that they conjure primitive images that misrepresent contemporary Africa (e.g. Sobania, 2003). I include them here because they were commonplace in the everyday discourse of my informants, and because they frequently appear in political and media discourse (e.g., Maathai, 2009; Wrong, 2009). The terms are used here in their ‘modern’ sense – to describe affinity to one’s ethnic group or, more commonly, to refer to

among would-be colonial powers reached its culmination with the Berlin Conference of 1884-85, where delegates of Germany, France, the UK, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and Belgium settled finally on how Africa would be divided. The arbitrariness of this carve-up meant that the frontiers of colonial jurisdictions frequently dissected tribal societies: “The Somali people, for example, were divided into four colonial systems: those of Britain (Somaliland), Italy (Somalia), France (Djibouti) and Ethiopia (Ogaden)” (Davidson, 1994: 11). Moreover, the colonial states that were formed – which in a matter of decades would approximate to the independent nations of Africa – bound together multiple tribal groups (sometimes hundreds) which typically had no experience of collective governance and had little cause to share a common identity (Gordon, 2007; Maathai, 2009).

Although some tribes were more than one-million strong and were spread over a large geographical area, most were not governed by any central authority, with power instead distributed within the (extended) family unit. Being predominantly pastoralist, prosperity was usually quantified in terms of cattle, sheep, and goats, and expanding the size of one’s herd (by adding more livestock) or enhancing the productivity of one’s herd (by adding to the number of people attending to the livestock) was often achieved through marriage. It was not uncommon for marriages to cross ethnic lines, giving lie to the popular image of African tribes as either disconnected or existing in a state of perpetual warfare (Sobania, 2003). Through marriage and commerce, many tribal dyads became culturally, economically, and genealogically intertwined, helping to forge patterns of cohesion that persist today.

Colonialism, however, did much to undermine inter-ethnic cohesion and to foment animosity between tribal groups that had previously had little contact. Inevitably, some tribes suffered more than others because of colonialism, although initial losses could sometimes pave the way for long-term gains. British settlers in Kenya, for example, were attracted to the Central Highlands region for its fertile soils and its relatively temperate climate, and the indigenous occupants of this region – most of it belonged to the Kikuyu and Maasai tribal communities – were forcefully stripped of their lands. Whereas the pastoralist Maasai drifted south onto new lands, many Kikuyu, who practiced more varied forms of agriculture that relied on the arable highland soils of the central region, faced destitution. Making matters worse, those Kikuyu that did obtain new lands in the region were prohibited by the colonial authorities from growing coffee, which was becoming a valuable commodity, for fear they would impinge on the profits of British settlers (Collins and Burns, 2008). With little alternative, large numbers of Kikuyu found themselves working on exploitative terms for the colonial settlers that displaced them (Tignor, 2015).

ethnically-rooted favouritism and hegemony in such spheres as the labour market or politics. The terms “tribe” and “ethnicity” are used interchangeably throughout this thesis (Udogu, 2001).

Colonial policies affected all of Kenya. Exorbitant taxations and restrictions on the movement of peoples were imposed ('tribal reserves' were created and strict racial segregation was practiced in Nairobi which prevented labour migrants from moving to the city without a permit). However, the directness of the Kikuyu colonial experience had particularly far-reaching ramifications. First, the substantial labour requirements of large agricultural plantations brought together a people that had previously been scattered thinly across a sparsely populated area and who, accustomed to living in small and insular communities of their own kin, had gained little exposure to their broader cultural heritage. Colonial oppression therefore provided the stimulus for them to think of themselves as a consolidated ethnic group rather than as a fragmented assortment of individual clans (Collins and Burns, 2008). Undoubtedly, this would provide impetus for decades of Kikuyu-led resistance to colonial rule, up to and including the landmark *Mau Mau* uprising of the 1950s. Second, and notwithstanding the resentment that festered within the Kikuyu community regarding their expropriation, it brought them close to their colonisers. Before any other ethnic group, and ultimately to a greater extent than any other ethnic group, the Kikuyu learned the ways of their colonial master. They were the first to attend the churches and schools established by colonial missionaries. Perhaps more importantly, Kikuyu leaders were quickly co-opted into the colonial bureaucracy, in which they carried out local administrative tasks like ensuring a steady supply of plantation labour and native compliance with petty colonial laws (Tignor, 2015).

In Kenya and elsewhere – in particular those parts of Africa that found themselves under British rule, where the policy was usually one of governance through pre-existing political institutions ("indirect rule"), as opposed to Francophone Africa, where "direct rule" was more prevalent – the ingratiation of particular tribal groups with the colonial administration produced inequalities of power, resources, and know-how that outlasted colonialism and stretched into the independence era (Gordon, 2007; Wrong, 2009). It has been argued that this problem was exacerbated by the *type of* people that were furnished with power by colonial authorities. Many upright, respected leaders did not defer to imperial decree and refused any involvement in the colonial system. Instead, leaders were often drawn from the margins of society – deviants and pariahs that were readily willing to trade what little social standing they had for the favour of the powerful (Maathai, 2009).

By the mid-point of the twentieth century, imperialist fervour had evaporated. This was brought about by the crippling financial and political toll visited on the main colonial powers by World War II, increased moral anguish relating to the fundamentally exploitative nature of colonialism (particularly within the recently established UN), and proliferating nationalist sentiments within

the colonies themselves. Widespread decolonisation took place in Africa between the mid-1950s and mid-1960s (Kenya gained independence in 1963).²

2.2.3 The Independence Era

African independence unfolded amidst a domestic and international groundswell of optimism. However, the rising tide of nationalism that surrounded it proved to have shallow depths, soon to give way to a deepening entrenchment of ethnic identities and inter-ethnic animosities. Kenya's first president was a Kikuyu called Jomo Kenyatta, a chief protagonist in the independence movement who had been imprisoned by the British for most of the 1950s. Kenyatta's vice-president, Oginga Odinga, also a prominent agitator for independence, was a member of another of Kenya's more prominent ethnic groups, the Luo, from the west of the country. Within two years, Odinga had split from Kenyatta's ruling party to form a rival party of his own, setting in motion the 'tribal politics' which has characterised Kenyan political discourse ever since (Okumu, 2001). (Incidentally, Kenya's current president, Uhuru Kenyatta, is Jomo Kenyatta's son; his arch political rival, Raila Odinga, is Oginga Odinga's son).

Odinga's breakaway party was promptly banned, and a number of high-profile political assassinations are believed to have been designed to consolidate the President's power by quashing dissent both within and outside of his own party. One of those killed was Member of Parliament J.M. Kariuki, whose commentary on the performance of the government of the day was both stinging and prophetic: "It takes more than a National Anthem however stirring, a National Coat of Arms however distinctive, a national Flag however appropriate, a national Flower however beautiful, to make a Nation." Also, coining a phrase that would prove popular as Kenya's socioeconomic inequalities grew in the coming decades: "A small but powerful group of greedy, self-seeking elite in the form of politicians, Civil Servants and businessmen, has steadily but surely monopolized the fruits of independence to the exclusion of the majority of people. We do not want a Kenya of *ten millionaires and ten million beggars*" (quoted in Sobania, 2003: 29, emphasis added).

Kenyatta was succeeded on his death by Daniel Arap Moi, who turned the country from a *de facto* into a formal one-party state over which he presided for 24 years. Moi, a member of the small Kalenjin tribe, undid almost a decade-and-a-half of Kikuyu cronyism, replacing it instead with his own – even more partisan – brand of tribal favouritism. This ethno-political merry-go-round has brought about the popularisation of another phrase: "It's our turn to eat" (Wrong, 2009).

² The Portuguese colonies, including Mozambique and Angola among others, had to wait until the mid-1970s for independence.

“Eating” or “taking something small” have become ubiquitous euphemisms for corruption in Kenya and apply just as much in the lowest ranks of the civil service as they do in upper government. The essence of “it’s our turn to eat” is that each ethnic group (or coalition of ethnic groups) is expected to bide its time until one of its own comes into power, at which point the spoils of that power – government jobs and tenders, infrastructural investment, and so on – will disproportionately accrue to members of that ethnic group.

It was during Moi’s presidential era that aid flows into Africa (and Kenya) began to accelerate rapidly. The scope for large-scale corruption that this engendered was not diminished by the various forms of conditionality that were attached to that aid; across Africa, aid conditionalities were regularly ignored, with an estimated 85 per cent of aid flows being used for purposes other than those intended (Moyo, 2009: 39). In other cases, conditionalities were afforded the minimal lip-service needed to secure access to additional tranches of funding; in the Kenyan case, a report by the World Bank noted that “conditionalities were met in letter but not in spirit” (Swamy, 1994: 3). When, under the market-liberalisation doctrine of Structural Adjustment in the 1980s and early-1990s, those conditionalities extended to the privatisation of public assets, African kleptocracy blossomed, as Moi and his contemporaries sold valuable state enterprises to political cronies at prices far below their market value (Meredith, 2005; Sobania, 2003). In all, Moi alone is reported to have siphoned off more than \$1bn from the public purse (Nwabuzor, 2005: 123). A popular purge of state corruption was instigated by Moi’s successor, President Mwai Kibaki, but it proved short-lived (Wrong, 2009), prompting UK High Commissioner Edward Clay to comment: “Evidently the practitioners now in government have the arrogance, greed and perhaps a desperate sense of panic to lead them to eat like gluttons. They may expect we shall not see, or notice, or will forgive them a bit of gluttony ... But they can hardly expect us not to care when their gluttony causes them to vomit all over our shoes” (BBC, 2004).³

Clay’s remarks speak to a misperception towards Africa which is widely held in the developed countries of the global North; that is, that the extent of Africa’s natural resource wealth coupled with substantial aid inflows should more than offset the rent-seeking and kleptocratic proclivities of its ruling class. This view dangerously underestimates the depth and seriousness of the ethnic divisions that have emerged post-independence. For a start, both resource wealth and aid have been shown to promote development only in nations with strong political institutions and policy environments (Collier, 2007; Moyo, 2009). The hasty nature of colonial withdrawal meant that emergent states were typically governed by resistance leaders that had to undertake the difficult task of nation-building with no direct experience of national governance (Okumu, 2001). As such,

³ Some months later, Edward Clay apologised for these comments, saying “he was sorry for ‘the moderation’ of his language, for underestimating the scale of the looting and for failing to speak out earlier” (Economist, 2005).

political institutions and policy environments were invariably deficient, and the flagrant ethnic biases exhibited by most governments fostered resentment and perceptions of illegitimacy among marginalized groups. In worst-case scenarios, resource or aid wealth in the context of an ethnically fractionalised state can constitute a ‘prize’ that incentivizes civil war (Moyo, 2007). Collier (2007: 32) estimates that the financial cost of a typical civil war is around \$64bn and, because war tends to beget war, the long-term implications for development would amount to a multiple of that figure.

Even where countries do not descend into civil war, ethnic fragmentation has been shown to be a key retardant of growth (Easterly and Levine, 1997). Collier and Gunning (1999) discuss how the tendency of African leaders to prioritise the interests of their own ethnic constituencies has led them to support markets and industries that matter to those constituencies but do not leverage the comparative advantages most likely to give their country a foothold in international trade, which ultimately serves to reduce the capital base available for basic investments in public services. In many African countries, Kenya included, this has devalued greatly the significance of government performance in electoral politics, instead reducing the latter to a patronage-driven game of tribal arithmetic (Ejobowah, 2001). In 2010, a new constitution was introduced in Kenya which was aimed at, among other things, limiting central government’s ability to favour its own ethnic constituencies by devolving a substantial portion of resource allocation decisions to the regional level.

2.3 Urbanisation and the Proliferation of Slums

Economists have likened the ongoing spike in Developing-World urbanisation to the industrial revolution that swept the West more than two centuries ago, such is the scale of its social impact on the countries affected (de Soto, 2000: 70). The pace and severity of urbanisation is reconfiguring the landscape for global development in fundamental and challenging ways (United Nations, 2014); as Kofi Annan writes in the foreword to a landmark UN-Habitat report (2003: v), “the locus of poverty is moving to the cities, a process now regarded as the ‘urbanisation of poverty’”. The same report later notes that rapid urbanisation has been “one of the great socio-economic changes of the last five decades or so” (p. xxxi).

Urbanisation is bringing about the widespread and expediated metamorphosis of small cities into large ones, and of large cities into ‘megacities’, a trend that is illustrated, again by drawing on the African context, in Table 2 (next page).

Table 2: The number of African cities per size category, 1995 and 2015 (data from UN-Habitat, 2015)

Size category (number of inhabitants)	Number of cities per size category (Africa only) ...	
	... in 1995	... in 2015
1-5m	25	46
5-10m	1	4
>10m	1	3

As municipal infrastructures have reached and exceeded their capacities, pockets of vacant urban land have quickly transformed into sprawling, unplanned slums (UN-Habitat, 2006), defined in 2002 by a UN Expert Group as an “area that combines, to various extents, the following characteristics: (i) inadequate access to safe water; (ii) inadequate access to sanitation and other infrastructure; (iii) poor structural quality of housing; (iv) overcrowding; (v) insecure residential status” (see UN-Habitat, 2003:12, for further definitions of ‘inadequate’, ‘overcrowding’, etc.). The centrality of slums to global development has been enshrined in the MDGs and the SDGs⁴ but, unlike extreme poverty, these initiatives have not targeted the eradication of slums, they merely aspire to improve them (UN, 2016). In fact, UN-Habitat’s SDG Programme Framework reports that “the absolute number of slum dwellers ... is expected to increase threefold by 2050 to almost half of the world’s urban population” (UN-Habitat, 2016a: 2). Already, fifty-five per cent of Sub-Saharan Africa’s urban population live in communities categorised as slums (UN, 2015, 2016). Although the proliferation of slums is most severe in Africa, it is by no means an exclusively African problem: around the world, 880 million people – approximately one in nine humans – now live in a slum (UN, 2015).

2.3.1 Slums as a Product of Policy Failure

Urbanisation is most extreme in the countries of the world that are least equipped to deal with it. Thus, the proliferation of slums is in-part attributable to “the failure of housing policies, laws and delivery systems, as well as national and urban policies” (UN-Habitat, 2010). However, rising levels of urban inequality – and, subsequently, slum growth – is a product not only of the State’s

⁴ MDG 7.D aimed to achieve a significant improvement in the living conditions of 100m slum dwellers (which by 2014 had largely been achieved), and SDG 11.1 aims, by 2030, to ensure access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services, and to upgrade slums (United Nations, 2015; UN-Habitat, 2016b). In addition, improving living conditions in slums is linked to at least seven other SDGs, including those associated with poverty, gender equality, energy, decent work and economic growth, inequality, peace and security, and partnerships (UN-Habitat, 2016b:1).

failure to perform its role, but also of underlying changes to the very nature of that role. The aggressively neo-liberal doctrine that shaped the global development agenda in the 1980s and 1990s contributed to a vastly diminished State presence (UN-Habitat, 2003). Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), development loans administered by the IMF and World Bank that were designed to help poor countries to ‘modernise’ their economies, forced poor countries to devalue their currencies, privatise state assets, and eliminate subsidies and tariffs, thereby inverting the received wisdom of the 1960s, which “advocated that the state should act as the motor of development and dismissed the role of markets” (Meredith, 2005: 369).

Structural adjustment has been a key contributor to the unparalleled levels of socioeconomic inequality that prevail in Africa today (Gordon and Gordon, 2007; UN-Habitat, 2003). Rather than cultivating inclusive prosperity, it decimated government expenditure both directly and by eroding the tax intake, propelled unemployment upwards by hollowing out the public sector and by opening up underdeveloped indigenous markets to global competition, and led to an explosion in informal economic activity (Meredith, 2005).

Davis (2007) argues, moreover, that the urban inequalities that were produced by structural adjustment have been exacerbated by the institutional transformation of African states in the post-independence era. As was noted earlier, colonial rulers imposed restrictions on labour mobility in many countries, refusing access to the main cities for any would-be labour migrants. This enforced inertia effectively meant that urbanisation pressures became ‘pent up’ over the course of decades, leading to an unprecedented deluge from the 1960s onwards. The economic decline of the 1980s did not stem this tide, nor has it been particularly responsive to soaring urban unemployment, suggesting that urbanisation has become largely decoupled from industrialisation and economic growth (Davis, 2007; UN-Habitat, 2013a).

This chronology confers an additional distinction on slums: for communities so large, the vast majority are unusually young (Davis, 2007). The communities are young both in the sense of their recent genesis (most did not exist prior to the 1960s, and a large number originated much more recently than that) and by virtue of their overwhelmingly youthful demographic. The age distribution of the Developing World as a whole, and of Africa in particular, is heavily skewed by an over-representation of young people (the so-called ‘youth bulge’). 36 countries have a median population age of less than twenty years old, and all but three of those countries are in SSA; in comparison, no EU27 or North American country has a median population age below 35 (World Population Review, 2018a). Slum communities, because they attract the young and able-bodied, exhibit an even more pronounced age imbalance. This imbalance has cultural and economic implications which are addressed, in turn, in the flowing sub-sections.

2.3.2 The (Sub-)Culture of Slums

Exclusion and deprivation figure prominently in the life experience of a slum dweller (Satterthwaite, 2001). UN-Habitat's (2003: 6) report on the state of the world's slums noted that, "Slum dwellers' 'life chances' are low; they are rarely able to obtain formal-sector jobs because of their lack of social capital, including lack of education, lack of patronage and contacts, and a general exclusion from 'regular society' that is mediated by signifiers of social class and a lack of empowerment. Slum dwellers are also not able to access regular sources of finance to develop their own businesses. Banks do not usually have branches in slums, and if they do, the lack of legally registered collateral will exclude all but the most well-off slum dwellers from obtaining loans."

Despite being typified by what they lack, slums constitute diverse and dynamic cultural environments, a kaleidoscope-in-squalor, a meeting point for "urban migrants com[ing] from all corners of their nation – and sometimes beyond it" (Lloyd, 1979: 21). In Africa, ethnic diversity compounds the multi-culturalism of the city slum (Macharia, 1992); slums there play host to a broad array of languages, forms of dress, and domestic and marital customs, and to fluctuating (but for the most part negligible) degrees of inter-ethnic tension (Sobania, 2003). Slums are therefore a place of cultural confrontation, negotiation, and fusion (Wrong, 2009).

'Slum culture' is much more than a mere re-parcelling or watering down of age-old ethnic identities, however. The institutional marginalisation of slum populations is now meeting with a current of connectivity, as technology – smartphones, internet, social media – leads the burgeoning numbers of disenfranchised urban youths to "forge a new understanding of belonging ... creating a broadly shared understanding of their place in a wider world" (Weiss, 2009: 28-29). This involves a stitching together of distant and proximal worlds, a re-imagining of their present circumstances in terms of a globalising culture; in an anthropological study of youth-centric barbershops in the Tanzanian city of Arusha, Weiss (2009: 72) noted how names like 'Brooklyn', 'Liverpool', or 'Kosovo' were very much in vogue, but that no barbershop bore the name of a local place like Dar es Salaam. Such is the kind of "transnational localism" that permeates the culture of even the most marginalised societies, where "The local is never just local, but always intersected through flows of other levels" (Steyaert and Katz, 2004: 192).

This gestalt of new and old has given rise to what Wrong (2009: 145) describes as "The Making of the Sheng Generation", *Sheng* being a "witty, cheeky, freewheeling *Clockwork Orange*-style brew of Kiswahili, English, and indigenous Kenyan languages, with added dollops of reggae jargon, American slang, French and Spanish, [that] originated in Nairobi's Eastland's slums in the 1980s" (Wrong, 2009: 150). *Sheng* is now spoken widely but exclusively by the urban youth

of Kenya, and has been recognised as “a symbol of solidarity and positive social divergence” (Mazrui, 1995:168) within that social category, serving at once to acknowledge one’s ethnic heritage and to distance oneself from the more divisive implications of it. The hyperlocal character of *Sheng* – one neighbourhood’s brand of *Sheng* typically differs markedly from that of adjacent neighbourhoods – coupled with its popularity among the urban poor have made it an important tool in forging a sense of togetherness within emergent, ethnically fragmented communities like slums (Mazrui, 1995; Wanyama, 2014). In a similar vein to the slang-laden urban dialects of poor, black communities in the US (Carrier, 2005), *Sheng* is routinely appropriated by people from the ‘out-group’ – white youths in the US and older people in Kenya, respectively – which, as Mazrui (1995: 172) writes, puts “constant pressure on the members of the ingroup to continually create new slang in an attempt to maintain their ingroup distinctiveness”. The power of *Sheng* as a social identifier, and as a locus of interpersonal solidarity, was recounted in the memoir of George Obama (half-brother to Barack), who spent a number of his adolescent years living in Nairobi’s slums.

“Sheng had a certain delicious exclusivity. If I was speaking Sheng with my Mosocho buddies, no grown-ups would be able to understand us. It was a secret language, and that was the real attraction of it ... Each Nairobi neighborhood had its own blend of Sheng, and no two Shengs were the same. Loyalty lay less in one's tribal identity and more in one's Sheng. So if someone from Huruma came to Umoja and caused trouble, we Umoja kids would close ranks to protect our own against an ‘outsider’. We mightn't know the tribe of the kid we were defending; all we would know was that he spoke our brand of Sheng, and that would be enough to make him ‘one of us’,” (Obama and Lewis, 2010: 87-88).

Similar patterns of linguistic evolution have been observed in urban centres of other African nations, such as Cameroon and South Africa, where multiple indigenous languages interface with each other and with the language of a former colonial power (Abdulaziz and Osinde, 1997).

2.3.3 Slum Economics

Developing-World slum communities occupy a place at the lower reaches of the global economic pyramid. However, these communities also constitute economic pyramids unto themselves, and not all who live within them are equally poor (UN-Habitat, 2003). Neuwirth’s (2005: 85)

summation of the pyramidal nature of Kibera's⁵ income distribution is apt: "There are lots of poor people in Kibera. There are some middle-class people. And there is one millionaire."

Most of those living in slums have only one realistic alternative to a life of urban squalor, and that is one of harsh, precarious rurality, where deficiencies in infrastructure and services are more acute, the risk of premature mortality greater, and personal liberties more constrained (de Soto, 2000; UN-Habitat, 2003). A minority, however, have the financial means to live in working- or lower middle-class urban districts, but instead favour the slum because of its proximity to industry and, above all, because inexpensive rents allow them to accumulate savings, often with a view to building a superior house in their rural home in the years ahead (Portes, 1972).

Most slum communities have a relatively well-ordered housing market of their own, although this varies in line with regional discrepancies relating to status and security of tenure. Squatting – the use of vacant land on an owner-occupancy basis – is a less common form of settlement than rent-paying tenancy, particularly in SSA (Davis, 2007; UN-Habitat, 2006). The latter usually arises when prospecting landlords claim *de facto* ownership of unoccupied tracts of land upon which they build dwelling structures for rental purposes. The intense concentration of small-sized dwellings that typifies the built environment of a slum lends itself well to portfolio-building, making property rental an extremely lucrative industry. Gulyani, Bassett, and Talukdar (2012: 263) estimate that slum residents paid \$31m in a single year in Nairobi alone. Moreover, slum tenants enjoy little protection and frequently find themselves held to ransom for non-payment of rent (Davis, 2007). In Nairobi's slums, for example, it is common practice for a landlord to change the padlock while the tenant is out, meaning that s/he cannot re-enter the house or retrieve his/her possessions until rent has been paid; often, landlords will resort to removing the door – or even the roof – altogether, subjecting the tenant to a considerable measure of public humiliation (Wouters, Ninio, Doherty, and Cisse, 2015).

Slums are generally host to a vibrant informal economy (UN-Habitat, 2003, 2006, 2013a). In cities like Nairobi, where more people live within the boundaries of a slum than do not, "a considerable share of the city's income is produced and consumed in the slums" (UN-Habitat, 2006: 14). At the individual level, however, informal-sector incomes tend to be low and prone to fluctuation, plunging people into periodic and acute economic hardships that demand exceptional coping strategies (Collins, Morduch, Ruthven, and Rutherford, 2012; Concern Worldwide, 2015). One inter-agency study found that, when poor rains brought about a spike in the price of corn flour (which is used to make *ugali*, a staple of the working-class diet throughout Africa), Nairobi's

⁵ Kibera is another of Nairobi's slums. By many measures, it is the biggest slum in Africa, with a population purportedly in excess of 1m (Otieno and O'Reilly, 2019).

slum dwellers, on average, went from eating 2.93 meals per day to eating just 1.53; respondents also resorted in large numbers to prostitution, child scavenging, and withdrawing a child from school (Oxfam GB, Concern Worldwide, and CARE International, 2009). Within the urban informal sector, entrepreneurship is often seen as a more secure livelihood option than paid employment, such is the lack of labour protection afforded to employees. Nonetheless, slum entrepreneurs operate within a highly constricted opportunity space, meaning that the range and value of the economic opportunities that they could realistically pursue given their resource and human capital endowments is highly limited. Scholars have argued that the market and institutional failures that beleaguer slum communities, coupled with the incessant influx of low-skilled labour, create ‘poverty trap’ conditions, meaning that, for entrepreneurs and other slum residents, slum life is a permanent state as opposed to the ‘stepping stone’ that it is generally envisaged to be (Marx, et al., 2013).

2.4 Enterprise and Entrepreneurship in Contemporary Africa

In spite of its problems, Africa has made considerable economic strides in recent years. Since 2000, the rate of African GDP growth has exceeded that of every other region except Asia (AUC/OECD, 2018), and significant investments have been made in public and commercial infrastructure. Although this has translated into higher GDP per capita *on average*, growth has not been as inclusive in Africa as elsewhere (hence the rise in absolute numbers of extremely poor) nor has it improved other well-being indicators (like quality of education, health status, housing conditions, and overall satisfaction with standards of living) to the extent that was predicted (AUC/OECD, 2018). Short-term economic forecasts indicate that this pattern of overall economic expansion paired with largely unchanged levels of extreme poverty will continue (World Bank, 2019b).

In a broader context, Africa’s economic trajectory over the past fifteen years has been viewed as evidence that its place in the global economic system is much less peripheral today than it once was. And although State impropriety is still regarded as a major problem, there is some optimism that Africa is better-placed to achieve sustainable development now that it is largely free of the crop of dictators and autocrats that came to power in the 1970s and resolutely clung to it into the 1990s and beyond (Moi in Kenya, Mobutu Sese Seko in Zaire, Hastings Banda in Malawi, Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe, the Milton Obete/Idi Amin back-and-forth in Uganda, et al.). Expanded trading partnerships with China and India mark a new and lucrative avenue for growth; China in particular has invested heavily in SSA in recent decades, facilitating large-scale infrastructural development in the areas of transport, energy, and extraction. These projects have made Africa a

more active participant in globalized trade, but have also led to a rapid accumulation of debt (World Bank, 2019c). Dependence within many poor African nations on China is high and growing, leading to accusations of “neo-colonialism” being directed by Western governments towards China (Reuters, 2011). In particular, strong concerns exist that Chinese investment, both public and private, has not been backed by adequate corruption controls, allowing patron-client relationships to develop between it and Africa’s ruling elite which undermine efforts by multilateral agencies like the World Bank, IMF, and UN to improve fiscal accountability among African governments (UNECA, 2016; Zafar, 2007).

Increased economic exchange between Africa and China has been the clearest expression of ‘trade-led’, as opposed to ‘aid-led’, development in Africa.⁶ Advocates of a ‘trade-not-aid’ approach to African development cite the fact that development aid has done little to incorporate LDCs into the global financial system (Moyo, 2009). Aside from China, both the EU and the US – in the form of their Everything but Arms (EBA)⁷ and African Growth and Opportunities (AGOA) initiatives respectively – have developed trade policies which offer tariff-free access to their markets for selected African goods and services. Critics, however, have argued that these measures don’t do near enough to facilitate African participation in global trade markets (Collier, 2007), in-part because EU and US markets benefit from domestic subsidies that preclude any kind of meaningful external competition. Moyo (2009: 114) notes, for example, that “each European Union cow gets US\$2.50 in subsidies, more than what a billion people, many of them Africans, each have to live on each day”.

The lion’s share of SSA’s exports is accounted for by primary goods – cash crops, precious metals, and oil – which are susceptible to dangerous fluctuations in value and, particularly in the case of the extractive industries, are capital intensive rather than labour intensive, meaning they do not create high levels of much-needed employment (Eurostat, 2019; World Bank, 2017a). In opening up its markets to outside competition, particularly from Asia, Africa’s manufacturing base has remained largely subdued (Bhorat and Tarp, 2016), a problem made worse by Africa’s geographical configuration – most of its nations are small and inland and rely on the infrastructure and co-operation of their neighbours for access to the sea (Collier, 2007). Overcoming these challenges is a central issue on Africa’s development agenda, and fostering greater regional integration has emerged as a key developmental pathway. In March 2018, 44 African states

⁶ Much of the Chinese investment in Africa has come in the form of developmental assistance (aid); however, it would appear to be driven by the pursuit of mutual benefit to a significantly greater extent than aid transfers coming from the West. See, for example, Zafar’s (2007: 120) description of China’s “aid for oil strategy”, designed to ensure a cheap and stable supply of oil to serve the burgeoning needs of China’s industrialising economy.

⁷ EBA does not apply to SSA exclusively or in its entirety, instead it applies to LDCs, so some SSA countries (e.g., Kenya, Ghana) are excluded while some non-SSA countries (e.g. Bangladesh, Cambodia, Samoa) are included.

reached agreement on the establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area which, it is hoped, will help double African manufacturing output by 2025 (United Nations, 2019).

Much contemporary development discourse therefore centres on creating the social and market conditions necessary for enterprise, both overseas and indigenous, to flourish. The scholarly field of entrepreneurship has recognized that it has an important role to play in this process, both by developing knowledge that can help to steer the process and by helping entrepreneurs and businesses to understand what these changing realities mean for them. Hence, recent years have seen substantial research attention paid to the so-called Bottom (or Base) of the Pyramid (Kolk, Rivera-Santos, and Rufin, 2014). This stream of literature has not only established for itself a popular niche within the wider field, it has also helped us to better understand ‘mainstream’ entrepreneurial phenomena; to quote Kodithuwakku and Rosa (2002: 433), “Just as the value of water is most apparent in a desert, so, by analogy, it could be argued that the best way of observing the true value of entrepreneurship is when resources and opportunities are at their most meagre”.

2.4.1 Entrepreneurship Research and the BoP Context

The term “Bottom of the Pyramid” (BoP) was introduced to business scholarship as a means to convey the vast depths of untapped profit potential in the consumer markets of the Developing World. In the words of the Prahalad and Hart (2002: 1, emphasis in original), “The real source of market promise is not the wealthy few in the developing world, or even the emerging middle income consumers [of the developing world]: It is the billions of *aspiring poor* who are joining the market economy for the first time”. Innovating new ways to serve this marginal segment would, according to proponents of the BoP model, help to improve the lives of billions of people by, at least, providing them with access to new kinds of goods and services and, ideally, empowering them economically by involving them in the production and distribution of those services (Cross and Street, 2009).

The core promise of the BoP approach has proven contentious, with critics arguing that the poor are constrained by low income rather than by a lack of choice, and that the practice of pushing branded products towards them exacerbates rather than alleviates this core problem (Karnani, 2007). Moreover, the logistical complexities that multi-nationals must navigate in implementing BoP strategies often prove untenable and can lead them to make hasty withdrawals that are costly both to them and to local society (Seelos and Mair, 2007; Simanis, 2012). Along these lines, empirical research suggests that MNCs from other developing countries, rather than from the Developed World, may be better equipped to cope with the institutional challenges of LDCs (Cuervo-Cazurra and Genc, 2008). Criticisms levelled at the starting premise of the BoP model

have not checked the term's growing popularity. Rather, they have brought about an expansion in its scope, shifting the discussion away from a narrow focus on the poor as consumers and re-positioning them as producers and as co-creators of value (Ansari, Munir, and Gregg, 2012). Usage of the term has become de-limited from its original MNC context, and now extends across a broad spectrum ranging from well-heralded exemplar cases like Unilever and S.C. Johnson to indigenous, subsistence-level street vendors (Kolk, et al., 2014). The present study links to the extant body of BoP literature at or near the latter pole of this spectrum, focusing on resource-poor micro-entrepreneurs operating on a predominantly informal basis.

2.4.2 The Informal Economy

For the purposes of this study, the informal economy is defined as “the set of illegal yet legitimate (to some large groups) activities through which actors recognize and exploit opportunities” (Webb, et al., 2009: 493). This definition explicitly decouples formality from legality, such that *some* economic activities which are illegal are captured by this definition, while others are not (Webb, Ireland, and Ketchen, 2014; Welter, et al., 2015). Economic activities which have not been officially licensed by a State authority and which do not pay regular tax but which comply with the informal institutions of the study community – that is, with prevailing “codes of conduct, norms of behaviour, and conventions” (North, 1990: 36) – are treated as informal. Activities which were generally deemed to violate these social standards – activities like people trafficking, dealing in hard drugs, theft and burglary, and racketeering – were viewed as taking place within the criminal or ‘renegade’ economy and were not a central interest of this study (Godfrey, 2011; Medina and Schneider, 2018; Webb, et al., 2009).

According to a recent report by the International Labour Office (ILO, 2018), 91.4 per cent of Africa's entrepreneurs operate in the informal sector. The report notes that informality “has a negative impact on the development of sustainable enterprises (especially in terms of low productivity and lack of access to finance), public revenues and governments' scope of action” (ILO, 2018: 1); as such, helping the world's 2 billion informal workers to gain access to the formal economy is a key developmental target and is a component of Sustainable Development Goal 8, which centres on inclusive growth and decent livelihood standards (UN, 2015).

In practice, (in)formality is more of a continuum than it is a clear, categorical dichotomy (De Castro, et al., 2014; Williams and Shahid, 2016). The economic and social imperatives of reducing the number of entrepreneurs operating outside of the formal tax and welfare system has led most developing countries to institute policies that facilitate partial or gradual formalisation. Generally, these policies rest on both ‘carrot’ and ‘stick’: reducing the costs and bureaucracy of tax and

registration for small, low-income businesses, clarifying the benefits to businesses of engaging with the state system, and enhancing enforcement capabilities (registration, audit, and collection) are some of their central pillars (Oviedo, Thomas, and Karakurum-Özdemir, 2009). The degree of formality that firms opt to enact depends on a subjective calibration of the costs that can be avoided by remaining informal (these include costs associated with environmental, labour, and distribution regulations as well as those associated with registration and tax) versus the risks and penalties associated with being caught (De Castro, et al., 2014; Nguyen, Verreyne, and Steen, 2014; Siquiera, Webb, and Bruton, 2016).

Informal economic activity is more prevalent in countries where trust in State authorities is low (Medina and Schneider, 2018; Transparency International, 2018). Where people consider the State to be hostile, corrupt, or incompetent, the incentive to disregard the law of the land and to rely instead on informal institutions – norms, customs, and collective values – to regulate economic and social exchange is stronger (Acquaah, 2007; Estrin, Korosteleva, and Mickiewicz, 2013; Meyer, Estrin, Bhaumik, and Peng, 2009; Mair, Martí, and Ventresca, 2012; Puffer, McCarthy, and Boisot, 2010; Williams and Vorley, 2014). For this reason, high levels of social embeddedness are usually seen as characteristic of informal entrepreneurship (Khavul, Bruton, and Wood, 2009; Kodithuwakku and Rosa, 2002; Viswanathan, Rosa, and Ruth, 2010); informal entrepreneurs depend to an even greater extent than their formal counterparts on personal contacts for resources, since they often cannot obtain resources through official channels like banks, recruitment agencies, and state bodies (Barrios and Blocker, 2015; Honig, 1998; Imas, Wilson, and Weston, 2012; Valliere and Peterson, 2009). Driven by internal patterns of repeated reciprocal exchange and by participants' marginal status in the wider economy, informality can inculcate collectivistic, 'us-and-them' values that promote strong internal solidarity (Lee and Hung, 2014; Peredo and Chrisman, 2006; Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993; Webb, et al., 2009).

Solidarity is not a given, however, nor is it always beneficial when it does exist. Informal economies, particularly in subsistence contexts, tend to be heavily congested market environments populated by low-margin and poorly differentiated micro-businesses (Alvarez and Barney, 2014; King, 1996; van Stel, Carree, and Thurik, 2005). Entrepreneurs in these markets typically lack the tools required to enact overt competitive strategies; they usually do not have the technologies necessary for differentiation, while razor-thin profit margins preclude cost-leadership. Yet this can have the paradoxical effect of intensifying competition by negating the 'de-congestive' effects of Darwinism: where the pace of technological advance is rapid, as it is in more developed markets, entrepreneurs that fail to adapt are forced to exit, but where it is slow, natural selection becomes less discriminative, notionally allowing the number of market participants (incumbents and new entrants) to grow almost limitlessly (Davis, 2007).

Informality helps entrepreneurs to extricate themselves from the constraints of formal institutions, affording them the freedom to flout burdensome regulations and, because of the absence of bureaucracy, to reinvent or reposition their business as new commercial openings appear to them (Khavul, et al., 2009; Rosa, Kodithuwakku, and Balunywa, 2008). However, in social and market settings where formal institutions are weak or absent, informal institutions can take on greater salience (Mair and Martí, 2009; Godfrey, 2011). Thus, any freedom that inheres in economic informality is often counterbalanced by onerous social expectations, particularly in the case where widespread informality stems from the economic marginalisation of a community in its entirety. Slade Schantz, et al. (2018) describe their Ghanaian study community as an “island network”, a dense cluster of actors that have close ties to each other but few ties outside of the cluster, and find that entrepreneurs therein were expected to fulfil a broad suite of socioeconomic functions, including providing training and mentorship to others in the community and serving as a financial safety net to those experiencing economic distress. Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993: 1339) observe that social obligations of this type frequently result in “promising enterprises [being turned] into welfare hotels, checking their economic expansion”.

2.5 Slum Communities: A ‘Blind Spot’ for Entrepreneurship Research?

Scholarly interest in the informal economy, and in the BoP more broadly, as a context for entrepreneurship remains in its nascency (Bruton, 2010; De Castro, et al., 2014; Webb, et al., 2009). Despite the recent surge in research attention paid to it, it retains the status of a “new frontier” (Godfrey, 1991; Zoogah, Peng, and Woldu, 2015), compelling the field of management to “urgently ... renew its relevance and expand its boundaries by confronting the implications of excluding such a large portion of the world’s economic activity from its purview” (McGahan, 2012: 13). Extant perspectives on the micro-processes of organising and ‘entrepreneurship’ that have their origins in the institutionally advanced market contexts of the global North appear to be inadequate to capture the fluidity and diversity of the burgeoning informal economies of the South (Bradley, et al., 2012; Bruton, Ketchen, and Ireland, 2013; Comaroff and Comaroff, 2012; Dessing, 1990; Hall, Matos, Sheehan, and Silvestre, 2012; Peredo and Chrisman, 2006; Seelos and Mair, 2007).

The present study seeks to deepen the existing body of knowledge in this area by providing the kind of fine-grained, ethnographic detail that has been demanded often (Ansari, et al., 2012; Viswanathan, et al., 2014; Yessoufou, Blok, and Omta, 2018) but delivered rarely (c.f. Bromley, 1978; Fadahunsi and Rosa, 2002; Fernandes, Mason, and Chakrabarti, 2019; Khan, Munir, and

Wilmott, 2007; Kodithuwakku and Rosa, 2002; Imas and Weston, 2012; Mair and Martí, 2009; Mair, et al., 2012; Martí, Courpasson, and Barbosa, 2013; Slade Schantz, et al., 2018; Thieme, 2013, 2015). Moreover, by deploying this immersive study design in the empirical context of an urban slum, this research helps to address the acute neglect of entrepreneurs at the BoP that are poor and marginalised *by the standards of their own countries* (Branzei and Abdelnour, 2010). Slums are home to one in nine people, a disproportionately large number of whom are engaged in entrepreneurial ventures, but are still little-known within the field of entrepreneurship (Anderson, Markides, Kupp, 2010; UN, 2016).

The tendency among researchers to seek informants from urban downtown, but not slum, districts is perhaps suggestive of an empirical ‘glass floor’ – a socioeconomic threshold beneath which the study of entrepreneurship is prohibitively challenging (Ansari, et al., 2012). As a result, knowledge-gaps concerning those communities which are systematically marginalized are under-addressed (Mair and Martí, 2009), or perhaps worse, are addressed by drawing inferences from research conducted in communities that share their geography but few, if any, of their political, institutional, or infrastructural circumstances.

The present study aims to address this problem in a two-fold way.

First, empirical attention is paid to a research context that has experienced prolonged scholarly neglect (Anderson, et al., 2010; Marx, et al., 2013), and the study is conducted using an immersive, naturalistic, and longitudinal form of inquiry which is well-suited to exploring the entrepreneurship process and its context (Gartner and Birley, 2002; Herron, Sapienza, and Smith-Cook, 1992; Welter, 2011). Aldrich (1992: 209, emphasis in original) has been among several prominent entrepreneurship scholars to express the need for greater methodological diversity: “The neglect of ethnographies [in researching entrepreneurship] is particularly troubling in a field whose very *raison d’être* is the dynamic response of creative individuals to turbulent social and economic conditions. ... *Our* research method of choice is the static, cross-sectional, standardized questionnaire which, at best, asks entrepreneurs to recall – in *our* own words – their triumphs” (see also Johnstone, 2008; Spedale and Watson, 2013; Steyaert and Katz, 2004).

Second, the present study departs from a sizable portion of the entrepreneurship literature by eschewing entrepreneurial heroism in favour of “everyday” entrepreneurship (Fletcher, 2007; Johnsen and Sørensen, 2017; Kaplan and Orlikowski, 2013; Williams and Nadin, 2012). Answering calls by Welter, et al. (2017: 313), this study looks beyond the “gazelles and unicorns” that have long been afforded prominence in the entrepreneurial world, and focuses instead on the “cows and horses” that in fact constitute

its vast majority (see also Steyaert and Katz, 2004; Watson, 2013a). Even a Developing-World slum has its share of gazelles and unicorns who, by virtue of exceptional entrepreneurial nous and/or privileged access to knowledge, networks, or resources, have forged levels of prosperity which deserve to be noted and celebrated. However, the vast majority of slum entrepreneurs clearly do not exhibit such Schumpeterian tendencies (Imas, et al., 2012; Marx, et al., 2013). My aim in this study is to shed some much-needed light on the lives and struggles of those entrepreneurs for whom the perils (and, possibly, merits) of the slum are ‘programmed’ into their entrepreneurial strategies and routines.

De Castro, et al. (2014: 77) point out that concentrating their study on a single country provided for them a “focused setting” for their work; by concentrating this study much further – on the clearly bounded socio-spatial setting of a slum – and by interacting with multiple stakeholders in that community over the course of months, I aim to penetrate deep into an empirical context that demands scholarly attention in its own right, but which continues to be treated as part of the general and complex milieu of Developing-World poverty (Anderson, et al., 2010; Ansari, et al., 2012; Branzei and Abdelnour, 2010). De Soto (2000: 74) captures well the spirit of this view: “Most of us do not see that the surge in the world’s extralegal [slum] populations over the past forty years has generated a new class of entrepreneurs with their own legal arrangements. Government authorities see only a massive influx of people, illegal workers, the threat of disease and crime.”

CHAPTER 3

Theoretical Background

3.1 Introduction

Over the past half-century, identity has been among the most discussed topics in the social sciences (Ashforth and Mael, 1989; Cerulo, 1997; Haslam and Ellemers, 2005). At its core is a concern for how individuals and groups self-define in terms of recognisable social categories like organisations, roles, communities, or race (Tajfel, 1982; Turner, 1984), but rapid and expansive theoretical development in the area of identity has led to a broader application and a more splintered terminology.

The purpose of this chapter is to specify the areas within this eclectic body of literature which warrant further theoretical development, and where the attention of the present study will be directed. Five sections follow this introduction. In the first (3.2, “Clarifying the Conceptual Basis of Identity”), I outline the identity-based constructs that are most prominent in the management and entrepreneurship literatures and delineate those constructs according to substantive differences in content and application. I also draw attention here to the considerable amount of overlap within and across studies with regard to these constructs, exploring potential synergies as well as clarifying construct boundaries. In the second section (3.3, “Identity as a Precursor to Action”), I explain the contingent link between identification and action. The purpose here is to bridge sociological and social psychological perspectives on identity, and to outline how the multiplex nature of identity poses a challenge to the assumption that action (of a particular kind) will take shape as an inevitable consequence of identification.

I then examine more closely (in section 3.4, “Layering, Resonance, and Sharpness, and their link to Collective Agency”), how identity and agency intersect in group contexts. Here, I begin to explore the potential utility of a shared identity – over and above giving people a sense of who they are, why might we take an interest in shared identity in an empirical context like an urban slum? Here, I attend to the layered nature of identity and examine links between identity and agency. Fourth (3.5, “Identity Change and Identity Work”), I move beyond the view of identity as something which people, or groups of people, simply choose or have assigned to them. I describe the dynamic and evolutionary qualities of identity, and the strategies that people and groups employ to manage tensions that arise at the intersection of multiple identities. Finally (3.6, “From Identity in Organisations towards Identity in Entrepreneurship”), I provide an in-depth

review of identity research in organisational and entrepreneurship contexts, before finishing with a summary of the relevant gaps in this literature that this study aims to address.

3.2 Clarifying the Conceptual Basis of Identity: What can we take from Construct Overlap?

Several identity-based constructs, including social identity, personal identity, collective identity, and organisational identity figure prominently in contemporary management and entrepreneurship literatures. Table 3 provides a summary of the core content of each of these constructs and establishes indicative boundaries between them.

Table 3: Delineating neighbouring identity constructs and their common usage

Identity-based construct		Level of Analysis	Broad premise of this construct	Illustrative example	Selection of indicative studies
Social Identity		Individual	A significant part of our sense of who we are derives from our membership of a social group. We identify with characteristics of that social group, internalising the interests and objectives of that group as our own. We are likely to develop favourable stereotypes of the in-group and negative stereotypes of the out-group, thereby enhancing our own sense of self worth.	"As a scholar of business, I believe in the power of innovation and commerce to solve the most pressing problems faced by society today. To you humanities scholars that believe that these problems can only be solved by slowly and carefully building better grassroots governance institutions, I say: we, the world of business, have the tools to address these problems, and address them we will!"	Ashforth, Harrison, and Corley (2008); Haslam and Ellemers (2005); Kreiner, Hollensbe, and Sheep (2006); Pratt (2000); Rao, Monin, and Durand (2003); Tajfel (1982); Tajfel and Turner (1986); Turner (1984)
Personal Identity		Individual	There is a part of ourselves which exists independently of our social selves. Personal identity is not constructed or projected so that one will be seen by an audience in a particular light, and it does not vary in form according to one's present company or social situation.	"Although I exist in a business school environment, I don't buy into all this 'commerce-is-gonna-fix-poverty' malarky. I'm a lot further to the left of my colleagues, and if you ask me, trying to address poverty through market-based solutions is just going to make things worse."	Grotevant (1987); Ibarra (1999); Turner, Oakes, Haslam, and McGarty (1994); Watson (2009); Wry and York (2017)
Role Identity		Sub-individual	An individual can hold multiple roles at once, and each of these roles exerts different identity pressures. Therefore the version of oneself that is presented in each of these roles differs.	"Who am I? Well, on the football pitch I'm a competitor, psyched up and aggressive. When I get up in front of a class to deliver a lecture I try to exude calm authority, to be responsive and empathetic to my students. And when I get home, I'm at by kids' every beck and call. If they say 'jump', I'll say 'how high?'. So who am I? I'm many people."	Ashforth, Kreiner, and Fugate (2000); Stryker (1980); Matthias and Williams (2017); Sveningsson and Alvesson (2003); Valcour (2002)
↳	Occupational / Career / Founder Identity	Individual or sub-individual	Usually jobs (including that of entrepreneur) are viewed in a similar way to 'roles', in that they subject us to different expectations. If only one job is being considered, the construct may be used in a similar way to social identity.	"I may work in this Business School, but that doesn't define who I am. I'm a scholar, a man of knowledge and science. Those are the ideals that I identify with, and if the research strategy of this place doesn't fit with that, then I'll go my own way."	Demetry (2017); Leavitt, Reynolds, Barnes, Schlipzland, and Hannah (2012); Hoang and Gimeno (2010); Navis and Glynn (2011); Pratt, Rockman, and Kaufmann (2006)
Collective Identity		Group	A consensual sense among a group of people of 'who we are'. Unlike social identity, collective identity resides with the group, not the individual.	"We all believe in the same thing - that the best way to improve the lives of the poor is by leveraging the power of the free market. So let's stand up to the aid agenda, and show the world that all it has ever achieved is to generate a culture of dependency among the poor and to prop up dictatorial regimes."	Haslam, O'Brien, Jetten, Vormedal, and Penna (2005); Wry, Lounsbury, and Glynn (2011); Ybema, Vroemisse, and van Marrewijk (2012)
↳	Organisational / Team Identity	Group or individual	Typically used in a similar manner to collective identity, but rather than pertaining to a general social group, organisational identity is usually used in reference to a specific organisation. Organisational identity is also sometimes examined at the individual level, in a similar way to the overview of social identity given above.	"We are the Business School. We bring in all the funding. We make sure all those big financial companies in town have employees to fill them. And we will not be told that our methods are 'unscientific'! So just stop interfering with what we're doing and back off!"	Albert and Whetten (1985); Ashforth and Mael (1989); Baron (2004); Dutton, Dukerich, and Harquail (1994); Hsu and Hannon (2005); Livengood and Reger (2010); Whetten (2006)

Irrespective of the particular construct employed, identity constitutes a fundamentally ‘social’ lens through which to examine the empirical world. A central premise of the identity literature is that the self-perception of an individual or group is somehow influenced by his/her/their actual or desired affiliation with an organisation or recognised social category. Such organisations/social categories may take several forms; examples from the literature include commercial and religious organisations (Kreiner, Hollensbe, and Sheep, 2006; Pratt, 2000), the gay and lesbian community (Bernstein, 1997), established creative or artistic styles (Rao, Monin, and Durand, 2003), political ideologies such as feminism (Cerulo, 1997; Zilber, 2002), immigrant or ethnic groups (Portes, Fernandes-Kelley, and Haller, 2005; Tajfel and Turner, 1986), or occupational categories like ‘entrepreneurs’, ‘parent volunteers’, ‘technicians’, or ‘biosafety officers’ (Barley, 1996; Demetry, 2017; Huising, 2015; Valcour, 2002). In general, the central concern of identity research has been to develop a better understanding of how, when, and what kind of behavioural responses emanate from those self-perceptions.

Conceptual agreement on what identity means is quite consistent across the different identity-based constructs outlined in Table 3. That is, scholars interested in organisational identity or collective identity typically conceptualise identity in a similar way to scholars interested in social or occupational identity. The key point of difference is the focal level of analysis – “the identity of a collective actor” versus “the identity of a collection of actors” (Whetten, 2006: 221; DiMaggio, 1997) – but several core concepts are held in common (Cornelissen, Haslam, and Balmer, 2007), and theoretical contributions pertaining to one construct are routinely extrapolated to others.⁸ Therefore, by taking a more integrated view of this literature, a coherent and robust conceptual basis can be established.

One of the cornerstones of the identity literature is Albert and Whetten’s (1985) “tripartite formulation” of organisational identity, variations of which are routinely appropriated and applied to other forms of identity (e.g. Ashforth, Harrison, and Corley, 2008; Brown, 2006; Hardy, Lawrence, and Grant, 2005; Walsh and Gordon, 2008). Included in this tripartite formulation are *ideational*, *definitional*, and *phenomenological* elements, which were elaborated by Whetten (2006) in response to criticisms that the concept of organisational identity had become ambiguous and analytically indistinguishable from neighbouring concepts like organisational culture and organisational image. The *ideational* component of organisational identity refers to “members’ shared beliefs regarding the question ‘Who are we as an organization?’”; the *definitional* component derives from those features of an organisation which are held by its members to be

⁸ Notwithstanding the general consensus regarding what is meant by identity, there is some disagreement regarding to whom an identity belongs. Some scholars have argued that traditional perspectives afford too much agency to individuals, groups, and organisations to formulate their own identity, and that the identity of an actor or group of actor belongs not to them but to their audience(s) (e.g. Hsu and Hannon, 2005). This tension is addressed more fully in the later sections of this chapter.

the “central, enduring, and distinctive” qualities of that organisation; and the *phenomenological* component posits that “identity-related discourse [is] most likely to be observed in conjunction with profound organizational experiences”, such as crises or “fork-in-the-road choices” (Whetten, 2006: 220-221).

In its core treatment of what is meant by identity, Albert and Whetten’s (1985) definition is consistent with other seminal formulations of the construct. In the social identity space, for example, conceptual work by Tajfel (1982) and Tajfel and Turner (1986) has been highly influential. Tajfel (1982: 2) posited that, for an individual to identify with a group, two conditions are necessary. The first is *cognitive* – an “awareness of [group] membership” – and the second is *evaluative* – that “this awareness is related to some value connotations”. A third aspect – “an emotional investment in the awareness and evaluations” – is also frequently linked to identity.

In the empirical sections of this thesis (Chapters 5-8), I take a strong interest in social identity, which can be parsimoniously defined as “that part of the individual’s self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance of that membership” (Tajfel, 1981: 255). These issues are of interest to me for two primary reasons. First, social groupings involve norms which specify (im)proper conduct (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983); therefore, the behaviour of individual actors (entrepreneurs) may be conditioned by the degree to which they identify with a given social group or category (Aldrich and Zimmer, 1986; Conger, McMullen, Bergman, and York, 2018; DeClercq and Voronov, 2009; Tajfel and Turner, 1986). Rao, et al.’s (2003) study of the bifurcated codes to which elite French chefs in the opposing camps of *nouvelle cuisine* and *classical cuisine* felt pressure to adhere is a case in point. Summarised: “Classical cuisine emphasized the power of the restaurateur, long menus requiring huge inventories and little freshness, rituals outside the plate, flambé preparations, and a long consumption process. By contrast, nouvelle cuisine emphasized the autonomy of the chef, with short menus requiring fresh ingredients and low inventories, service through the plate, and a short consumption process” (Rao, et al., 2003: 798). Although all of their informants were elite chefs, they worked according to highly contrastive sets of principles, and affiliation with either category – *nouvelle cuisine* or *classical cuisine* – was considered a matter of identity, not one of strategy.

The second reason why social identity is of interest in the present study is that, social identity, although it is an individual-level construct, can provide insight into the actions taken (or not taken) by groups. Specifically, it can indicate the strength of “we-ness” or “one-ness” (Snow, 2001; Snow and McAdam, 2000) that prevails in a social grouping, which links to the core domain of interest in this thesis: collective identity. In defining collective identity, I return to the tripartite formulation of organisational identity developed by Albert and Whetten (1985) and elaborated by

Whetten (2006), which encompassed three elements, namely: ideational ('who we are'), definitional (our 'central, enduring, and distinctive' characteristics), and phenomenological (the tendency to invoke these shared self-concepts during times of deep uncertainty or crises). I understand collective identity to refer to the identity of a collection of people, irrespective of whether they do or do not constitute a formal organisation (Polletta and Jasper, 2001). Further, I distinguish collective identity from social identity according to level of analysis: I take social identity to refer to that part of an *individual's identity* which derives from his/her membership of a group (Tajfel, 1981), while collective identity is taken to mean the *identity of the group* of which s/he is a part (Snow, 2001).

3.3 Identity as a Precursor to Action – Building Cross-Disciplinary Foundations

Sociology has been quicker to embrace the idea of a general causative link between identification and action, as groups and roles are laden with norms that specify how their occupants should think and behave (Akerlof and Kranton, 2000). In the field of social psychology, emphasis is placed on identification as a cognitive state (Turner, 1984). Here, individuals need only perceive themselves to be a member of some social group and assign value connotations to their membership of it (Tajfel 1982: 18). A series of "minimal group studies", conducted by randomly assigning individuals to arbitrary groups, has shown that these conditions are sufficient to generate bias and competition in intergroup relations (Haslam and Ellemers, 2005; Tajfel and Turner, 1986). As membership of a given social group becomes a more salient facet of an individual's sense of self, s/he grows more inclined towards formulating positive stereotypes of the in-group and negative stereotypes of the out-group (Dolan and Connolly, 2018; Tajfel, 1982). These stereotypes also encompass the self, and self-stereotyping, at its extreme, culminates in depersonalisation (Ashforth and Mael, 1989; Brewer and Gardner, 1991; Haslam and Ellemers, 2005; Tajfel, 1982), "where one sees the individual as an interchangeable exemplar of the group" (Sluss and Ashforth, 2007: 14). Social psychology views identification, therefore, as a "quest for positive distinctiveness [in which individuals and groups] strive to see 'us' as different from, and preferably better than, 'them' in order to feel good about who they are and what they do" (Cornelissen, et al., 2007: S5).

Positive distinctiveness does not come about only by cognitively subsuming oneself into social groups (Jennings, Jennings, and Sharifian, 2016; Shepherd and Haynie, 2009a). Optimal Distinctiveness Theory (ODT), which derives from social identity theory (Tajfel, 1982; Tajfel and Turner, 1986) and self-categorisation theory (Ashforth, et al., 2008; Turner, Oakes, Haslam,

and McGarty, 1994), is concerned with the competing human desire to feel both a sense of distinctiveness and a sense of belonging. ODT is consistent with the view that identity is a multi-layered construct, where personal identity is “*expandable and contractable* across different levels of social identity with associated *transformation* in the definition of self and the basis for self-evaluation” (Brewer, 1991: 476, emphasis in original). At the core of the ODT framework is this idea of “the extended self ... where the boundaries of the self are redrawn, and the content of the self-concept is focused on those characteristics that make one a ‘good’ representative of the group” (Brewer and Gardner, 1996: 84). Optimal distinctiveness is therefore a dynamic equilibrium: feelings of excessive similarity are likely to produce a yearning for distinction, but changing circumstances may induce a reversal as people seek a sense of belonging in times of struggle or uncertainty.

None of these identification processes *necessarily* entail or provoke action of any kind (Ashforth and Mael, 1989). From a social psychology perspective, it is entirely feasible for an individual to identify with a social group without internalising the norms or values embedded within it; moreover, it is not taken as given that members of that group will feel any kind of emotional affinity with one-another, interact with one-other, or demonstrate any kind of interpersonal solidarity (Turner, 1984). Thus, social identification can be purely ‘psychological’ in nature (Turner, 1984). Conversely, there is a broad consensus that identification can, and often does, influence a person’s behaviour in such a way that it more closely corresponds to the values, goals, and beliefs of the group (Dutton, Dukerich, and Harquail, 1994; Polletta and Jasper, 2001). Thus, empirical research needs to be sensitised to the contingent nature of the identification-action link, whereby action is treated as a possible, but not inevitable, consequence of identification (DiMaggio, 1997; Swidler, 1986).

One way to bridge this gap is to imagine identification as spanning a continuum from “narrow” to “broad” (Ashforth, et al., 2008: 330). In its narrowest formulation, identification is composed of its most minimal set of prerequisites: a cognitive component (an awareness of group membership), an evaluative component (that membership relates to some value connotations), and – typically, but not always – an emotional component (that those value connotations have some emotional significance) (Tajfel, 1982). Further along the continuum, individuals exhibit a greater propensity to internalise the values, goals, beliefs, and stereotypical traits of the group and align them to their own. At the rightmost pole, where the formulation of identification is broadest, individuals behave in ways that are consistent with group norms and supportive of the interests of the group at large (Ashforth, et al., 2008).

3.4 Layering, Resonance, Sharpness, and their link to Collective Agency

We pay close attention in this study to the way that collective identity is “layered” (Snow, 2001), and especially to the temporal inconsistency of this layering process. In other words, an individual may recognise her place in a community, but the meaning that she derives from her membership of that community may – at least early on – be conditioned by her membership of other social groupings, such as her family.

This is an important aspect of the literature on the integration processes of immigrant communities. Referring to observations made by Glazer (1954), for example, Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993: 1328) describe “Sicilian peasants coming to New York in the early-1900s whose original loyalties did not extend much beyond their local villages”; in time, and after experiencing the difficulties of immigrant life, “These immigrants learned to think of themselves as Italian and to bond together on that basis.” Although these observations pertain to a very different historical and geographical context, they remain instructive to the present study. Rural-to-urban migration is most commonly an intra-country phenomenon, but it is associated with patterns of “social uprootedness” and “personal isolation” which are similar to transnational migration; many of those now living in slums around the world moved there in adulthood, and, like immigrants arriving to an unfamiliar host country, “are foreigners to the city” (Portes, 1972: 284). For both immigrant and slum communities, external designations are usually poorly sensitised to the complex stratifications that exist therein. As Glazer (1954) points out, the populace of Sicilians that emigrated to New York in the early-1900s took time to see itself as a community, rather than as a collection of individual families, yet to other New Yorkers, this populace was, from the outset, “the Sicilian (or the Italian) community”. Given these parallels, my empirical analyses pay close attention to the various layers of collective identity that exist within the study community, and the extent of congruence that exists between them.

These details matter because identity groups have collective agency (Cerulo, 1997; Fiol and Romanelli, 2012; Snow, 2001), meaning they can act collaboratively for the betterment of the group as a whole. For this reason, much of the extant theory on collective identity derives from research on social movements, where social groups that are marginalised, persecuted, or otherwise disadvantaged engage in collective action aimed at redressing those problems (Polletta and Jasper, 2001; Snow and McAdam, 2000). The US Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s provides a classic example, and, going deeper, it serves to illustrate how collective identity can manifest in layers which exhibit only partial congruence with each other. Snow (2001: 10) describes three analytical layers. The first is the “constituent layer”, which in the context of the US Civil Rights Movement was made up of black Americans; beneath that was the “social

movement layer”, which refers to the thrust towards, or the agitation for, black civil rights; last was the “organisational layer”, made up of bodies such as the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Congress for Racial Equality. Importantly, Snow (2001: 10) argues, “each successive layer may be embedded in the larger more inclusive layer, giving rise to a generalized, cohesive collective identity at the community or national level. But clearly the existence of a collective identity at one level does not automatically generalize to or incorporate another level” (see also Dolan and Connolly, 2018; Gaertner, Dovidio, and Bachman, 1996).

The ease with which a social grouping can enact collective agency is heavily conditioned by the ‘resonance’ of the identity which binds that grouping together. Baron (2004: 11) explains that “[w]hat makes identities resonant is not simply that they are distinct, but that they capture or activate powerful distinctions along social, ethnic, religious, political, and cultural lines”. Through this lens, the potency of an identity group such as Black Lives Matter, in terms of its ability to trigger the collective agency of an identity group, is evident. Others – Baron offers the example of “computer user” – “[do] not activate much by way of social, cultural, economic, or political baggage” (Baron, 2004: 11), and are therefore far less potent.

Resonance, however, is not the only factor. The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) – the precursor to the African Union – was established in 1963, as many of Africa’s nations were stepping out of the shadow of colonialism. The principal objective of the OAU was to promote pan-African unity “in order to assure the well-being of [its nations’] peoples and to reinforce the links between them ‘by establishing and strengthening common institutions’”, a goal made all the more ‘resonant’ by the organisation’s determination to do so whilst “fight[ing] neocolonialism in all its forms” (Elias, 1965: 246). For many decades, however, the inception of the OAU was a high watermark for pan-African unity, as the continent experienced further fracture and division between the post-independence era and the end of the 20th Century (Collier, 2007; Moyo, 2009). The failure of the OAU to inculcate an inclusive and meaningful pan-African identity was not a problem of ‘resonance’, since all of the continent’s nations bore the continent’s social, cultural, economic, and political baggage, much of which was left behind by the former colonial powers. Instead, the problem was one of ‘sharpness’ (Baron, 2004) – that the African collective, rather than being internally homogenous and cohesive, was cut across by both emergent and deep-set divisions. Maathai (2009: 33) highlights the “many points of nonconvergence: history, language, ethnicity, race, culture, religion, and national boundaries. Even the difference between Francophone and Anglophone Africa was a factor. It was hard for the OAU to establish a single

identity, and not long after its inception it splintered into unofficial factions, rendering it largely ineffective”.⁹

In terms of collective identity, slum communities embody many of these issues in microcosm. Like the black population of the pre-Civil Rights Movement US, slum dwellers are routinely denied basic rights and liberties, such as adequate housing, clean water, and political representation (de Soto, 2000; UN-Habitat, 2003; Mitullah, 2003). Yet the ‘resonance’ that this might confer on the collective identity of a slum community could well be undermined by shortcomings in ‘sharpness’. Slum communities are not internally homogenous; like other urban societies, they are stratified according to things like wealth, occupation, tenancy status, and ethnicity (Martí, et al., 2013; Portes, 1972; UN-Habitat, 2016a). In Sub-Saharan Africa, where most of the world’s slum population is concentrated, the latter of these social stratifications – ethnicity – is especially pertinent. Maathai (2009) refers to these ethnic groups as “micro-nations”, as they are often a more prominent aspect of people’s identities than is their nationality. Most of these ethnic groups have their own language and customs, and their territories often straddle national boundaries. Some African countries, like Nigeria and Cameroon, have upwards of 200 recognised ethnic groups; others, like Rwanda, Burundi, and South Sudan, have much fewer, but bitter divisions between them have escalated tragically (Jok and Hutchinson, 1999; Maathai, 2009; Uvin, 1999). Kenya, where data for this study was collected, has 44 ethnic groups (or “tribes”). Most of Kenya’s rural communities and small regional towns are largely mono-ethnic (or are populated by two or more ethnic groups that are closely related), but its main cities, most notably its capital, Nairobi, are highly ethnolinguistically diverse (Sobania, 2003). On occasion – such as the post-election period in 2007 and, to a lesser extent, the post-election period in 2017 – these divisions have sparked widespread, inter-ethnic violence, but in the everyday world of a poor Kenyan, they play out in more subtle ways, such as choosing who to do business with or whom to hire.

In relation to the collective identity of a slum community, two competing forces might therefore be at play. On the one hand is the unifying power of resonance, where the slum’s population constitutes a readily recognisable social group which is associated with deprivation and marginality, as well as with a unique and shared geography. On the other is the divisiveness that stems from a lack of identity sharpness and which, at its extreme, can foster a “vision of existence as a merciless contest, in which only ethnic preference offers hope for survival” (Wrong, 2009: 42). In view of the earlier observation that collective identity is ‘layered’ – an individual may

⁹ This, of course, is not a patently African issue; one can observe it across geography and history, ranging from the Ottoman Empire (Landes, 1999: 396-399) to the present-day European Union, as peoples from various cultural backgrounds and with asynchronous collective aspirations are, quite suddenly, given cause to think of themselves ‘as one’.

identify with the community as a whole, with particular subsets of it, or indeed with neither (Brewer, 1991; Portes, and Sensenbrenner, 1993; Snow, 2001) – and that this layering may entail some degree of temporal inconsistency, two distinct possibilities exist for what this collective identity may actually be oriented to achieve. Both of these possibilities derive from social identity theory (Haslam and Ellemers, 2005; Tajfel and Turner, 1986).

The first possibility is ‘social change’ (Tajfel and Turner, 1986). Social change refers to systemic change that, in the present case, would positively alter the circumstances of the community as a whole. As such, it relies on the inhabitants of the slum acting ‘as one’, which is reliant in turn on a strong and inclusive collective identity that transcends the competing interests of isolated groups existing within. As I outlined earlier, the OAU set out to achieve social change, but fell victim to the fractious nature of the collective and to the roguish behaviour of individual nations and their leaders (Maathai, 2009). The second possibility is ‘social mobility’, in which the system remains largely ‘as is’ but individual members or groups improve their personal circumstances (Tajfel and Turner, 1986). In the context of the slum, this may involve forging a relatively comfortable life within the slum – by building a better house, diversifying one’s business, and/or enhancing one’s social status – or it may involve moving out of the slum and into a more affluent part of the city.

3.5 Identity Change and Identity Work

Kreiner, et al. (2006: 1032) note that “[t]he term ‘identification’ is used in the literature with two meanings, to describe both a state and a process”. So far in this chapter, our focus has centred on the former – ‘who are we?’, and ‘why does it matter that we are who we are?’ Relatedly, I have taken what might be described as an “essentialist” or “structuralist” perspective, which assumes that shared attributes, geography, and circumstances, coupled with embeddedness in roles, networks, and groups, constitute the primary sources of collective identity (Cerulo, 1997; Snow and McAdam, 2001). In turning towards the view of ‘identification-as-process’, I treat identity as a social construction rather than simply as a product of common ascriptions (such as age, gender, address, income status, etc.). This constructionist standpoint is predicated on the idea that collective identity does not only precede collective action but that, to some extent, it is (re-)formulated in and through collective action (Polletta and Jasper, 2001: 285).

The constructionist paradigm does not require that we disregard the structuralist basis that has been established already, which loosely posits that collective identity may coalesce broadly around things like socioeconomic marginalisation (Webb, et al., 2009), or, more locally, around things like age, ethnicity, or occupation. As Snow (2001: 7) points out, “constructed identities are not fabricated whole cloth but typically knit together by drawing on threads of past and current

cultural materials and traditions [and] structural arrangements ... Thus, while collective identities are undeniably constructed, they rarely are constructed *carte blanche*; rather, they typically are forged not only with the materials suggested by the ... structuralist perspectives, but with and through the experience of collective action itself.” Importantly, the constructionist view assigns a substantial degree of indeterminacy to collective identity (Cerulo, 1997; Dentoni, Pascucci, Poldner, and Gartner, 2018): since identity is formulated through action as well as abstraction, it is at least partially path-dependent.

Portes, et al.’s (2005) work on the assimilation of immigrant communities into US society is a useful illustration of this point. The authors critique the assumption that the assimilation trajectory of contemporary Mexican immigrants will more-or-less reflect that of European immigrants in the 19th and 20th Centuries, since they confront a radically different society than that encountered by earlier waves of immigrants (Elder Jr, 1994). Noting the “downward assimilation” that often characterises the experience of second-generation immigrants, they argue that “the central question is not whether the second generation will assimilate into American society, but *to what segment* of that society it will assimilate” (p. 1000, emphasis in original). The indeterminacy of this process means that the collective identity of this social group could crystallise in various different forms, or it could splinter.

A key construct in the constructionist paradigm is that of “identity work” (Atewologun, Kutzer, Dolder, and Anderson, 2017; Dentoni, et al., 2018; Essers and Benschop, 2009; Grotevant, 1987; Kreiner, et al., 2006; Pratt, et al., 2006; Snow and Anderson, 1987; Schwalbe and Mason-Schrock, 1996; Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003; Watson, 2009). Identity work “encompasses the range of activities people engage in, both individually and collectively, to signify and express who they are and what they stand for in relation or contrast to some set of others” (Snow, 2001: 7). Identity work usually occurs at the intersection of multiple identities, and has been treated as a means by which individuals and groups can overcome the normative constraints affixed to roles and identities. For example, Essers and Benschop (2009) explored, through the lens of identity work, how female Muslim immigrants in the Netherlands created boundaries between their spiritual and occupational selves, which afforded them the personal agency required to initiate entrepreneurial ventures within the identity confines of their faith.

The Essers and Benschop (2009) example highlights some of the central and recurrent elements of the identity work literature. First, close attention is paid to the overlap of identification and embeddedness (McKeever, Jack, and Anderson, 2015; Reynolds, 2013). Constraints of various forms are specified, the most obvious being the social protocol to which occupants of the identity category ‘Muslim women’ are expected to adhere. Assuming that one feels emotionally invested in his/her religious and/or gender identity, deviation from categorical norms is likely to undermine

perceived self-worth. From a relational perspective also, appearing to lose sight of one's religious/gender identity and veering too much towards an occupational (entrepreneurial) identity might attract social sanctions, such as the withdrawal of support from family and friends. Some benefits of embeddedness are also identified; by belonging to the identity category of 'Muslim women' themselves, for example, the entrepreneurs were intimately familiar with the commercial needs of other Muslim women (e.g., the need to have a female driving instructor).

Second, it is evident from this study that identities can be both contextual and acontextual. Where so many micro-identities intersect (in this case, there were religious, gender, ethnic, and occupational identities), tensions between them force some, temporarily, to the margins. For some of the women, ethnic identity lost salience in an entrepreneurship context. This did not imply that they did not value their ethnicity, but simply that it had no bearing on who they were as entrepreneurs. Conversely, identifying as a Muslim was, for many, a relative constant; even in an entrepreneurship context, most of the women still attached importance to the customs of Islam (such as "keep[ing] a distance from ... male clients" (Essers and Benschop, 2009: 412)). Illustrated here is the difference between "situated" and "deep-structured" identification (Rousseau, 1998). Whereas situated identification is ephemeral and context-dependent, deep-structured identification "shapes [an individual's] long-term self-concept" (Riketta, Van Dick, and Rousseau, 2006: 91). Consistent with this example, deep-structured identification with a group or category can have a significant bearing on a person's attitudes and motivations; in challenging circumstances, deep-structured identification is associated with increased commitment to the collective interest (somewhat aligned to 'social change'); situated identification, in contrast, can be *engendered* by challenging circumstances, but may not be sustained if those circumstances are prolonged (Riketta, et al., 2006; Rousseau, 1998).

Third, the study unpackages the agentic processes by which people manage their identities. People and groups can purposefully enact boundaries between various aspects of who they are, or, alternatively, they can view themselves as one integrative whole. Linking to Optimal Distinctiveness Theory, the latter is viewed as a means to satisfy the need to feel 'belonging'. However, taken to its extreme, it can produce "overidentification", where the notion of 'me' melts into that of 'we' to such an extent that individuality becomes crowded out (Kreiner, et al., 2006: 1033). To mitigate this issue, people "segment" or "compartmentalise" their identities (Kreiner, et al., 2006; Shepherd and Haynie, 2009a), deliberately situating micro-identities within particular contexts or task domains. Segmentation tactics are not always viable (Shepherd and Haynie, 2009b), but, in general, it is believed that entrepreneurs – because of the personal (or, in a group context, collective) agency that is necessary for entrepreneurship – have a stronger disposition for identity segmentation than identity integration (Shepherd and Haynie, 2009a).

3.6 From Identity in Organisations towards Identity in Entrepreneurship

Scholars of entrepreneurship have long contended that new and nascent organisations constitute a context for individual behaviour and social relations that is distinct from the context of established and mature organisations (Gartner, Bird, and Starr, 1992; Hjorth, Holt, and Steyaert, 2015; McMullen and Shepherd, 2006). All of the constructs outlined in Table 3 are in widespread use in organisational research, but they have been used far more sparingly in entrepreneurship research (Ruef, 2010; Hoang and Gimeno, 2010; Shepherd and Haynie, 2009a). In this section, I select three core themes, which are both prominent in the literature on identity in (and of) organisations and relevant to the empirical sections of this thesis, for closer examination. I then explore in a more focused way the extant research on identity in an entrepreneurship context. I highlight some important gaps in this literature, and argue that extrapolating from research carried out on established or mature organisations may not be an appropriate means to address these gaps. Accordingly, I draw attention to the specific areas of this literature which this study aims to advance.

3.6.1 Identity in an Organisational Context: Key Themes

(i) *Identity as a socialising force.* A popular stream of identity research has been the investigation of how individuals become socialised into the culture or requirements of a particular organisation or role (e.g., Bullis and Wackernagel Bach, 1989; Dutton, et al., 1994; Ibarra, 1999; Pratt, 2000; Sluss and Ashforth, 2007). Much of this research centres on how congruence is forged between personal and role/organisational identity, and processual approaches which take account of external influences, such as relationships and on-the-job experiences, have become commonplace (Ibarra, 1999; Pratt, 2000; Pratt, Rockman, and Kaufman, 2006).

Problems arise when key elements of this research are transposed from an organisational to an entrepreneurship context; two aspects in particular appear to be poorly compatible with the fluid, emergent nature of entrepreneurial venturing (McMullen and Dimov, 2013; Hjorth, et al., 2015; Sarasvathy, 2001, 2008).

First, this literature works from the premise that the identity of the role/organisation and the identity of the individual are incongruent, *but that either one of them is relatively fixed or static.* Then, these studies seek to understand the patterns through which this incongruency is resolved; usually, as an individual becomes more deeply embedded in a role or organisation, s/he will become more attuned to its requirements and develop competencies that enable her to perform

effectively. Over time, convergence is likely to occur between personal identity and role/organisational identity (Snow and McAdam, 2000). A tendency among scholars to examine these processes within organisations that have “strong” cultures means that organisational/role identities are typically treated more like structural categories – i.e. inert and extraneous – than they are like identities – emergent and indeterminate. While studies in this area have deepened our understanding of individual adaptation during periods of transition, questions remain over how well they transfer to the domain of entrepreneurship. Pratt’s (2000) study of identification (and disidentification) among Amway distributors, for example, highlights specific socialisation mechanisms such as “positive programming” (“whereby the distributor is taught to fill their mind with things that are ‘uplifting and edifying’” (p. 469)) and “dream building” (a motivational tactic grounded in materialism, where a distributor’s current self is set against an ideal self). These socialisation mechanisms are designed to foster identity alignment between Amway and its distributors, but are predicated on the fact that Amway’s identity is relatively well-formulated and concrete (Cornelissen, et al., 2007). In an entrepreneurship context, concerned with new and nascent organisations, the identity of an organisation is likely to be much more fluid, and will co-evolve with, rather than simply provide a template for, the personal identity of its founder(s) (Lewis, 2016; Ruef, 2010).

The second issue of note in this area of research is the influence that that mentors and superiors exert on the personal identities of those individuals that are undergoing career transitions. At Amway, for example, a mentor (an experienced distributor) was termed as an “upline”, while a mentee (a new recruit) was a “downline”, and these relationships involved great emotional investment. Pratt (2000: 464) describes how mentors used practices like positive programming and dream building to cultivate “seekership” among new recruits, the main purpose of which was to “disrupt an individual’s sense of self to create a meaning void that must be filled.” The role of a mentor in this process of identification may also take a more passive form. Ibarra’s (1999) work explores how, in the high-pressure context of investment banking and management consultancy, junior staff experimented with “provisional selves” by choosing which superiors they would mimic in their dealings with clients, at least until they gained the confidence and competence to interact in a more ‘natural’ fashion. Since entrepreneurs do not have superiors, the option of simply mimicking a prototype is often unavailable. Novice entrepreneurs may look to cultural ideals – Whitney Wolfe, Muhammad Yunus, Richard Branson, etc. – or to other, more proximate incarnations of the entrepreneur as models to follow (Downing, 2005; Howorth, Smuth, and Parkinson, 2012; Malecki, 2012; Newbery, et al., 2018), but it is unlikely that either would provide such a fully-formed prototype as a direct superior in a hierarchical organisation (Demetry, 2017; Hoang and Gimeno, 2010; Mathias and Williams, 2017).

Entrepreneurs, like employees, formulate identities by combining and recombining elements of their cultural repertoire, but that cultural repertoire is vastly more disparate, and the formulation of identity is more of an exercise in bricolage, than it is for employees in hierarchical organisations. Rather than slotting into an organisation that already has its own identity, entrepreneurs create organisations and forge their organisation's identity by piecing together symbols, practices, and myths which have meaning within a particular industry or society (Aldrich and Fiol, 1994; Conger, et al., 2018; DeClerq and Voronov, 2009; Lamont and Molnár, 2002; Rao, 1994). Also, whereas employees can model their behaviour on a direct superior to whom they are close, the cultural mould of an entrepreneur is often vaguely defined and highly variant across different societies (Baker, Gedajlovic, and Lubatkin, 2005; Farmer, Yao, and Kung-McIntyre, 2011; Hoang and Gimeno, 2010). Lastly, the feedback mechanisms that entrepreneurs rely on to make identity 'corrections' come from a broad set of constituents – customers, investors, competitors, regulators; for employees of established and mature organisations, the organisation's obligations towards these constituents are usually embedded quite clearly in role expectations, and the employee's performance in respect of these obligations is continuously monitored and evaluated by his/her superiors (Sluss and Ashforth, 2007; Valcour, 2002).

(ii) Identity as an organisational marker. Identity can play a central role in shaping how an organisation perceives its market context, and in where an organisation positions the boundaries that demarcate it from that market context (Porac, Thomas, Wilson, Paton, and Kanfer, 1995; Santos and Eisenhardt, 2005).

Boundary work is concerned with the ways in which people resolve identity tensions that stem from multiple and conflicting role identities. The case of the Muslim women who emigrated from Morocco and Turkey to the Netherlands, where they initiated small, independent enterprises (outlined in Section 3.5), provides an illustrative example of the boundary work concept. In order to establish and preserve the personal agency necessary for entrepreneurship, these women needed to reconcile their entrepreneurial identities with their ethnic, religious and gender identities by enacting boundaries between these fragments of their self-concept (Essers and Benschop, 2009). Boundary work can also be undertaken at the group level, where a social group engages in identity work with the objective of distinguishing itself from other social groups, either as a simple classification exercise or in order to maintain privileged access to some set of resources or opportunities (Lamont and Molnár, 2002).

Identity is viewed as one of four key determinants of organisational boundaries (Santos and Eisenhardt, 2005). The others are: (i) efficiency, where organisational boundaries are positioned in order to minimise the cost of governing activities (a transaction cost economics perspective);

(ii) power, where organisational boundaries are positioned in order to reduce dependence on other market stakeholders (a resource dependency perspective); and (iii) competence, where organisational boundaries are determined by the resources and competencies possessed by the organisation (a perspective grounded in contingency theory and the resource-based view) (Santos and Eisenhardt, 2005). Santos and Eisenhardt's (2005) observation that identity often takes primacy in this hierarchy (they reference the difficulty that organisations tend to experience when they attempt to tweak identity boundaries for reasons of efficiency, for example) has found support in empirical research. Building on earlier work by Ruef, et al. (2003) and Ruef (2010) investigated the human composition of new venture teams and found that transaction cost economics and the resource-based view provided a weak explanatory basis for the boundary decisions of those ventures. When he performed the same analyses using the principles of "relational demography", which is concerned with relationships and identity rather than efficiency, he was able to more accurately predict whether someone would hold the status of insider or outsider.

In a point that echoes other behavioural theorists in the field of entrepreneurship (e.g., Sarasvathy, 2001, 2008), Ruef (2010: 34-35) suggests that the uncertainty that inheres in entrepreneurship makes judgements relating to efficiency and resource dependency more difficult in the early stages of venturing, and that identity plays a prominent role in the formulation of boundaries. Yet, of the four forms of organisational boundary, 'identity' has attracted the least amount of empirical attention (Eisenhardt and Santos, 2005). Scholars have argued that shortcomings in this area have contributed to misguided assumptions related to agency and rationality in entrepreneurship research (Aldrich and Zimmer, 1986; Baron, 1998; Biggart and Delbridge, 2004; Dacin, Ventresca, and Beal, 1999; Francis and Sandberg, 2000).

(iii) Identity as a basis for organisational form. Organisational forms reveal important insights relating to an organisation's external environment and serve as a blueprint for the actions of the organisation itself (Hannan and Freeman, 1977: 935). They "represent classes of organizations that audiences understand to be similar in their core features and distinctive from other classes of organization" (Fiol and Romanelli, 2012: 597). The traditional means of classifying organisations according to their form has been to consider the products and services that they sell, but recent studies have questioned the adequacy of this approach (Hsu and Hannon, 2005). Baron's (2004: 7) example captures the spirit of this critique. "Imagine three enterprises engaged in selling soup to the public: (i) a health-conscious urban restaurant that serves wholesome dairy-prepared soups to a busy clientele of shoppers and businesspeople; (ii) a charitable soup kitchen that serves soup and other meals to the homeless and indigent; and (iii) Pea Soup Andersen's in Buellton,

California, a tourist attraction that showcases Andersen's split pea soup and other prepared foods that are for sale in groceries and supermarkets." Reflecting renewed interest in ecological approaches in this area of research (Hannan and Freeman, 1977), it is now widely accepted that identity – 'who we are' as an organisation, as perceived by both insiders and outsiders – provides a much more appropriate basis for understanding the emergence of new organisational forms than the products/services they provide (Hsu and Hannon, 2005; Polletta and Jasper, 2001; Fiol and Romanelli, 2012; Ruef, 2000).

The link between identity and organisational form has produced a number of important insights relating to the strategic behaviour of organisations. It has been used, for example, to explain competitive behaviour by showing that firms are highly selective in who they define as competitors, a cognitive process which is governed as much by similarities in organisational form as it is by similarities in goods produced, and which relies heavily on insiders' acquired knowledge of established patterns of interaction among market actors (Porac, et al., 1995). It has also been used extensively in the literature on organisational hybridity and social entrepreneurship (Battilana and Lee, 2014; Smith and Besharov, 2019; Wry and York, 2017; York, O'Neil, and Sarasvathy, 2016). Studies in this area have proven particularly adept at integrating multiple levels of analysis, which has helped us better understand the nexus of identity, form, and action in organisations. Ethnographic research carried out by Tracey, Phillips, and Jarvis (2011) illuminated the process by which entrepreneurs synthesise pre-existing scripts and material practices (concerned, in this case, with welfare and retail logics) to create variations on orthodox organisational forms. In turn, hybrid organisations are made sustainable by effective "guardrails", which refer to identity-based principles and structural arrangements that prevent them from veering too far towards either their economic or social mission (Smith and Besharov, 2019).

Much of the identity research in this area draws, explicitly or implicitly, from paradox theory (Moss, Short, Payne, and Lumpkin, 2010; Smith, Gonin, and Besharov, 2013). The popularity of paradox theory has grown in-line with mounting evidence that dominant theoretical perspectives such as contingency theory fail to properly account for phenomena such as organisational hybridity (Santos, 2012; Smith and Lewis, 2011). Whereas contingency theory would suggest that, faced by tensions between economic and prosocial identities, organisations would work to resolve those tensions by favouring one identity over the other, paradox theory accepts that these conflicting identities can co-exist indefinitely (Smith, Knapp, Barr, Stevens, and Cannatelli, 2012; Smith and Lewis, 2011). Although the proliferation of these ideas has been most noticeable in the social entrepreneurship space, they have helped scholars to come to a more general understanding of how entrepreneurship can be oriented towards the collective good (Bacq and Alt, 2018; Fauchart and Gruber, 2011; Miller, Grimes, McMullen, and Vogus, 2012; Ven de Ven, Sapienza, and Villanueva, 2007).

3.6.2 Identity in an Entrepreneurship Context: Background and Theoretical Objectives

It is important to distinguish identity-based theories and constructs from the traits- and personality-based approaches which were popular in entrepreneurship studies in the field's nascency (Aldrich and Zimmer, 1986; Gartner, 1988, 1989). Although both take an interest in the question, 'Who is an entrepreneur?', the two approaches stem from radically different intellectual backgrounds. Traits- and personality-based approaches have their roots in cognitive psychology, and their central premise is that entrepreneurs differ from the general population according to ascriptive characteristics like age or ethnicity, or according to personality characteristics like the need for achievement, locus of control, or propensity to take risks (Brockhaus, 1980; Gnyawali and Fogel, 1994). Identity-based approaches, by contrast, stem from social psychology (Brewer, 1991; Haslam and Ellemers, 2005; Tajfel, 1982) and sociology (DiMaggio, 1997; Polletta and Jasper, 2001). They refer to the meanings that people affix to the social category of 'the entrepreneur' (DeClercq and Voronov, 2009; Johnsen and Sørensen, 2017); rather than attempting to develop frameworks that might predict, 'Who will become an entrepreneur?', identity perspectives seek to understand 'What does it mean to be an entrepreneur?'. This approach is accommodating to the fact that the meanings that are associated with the social category of 'the entrepreneur' can differ quite drastically across social and geographical contexts (Baker, et al., 2005; Welter, et al., 2017; Zoogah, et al., 2015). Equally, it is accommodating to individual difference within social and geographical contexts, as micro-level processes (the use of logics, frames, and schemata) produce diversity within singular macro environments (Greenwood, Raynard, Kodeih, Micoleta, and Lounsbury, 2011; Pryor, Webb, Ireland, and Ketchen, 2016; Williams and Nadin, 2011).

Identity has become an increasingly popular lens through which to examine various entrepreneurial phenomena. However, the base of research in this area is still a relatively shallow one, and substantial work remains to be done if identity is going to enlighten entrepreneurship studies to a similar extent that it has organisational studies (Conger, et al., 2018; Demetry, 2017; Hoang and Gimeno, 2010; Navis and Glynn, 2011). Here, I provide a short overview of the key contributions made by identity studies to the field of entrepreneurship research, before proceeding to specify the ways in which this study aims to advance this body of literature.

(i) Identity as a classification device. Extant typologies of 'founder identities' serve as powerful illustrations that a) entrepreneurs do not conform to one identity type, even when they are clustered in the same industry and geographical region, and b) identity can have clear and systematic imprinting effects on entrepreneurial motivations and behaviours. Fauchart and Gruber's (2011) typology specified three types of founder identity, each of which was identifiable

by its distinctive social motivation, basis of self-evaluation, and frame of reference (i.e. relevant others) (Fauchart and Gruber, 2011: 942). “Darwinians” resemble the quintessential entrepreneur – self-interested with a desire to increase his/her own financial wealth, possessed of shrewd market judgement, and aspiring to gain and maintain an edge on market competitors; “Communitarians” care primarily about doing well by a small and well-defined social group, and economic profits matter less than the “authenticity” that is afforded by demonstrating a nuanced awareness of the needs of their peers; and, lastly, “Missionaries” are ideological, determined to serve a higher and more universal cause than obsessing with their own financial state or the material desires of their peers.

Cardon, Wincent, Singh, and Drnovsek’s (2009) typology contains a different set of categories – “inventor”, “founder, and “developer” – but its premise is largely the same: different aspects of the entrepreneurial process spark passion in different entrepreneurs, which leads to patterned diversity in how entrepreneurs interpret their “role” and the activities and outcomes that they deem most important (see also Morris, Neumeyer, Jang, and Kuratko, 2016). Powell and Baker (2014) provide a compelling account of how categories like these – their grounded analysis yielded sixteen different role and social identities, including “patriot” and “green activist” – underpin entrepreneurial behaviour. In seeking to understand why entrepreneurs enact different strategic responses when faced with the same environmental challenges, they found that identity played a much more central role than value judgements based on ‘objective’ market assessments. That is, differences in the structure of entrepreneurs’ identities produced differences in how those challenges were construed – some saw adversity as an opportunity, others as a challenge or a threat – which in turn led to patterned differences in entrepreneurs’ strategic responses. Moreover, in signalling how “[f]ounders use their firms as vehicles through which they affirm and defend their identities” (p. 1430), Powell and Baker (2014) hint at the use of entrepreneurship as a mode of expression, which is a theme I pick up in the empirical chapters of this thesis.

(ii) Identity as a competitive asset. The notion that identity can, through various mechanisms, provide entrepreneurs with advantages in competitive markets has been a popular theme of research conducted in non-traditional contexts, such as the informal economy or among impoverished or immigrant entrepreneurs. The core premise of this view is that when an entrepreneur is a member of a particular social group, s/he is well placed to be able to spot opportunities arising from the needs and demands of that group (Webb, et al., 2009). Research carried out in India by Viswanathan and colleagues (Viswanathan, et al., 2014; Viswanathan, et al., 2010; Viswanathan, Sridharan, Ritchie, Venugopal, and Jung, 2012) paid close attention to the shared circumstances of subsistence-level micro-entrepreneurs and their customers and

vendors, and the manifold ways that this influenced market exchange. They argue that being socially embedded in the communities in which they do business makes information gathering a relatively organic process for subsistence entrepreneurs, and that the intimate knowledge they have regarding the personal circumstances of their customers makes it possible for entrepreneurs to enact strategies – like offering credit to particular customers – that cultivate the commitment and interdependency necessary to ensure their continued custom.

For these entrepreneurs, trading on identity essentially means trading on the underlying state of familiarity, enabling entrepreneurs, as ‘insiders’, to create and deliver value in ways that ‘outsiders’ could not. However, researchers have also highlighted instances in which entrepreneurs make a virtue of their outsider status. Bonacich (1973), for example, examines the consistent over-representation of immigrants within the population of entrepreneurs of their host country. Knowledge-based logic has been most commonly used to justify this pattern: individuals take knowledge and skills from their home country, where it is abundant, and put it into practice in their host country, where it is scarce – Asian restaurants located in Europe or the US serve as a classic example. Another common explanation is that, because of poor language skills or a lack of professional networks, immigrants have difficulty accessing the labour market and revert to self-employment out of necessity. While both of these factors undoubtedly go a long way towards accounting for the over-representation of ethnic minorities in entrepreneurship, neither one provides any kind of a clue as to why these groups tend to thrive, specifically, in *brokerage* roles. Bonacich (1973) posits that immigrant and other ethnic minority groups are well-disposed to the role of “middleman” because they do not bear the historical or political baggage that tends to accompany membership of one domestic social group or another. In East Africa, for example, Indians account for a far greater share of the business-owning population than they do of the general population, and Bonacich (1973) argues that this is, at least in-part, attributable to the fact that their status as outsiders makes them an effective buffer between the rich and poor: not having ties to the political and economic elites makes it relatively easy for them to trade with the poor, which also suits the elites because it is the Indians, not the domestic elites, that subsequently attract the acrimony of the poor.

This stream of identity literature intersects with the expansive literature on social capital in entrepreneurship and management studies. Often, membership of a particular identity group (e.g., being an Irishman in Boston, a member of the Quakers, or an alumnus of the “Class of ‘95”) entails preferential access to resources when those resources are under the control of fellow members, since the (re-)distribution of resources and opportunities often occurs within, rather than across, identity groups (Matthias, et al., 2018; Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, and Flament, 1971). Most entrepreneurs rely heavily on these relational ties for access to critical resources like finance, expertise, and material inputs (Granovetter, 1983; Portes, 1998; Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998;

Stuart and Sorenson, 2003; Zhao and Lounsbury, 2016). Furthermore, long-term viability and growth often depends on an entrepreneur's ability to cultivate ties that extend beyond his/her immediate network, overcoming problems associated with excessive homophily and providing access to new ideas and rare resources (Adler and Kwon, 2002; Granovetter, 1973; Korsgaard, Ferguson, and Gaddefors, 2015; Stam and Elfring, 2012;). Often, these ties bridge two or more identity groups (Gulati, Sytch, and Tatarynowicz, 2012; Martí, et al., 2013) or connect members of a single identity group, such as an ethnic group, across substantial geographical distances (Hess, 2004).

Related to the concept of social capital is that of identity capital, which refers to the investments that individuals and groups make in "who they are" with a view to reaping some future dividend (Côté, 1996, 2003). Identity capital is fashioned as boundaries between social groups become increasingly objectified, enabling some groups to obtain and accumulate privileges that can be allocated amongst its own. Such privileges can be purely psychological in nature, like the enhanced self-esteem that accompanies positive distinctiveness, or they can be embodied in resources, knowledge, reputation, or goodwill.

(iii) Identity as a normative cue. As well as providing entrepreneurs with a portal as to the needs of a given society, embeddedness also pushes entrepreneurs to internalise the norms of that society (Essers and Benschop, 2009). This phenomenon is analogous to the process by which new employees become socialised into the culture of an organisation or into a new role, a process which has received substantial research attention (and a summary of which is given in Section 3.6.1(i)). The central question shifts from, 'what is expected of me as an employee of this organisation?', to, 'what is expected of me as an entrepreneur in this community?'. Research has addressed this question in two overarching ways. The first has been to assume that social norms are clearly specified and that entrepreneurs choose to adhere or not to adhere to these norms. Identification is seen here as a function of this (non-)adherence, and the key domain of interest is the regulating effect that this has on what entrepreneurs can and cannot legitimately do. The second approach is more sensitised to the fact that entrepreneurs do not adhere to only one set of norms. As I mentioned in the earlier discussion of the socialisation process of new employees, entrepreneurs must satisfy a much broader array of constituents than employees, and it is likely that the expectations of these constituents will occasionally conflict (e.g., investors demanding maximum returns, versus lobbyists demanding environmentally friendly production practices, versus customers demanding low-cost goods, versus staff demanding long-term employment security, etc.). Here, identity is seen to be constructed through interaction with this disparate collection of agents (Cerulo, 1997; Gartner, et al., 1992). These approaches are not mutually

exclusive, and both carry relevance for the present study. In this sub-section, I focus on the first of these approaches.

To a greater or lesser extent, communities are underpinned by a collective identity. That is, members of a community share some measure of a consensual understanding regarding ‘who we are’ and why ‘we’ are different to ‘them’ (Bernstein, 1997; Haslam and Ellemers, 2005). Extant research indicates that one basis for collective identity is hardship, such that if one community experiences greater hardship than nearby others, and if the State is not seen to intervene to alleviate this hardship, a collective identity may form around members of that disadvantaged community (Webb, et al., 2009). As a corollary, economic activities which are outlawed by the formal laws of the state may be viewed as permissible within that community, since extra-legal means often provide an outlet for marginalised individuals and groups to redress their own economic disadvantage (Bourgois, 1999; de Soto, 2000; Fadahunsi and Rosa, 2002). Certain types of economic activities – informal entrepreneurship, for example – will therefore be more acceptable, or legitimate, within some communities than they are in others (Godfrey, 2011; Webb, et al., 2009). On the other hand, research has highlighted that, in communities that are bound by a strong collective identity which is grounded in hardship and struggle, gains made by individual entrepreneurs are often viewed unfavourably (Slade Schantz, et al., 2018). In extreme cases, entrepreneurs can attract social sanctions, including alienation or even sabotage, if their performance is out of step with the collective identity of their community (Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993; Slade Schantz, et al., 2018; Viswanathan, et al., 2012).

Belonging to a particular ethnic group or being embedded in a particular geographical community can therefore have a significant bearing on how entrepreneurs rate the attractiveness of certain opportunities and activities (Steyaert and Katz, 2004). So, too, can normative pressures arising from identity categories into which entrepreneurs self-select (Hess, 2004). Conger, et al. (2018) find that B-Corp certification causes entrepreneurs to re-evaluate the strength of their prosocial orientation. For some, B-Corp status reified their prosocial identity, leading them to increase investments in prosocial opportunities; others found living up to the expectations of the B-Corp charter too onerous, and in many cases their firms simply dissolved.

Along these lines, it is well-known that collective identity can be both enabling and constraining (Ruef, 2010; Vershinina, Woldesenbet Beta, and Murithi, 2018), yet entrepreneurship research has only begun to scratch the surface in its investigations of how and why (Hoang and Gimeno, 2010; Refai, Haloub, and Lever, 2018). A crucial avenue of inquiry which has come to prominence in recent studies is the construction or emergence of identity. As I mentioned above (and in Section 3.6.1, point (i)), there is a strong case that identity processes differ between entrepreneurs – who *create* organisations – and employees – who *join* organisations. In the next

sub-section, I provide a short overview of how this literature is taking shape, before explaining how the present study seeks to further this conversation.

(iv) Constructionist perspectives on identity in entrepreneurship research. As I have already established, identities are constructed experientially and by piecing together fragments of different identity categories (Polletta and Jasper, 2001; Snow, 2001). Conceptually, this indicates that identities are not singular but situational, meaning that an individual or group can hold multiple identities at once, and identities can be triggered, forged, experimented with, or cast off depending on the context (Ibarra, 1999; Leavitt, Reynolds, Barnes, Schlipzland, and Hannah, 2012; Snow and McAdam, 2000). Although entrepreneurship research has been favourable towards the idea that identity systematically shapes action (as the typologies set out above illustrate), it has largely failed to address the issue of how people or groups come to hold particular identities. We know, for example, that “communitarian” entrepreneurs (Fauchart and Gruber, 2011) place greater import on their social standing among their peers than they do on financial profit; however, as the authors themselves note (Fauchart and Gruber, 2011: 953), the cross-sectional nature of the study (data was collected using once-off interviews) is highly limiting. Most problematic is the assumption that identity derives only from childhood or pre-founding experiences (such as doing a degree in management or economics as opposed to, say, technology), leading to the inference that ‘once a communitarian, always a communitarian’. This is a weak structural basis for identity, because it takes no account of the society in which these entrepreneurs exist (for example, is this a collectivist society in which Darwinians are seen as deviant? Do all entrepreneurs have the social resources that communitarianism requires?). Additionally, it leaves little room for identity to evolve in and through the process of entrepreneurship itself (could these identities be sequential, whereby communitarianism is a form of ‘effectuation’ which might prove popular in the early stages of venturing, but which generally gives way to a Darwinian and then a missionary identity as the entrepreneur becomes more established?). Also problematic is that “Darwinians”, “communitarians”, and “missionaries” (like “inventors”, “founders, and “developers” in Cardon, et al.’s (2009) typology) are conceptual pure types. In practice, few, if any, entrepreneurs conform to only one of these categories; instead, the vast majority of entrepreneurs have “hybrid” identities which incorporate facets from two or three of these categories (Cardon, et al., 2009; Dentoni, et al., 2018; Fauchart and Gruber, 2011; Powell and Baker, 2017). Again, this signifies some process of evolutionary or situational change, where identities come and go, or at least where they become salient or dormant (Mathias and Williams, 2017).

Entrepreneurship scholars have recently begun to contend with the fluid, emergent nature of identity, but research in this area remains highly exploratory. Demetry (2017), for example, examined the phenomenon of “identity play” among founders of underground or pop-up restaurants. These informal establishments provided a stepping stone into the restaurant industry for aspiring chefs that hadn’t gone through culinary training and offered established chefs the opportunity to be more expressive and daring with their styles of cooking. This study highlights both the creativity that is inherent in entrepreneurs’ identity work and the constraints that bear on this process. Entrepreneurs have the scope to concoct elaborate fantasies (Gartner, et al., 1992), but these narratives of the self are legitimised and made sustainable only through external validation (Swail and Marlow, 2018). As Demetry (2017: 196) finds, “having diners validate a chef’s culinary skills encourages the development of this new professional identity, sparking a transition from a ‘labor of love’ to a new business rhetoric”.

Dentoni, et al. (2018) term this phenomenon “embracing positive epiphanies”, and they argue that it is a key mechanism in the identity change process (as is its inverse, “embracing negative epiphanies”). Epiphanies – “sudden, shocking realizations that alter the flow of an individual’s life in unexpected ways” (Dentoni, et al., 2018: 604) – trigger sensemaking, which can play out in a gradual and iterative way. Using simulation techniques, Newbery, et al. (2018) found that epiphanies contribute to identity formulation by activating cognitive dissonance between observed behaviour and experienced behaviour, leading to an increase or decrease in the salience of entrepreneurial identity relative to other role- or micro-identities that an individual might have. Put differently, when an individual discovers that the experience of being an entrepreneur is harsher than what she expected it to be, it is likely that ‘entrepreneur’ will feature less prominently in her sense of who she is. Often, this will culminate in a radical change of approach or the discontinuation of the venture (Conger, et al., 2018).

When there is more than one founder – as in community- or team-based venturing – identity change can co-occur across two levels of analysis, the collective (what we might think of as the organisation) and the individual (Morris, et al., 2016). As Dentoni, et al. (2018) illustrate, participants collaboratively and experientially co-construct the collective identity of the organisation or group, creating for the members of the group a sense of positive distinctiveness – that ‘we’ are different to ‘them’, and that ‘we’ can feel positively about who we are and what we do (Haslam and Ellemers, 2005; Nason, Bacq, and Gras, 2017). However, the pace, or even the direction, of change in collective identity may not be reflective of the changes in individual identity among members. What happens, for example, when a founding team veers towards communitarianism, but contains one intransigent Darwinian? Powell and Baker (2017) propose that groups, specifically new-venture teams, construct identity “prototypes” which embody the positive distinctiveness of the group, that is, the values, norms, and beliefs that make that group

different from others. Prototyping infers that identity is malleable at both the collective and the individual level. At the collective level, prototypes can occupy any position on a multitude of spectra – for example, a group or organisation can be compassionate or ruthless, Darwinian or missionary, transparent or opaque, etc. Because of this malleability, individuals can “contest” prototypes that they feel do not represent their personal identity with a view to bringing “who I am” and “who we are” into closer alignment. Alternatively, individuals can submit to “pragmatic deference”, where they put aside their personal reservations to advance the greater goals of the group (Powell and Baker, 2017).

3.6.3 Summary and Theoretical Objectives of the Present Study

Individual and collective action can be conditioned by the strength and content of identity. By identifying with a social group, an individual will come to recognise the interests of that group as his/her own. In an entrepreneurship context, this can lead to behaviours and practices which are oriented towards the welfare of the group at large or which favour members of the in-group over members of the out-group. In this way, identification can curb self-interest, causing the locus of motivation to shift outward from the self (ego-centric) to the social group (group-centric). However, this phenomenon is subject to a number of important contingencies. Identities exist on the dual spectra of ‘sharpness’ and ‘resonance’; *ceteris paribus*, more potent identities will exhibit both at high levels. Additionally, ‘deep-structured’ identification is associated with more consistent expressions of togetherness within a social group than is ‘situational’ identification. Lastly, the identity of individuals, organisations, and social groups exists in a state of constant flux; the propensity of identity to condition individual and collective action, and the nature of that conditioning effect, can therefore grow and decline over time.

The present study seeks to add to this existing body of knowledge by furthering our understanding of the dynamic interplay between entrepreneurship and collective identity. The study’s theoretical objectives are broken down by chapter and explained in more detail below.

Chapters 5 & 6 (Individual Entrepreneurs). The practical objective of these sections is to gain an understanding of ‘what it means’ to be an entrepreneur in an environment where people with no historical ties to one-another are thrown together in conditions of dire poverty and forced to navigate constant socioeconomic precarity with little or no State support. Prior studies have theorised that social groups which experience protracted hardship and exclusion will be bound together by a strong collective identity (e.g., Rousseau, 1998), and that solidarity and informational benefits can accrue to entrepreneurs therein (Webb, et al., 2009). However, these arguments are predicated firmly on the logics of ‘resonance’, with little or no account given to

issues of ‘sharpness’ (Baron, 2004). The two research questions posed across Chapters 5 and 6 help address this problem.

‘Do members of the study community feel bound by a collective identity and, if so, what is it predicated upon?’

‘At the level of the individual venture, what bearing does collective identity have on the entrepreneurship process?’.

Chapters 7 & 8 (Entrepreneurial Collectives). A substantial portion of my field data pertained to two ‘entrepreneurial collectives’, groups of friends that initiated and maintained market ventures on a collaborative basis, which first-hand observations made by me and by other scholars (Thieme, 2013) indicate are prevalent in communities of this type. The collectives presented an opportunity to better understand how the relationship between collective identity and entrepreneurship might evolve in line with the changing social realities of a slum (Elder Jr., 1994), and simultaneously to address a more general need to move beyond the current empirical fixation with economic entities whose goals and boundaries are readily discernible and can easily be deduced from market-based logic (Santos and Eisenhardt, 2005; Steyaert, 2007). Rehn and Taalas (2004a: 146) make the argument that “a network of friends helping each other out is not an organisation, but a case of organising, fluid and tentative”, and posit that these are themes which must be more directly addressed in order to capture the emergent nature of entrepreneurship, and the uncertainty and ambiguity that inhere in the entrepreneurial process (McMullen and Dimov, 2013; Johannisson, 2011; Ruef, 2010). To allow for a deeper examination of the collectives, it was decided to split them out from the wider sample and to reframe the research questions to better suit their form. Addressing directly the issue of change across successive generations, I begin by asking,

‘Why did the collective emerge as an organisational form, particularly when entrepreneurship was regarded by the first generation as a distinctly solitary endeavour?’

I then move on to explore the transformations that the collectives underwent as they became market as well as social entities, and investigate the implications of being both at the same time. I ask,

‘How did collective identity and entrepreneurship co-evolve within the collectives, particularly in respect of the pre-existing and multi-faceted ties that underpinned them?’

The collectives, as well as being market and social entities in and of themselves, were also contexts for individual agency. Understanding this link is the aim of my third and final question,

‘How was individual agency enacted within the identity confines of the collectives?’

Here, I address an important empirical gap by exploring how identity is (re-)formulated within entrepreneurial groups that have strong pre-existing ties (Dentoni, et al., 2018; Francis and Sandberg, 2000; Powell and Baker, 2017; Schjoedt, Monson, Pearson, Bennett, and Chrisman, 2013). To-date, the focus of this literature has centred on groups that come together with the specific intention of initiating a venture or achieving some other entrepreneurial goal. Research indicates that most new ventures are formed by teams that are bound by pre-existing ties (Ruef, et al., 2003; Ruef, 2010), and scholars interested in the nexus of identity and entrepreneurial teams have speculated that identity processes differ when pre-existing ties are present (Klotz, Hmieleski, Bradley, and Busenitz, 2014), but empirical investigations are largely absent from the current body of research. Relatedly, I investigate the relationship between identity and organisational boundaries (DeClercq and Voronov, 2009; Ruef, 2010; Santos and Eisenhardt, 2005) by linking boundary work to the ongoing formulation of identity. Analysis generates much-needed insight into the co-evolution of identity and organisational boundaries in an entrepreneurship context (Lamont and Molnár, 2002; Wry, et al., 2011; York, et al., 2016).

CHAPTER 4

Methodology

4.1 Introduction

I begin this chapter by outlining the philosophical underpinnings of this research (4.2, ‘Philosophical Background’), before proceeding to describe the techniques of data collection that comprise ethnography and how they were deployed in the present study (4.3, ‘What is Ethnography’). A distinctive feature of immersive qualitative methodologies such as ethnography is the inseparability of the researcher and the data collection process, which raises issues of ‘Positionality’ which are addressed in Section 4.4. In the following section (4.5, ‘Research Setting and Sample’), I describe how and why I settled upon Mukuru as an empirical setting for this study, and introduce my research participants. Section 4.6 (‘Data Analysis’) details the analytical procedures that were used to transform a sizable corpus of raw data into the present report. I then provide an overview of the ethical considerations arising at the various stages of this project (4.7, ‘Ethics’) before concluding the chapter by setting out how the empirical chapters of the thesis, which follow after this one, are laid out (4.8, ‘Structure and Sequence of Empirical Chapters’).

4.2 Philosophical Background

In this section, I identify “subtle realism” as the philosophical paradigm which underpins the execution and theoretical claims of this research. I detail briefly its ontological origins in the postmodern turn, and I trace its epistemological roots to constructivism. Subsequently, I establish a place for my chosen methodology – ethnography – within the epistemological and ontological assumptions of the paradigm.

4.2.1 Post-modernism and the Emergence of Subtle Realism

It has been argued that the social sciences, and ethnography in particular, now find themselves in a “post-postmodern” moment (Brewer, 2000). Calás and Smircich (1999) argue that a central legacy of the postmodern turn has been to more deeply enshrine the need for ongoing and explicit reflexivity, in which the researcher accepts more openly their place in the text: “[n]o matter who

'we' might be – men or women, from the Third World or not, trained in the sciences or the humanities or neither – in our writing we are fixing signification; excluding, including, concealing, favouring some people, some topics, some questions, some forms of representation, some values. Can we do our own writing in a way that is 'self-conscious' of our 'choices'...?' (Calás and Smircich, 1999:664). Aligned to this heightened reflexivity is a greater awareness of what ethnography and other qualitative methodologies can and cannot do. Delamont (2004:227) notes that one response to the infinite realities conundrum presented by postmodernism is to succumb to "an intellectualized form of writer's block" and simply to "lapse into silence"; she also note that there is a more "optimistic response", one that begins with "the recognition that there is no such thing as a perfectly innocent or transparent mode of representation". Hammersley's concept of "subtle realism", which "involves maintaining a view of language as both constructing new worlds and as referring to a reality outside the text" (Seale, 1999:470), is born from this logic.

Key to understanding subtle realism as distinct from more rudimentary forms of realism – "naïve realism" has become the accepted label for the notion of straightforward engagement with an external reality (Brewer, 2000) – is the separation of ontology (the nature of reality) and epistemology (the way we come to know about reality) (Maxwell, 2012). Both subscribe to the ontological standpoint of an objective reality, but where the naïve realist considers it possible to "eliminate the effects of the researcher on the data ... [and,] in principle at least, to isolate a body of data uncontaminated by the researcher, by turning him or her into a neutral vessel of cultural experience (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:16), the subtle realist recognises that the researcher, as the "research instrument *par excellence*" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:19), is a pivotal part of the knowledge production process, in ways which are both meaningful and idiosyncratic, and also in ways which can be exploited to generate further depth of understanding. Relatedly, where a 'critical realist' – a prominent and well-established branch of realism which could be seen as sharing subtle realism's concern for reflexivity – would recognise, and then attempt to eradicate or deny, the positionality of the researcher, a subtle realist would attempt to minimise it but accept that some of the characteristics which cement the researcher's status as an outsider (in my case things like skin colour, relative wealth, an education) are ineradicable. It is therefore seen as preferable to, as far as possible, explicate positionality – that is, to account for how sampling choices or observations undertaken may have been impacted by the social identity exuded by, and constructed for, the researcher while in the field – rather than claiming to have captured a 'fly on the wall', or indeed 'full insider', perspective which is untainted by the researcher's characteristics, interests, and unconscious choices (Brewer, 2000; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Wolcott, 2008).

4.2.2 Evaluating Ethnography within a Subtle Realist Paradigm

Golden-Biddle and Locke (1993:599) scrutinised these challenges and detailed the strategies that researchers employ to navigate them when they set out to understand how ethnographic texts overcome their apparent incompatibility with “normal science” to convey “the assurance of conviction based in authenticity, rather than on the assurance of certainty based in an absolute truth”. Strong ethnographic research, they posit, demonstrates “authenticity ... [convincing] readers that the researcher was there, and was genuine to the experience in writing up the account”; “plausibility ... addressed by the question, ... ‘[d]oes this story make sense to me as a reader ... given where I am coming from?’”; and “criticality ... [meaning] the ability of the text to actively probe readers to reconsider their taken-for-granted ideas and beliefs” (Golden-Biddle and Locke, 1993:599-600). Pairing these attributes with the inductive logic that typically underlies ethnography (Hammersley, 1990), a case can be made that simply “being there” (Golden-Biddle and Locke, 1993; Ó Riain, 2009) – a distinguishing but often taken-for-granted feature of ethnography – unlocks unique empirical and theoretical possibilities; I close this section by outlining three such possibilities.

The inherent value of simply being there is manifest in three crucial ways. First, it enables the researcher to develop an awareness, through multi-sensory engagement with a place, community, or phenomenon, of locally constructed meanings and norms (Gephart, 2004), which are a core part of the composition of reality (or realities) in all interpretivist paradigms. Second, to quote Johns (2001: 31): “I share with Daft (1983, p.543) the observation that ‘it becomes painfully clear that many authors have never witnessed or seen the phenomena about which they write.’ Ipso facto, this obviates any grasp of contextual effects.” As I will come to see in greater detail later, ethnography is highly suited to the study of context, “focused more on ‘how’ and ‘why’ than on ‘how much’ or how many” (van Maanen, 2011:219; see also Bamberger, 2006; Johannisson, 2011).

Thirdly, and without seeking to contradict the previous point, prior work has established how “being there” can sometimes be a very useful means to determine “how many”. Particularly in circumstances where the researcher is an outsider, suspicion, hubris, or a simple misunderstanding of instructions may lead informants to under- or over-report basic quantitative data; in such instances, the opportunities for corroboration, or triangulation, conferred by “being there” can prove crucial (Jick, 1979; Seale, 1999). This has been quite clearly evident in prior studies where empirical data – particularly concerning financial information – has been sought from impoverished populations which are unaccustomed to providing such information for academic purposes. Honig (1998:382) noted that, for his study of microentrepreneurs in Jamaica, the on-site execution of surveys enabled him to triangulate survey data with “evidence of income ... in the form of tools, machinery, and other inventoried fixed assets” and that “respondents were asked

questions regarding their private or business ownership of significant items, such as cars and video recorders, and this information was used to assess the possibility of gross income discrepancies or erroneous reporting.” In an even more illustrative case, Collins, et al. (2009:208) report that the “financial diaries” which were kept by their participants, and which underpinned their three-country study of financial practices among the poor, were not considered accurate until an average of *six* meetings had taken place between researchers and participants. Although the present study is more qualitative in its orientation than either of those mentioned above, the qualitative data which it draws from is permeated with information which is expressed in quantitative terms (like income, age, and number of people involved in the business), with one frequently employed as a reference point for the other. Thus, while the interpretivist paradigm largely eschews notions of validity and reliability (Gephart, 2004), it still supposes degrees of accuracy with which the social world can be represented (Hammersley, 1990). Ethnography differs from most other methodological approaches, including the majority of qualitative approaches, by stipulating that the researcher “be there” (and remain there for a meaningful period of time); as such, it enables and values near-constant triangulation as a means to confer authenticity on ethnographic description.

4.3 What is Ethnography?

In this section, I traverse the subtle distinction between ‘methodology’ and ‘method’ as I move towards a more focused understanding of ethnography as a set of procedures and activities undertaken to collect data (‘method’), rather than, as has been the objective of previous sections, to establish a place for ethnography within a broader philosophical stance (‘methodology’) (Brewer, 2000:27-28).

Efforts to define ethnography have yielded highly discrepant outcomes, reflecting the cross-disciplinary proliferation of the method and the consequent ambiguity of its objectives and scope. For present purposes, namely to understand ethnography as a practical enterprise, rather than as a paradigmatic construct, I identify, from a sizable array of definitions, three defining qualities of ethnography that might be linked or stitched together to form a working understanding of the method:

- (i) “Ethnography is the study of people *in naturally occurring settings* or ‘fields’ by means of methods which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities” (Brewer, 2000:10, emphasis added).

(ii) Ethnography “involves the ethnographer ... participating in people’s daily lives *for an extended period of time*, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions – in fact, *collecting whatever data are available* to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:1, emphasis added).

(iii) “Ethnographers should document *the native’s point of view*” (Jacobs, 1987, emphasis added), or, to borrow her reference to Malinowski, “*his vision of his world*”.¹⁰

From these definitions we can infer that, on a universal basis, ethnography involves direct and prolonged immersion in a real-world research setting, in which the researcher deploys a broad range of complementary qualitative methods to understand and faithfully depict some phenomena or aspect of a people’s lives.

4.3.1 Demystifying Fieldwork

Fieldwork is broadly seen as the characteristic which most clearly delineates ethnography from other popular qualitative methodologies (Delamont, 2004:218). However, to non-practitioners of ethnography fieldwork can seem a vague concept, predicated as it is on “methods that ... are unstructured, flexible, and open-ended” (Burgess, 1982:15). To bring clarity, I will outline three core activities of ethnographic fieldwork (Johnstone, 2008) which were of central relevance in the execution of the present study, namely, interviews and focus groups, participant observation, and diary-keeping, and provide an overview account of how they were utilised in the field.

¹⁰ Bronisław Malinowski (1884-1942) is a seminal figure in ethnography, and almost 100 years after the original publication of his best-known work (conducted in Papua New Guinea during WWI and published in 1922), his ideas remain highly influential. Some of those ideas, however, were regarded as idealistic in light of the postmodern turn. The notion that ethnographers could and should study a social group “in all its aspects” (Wolcott, 2008:26), for example, was largely discarded in favour of an acceptance that researchers have neither the time nor the sensory capacity to capture everything, and therefore “partial and incomplete are the marching orders of the day” (Wolcott, 2008:5). Similarly, in relation to ‘the native’s point of view’, postmodern and other antirealist positions contest the notion of a monolithic, ‘insider’ perspective (Wolcott, 2008:5). Consonant with the subtle realist’s view, this study works from the understanding that, indeed, there is no singular, native perspective, but that it is possible (and important) to describe phenomena in ways which are sensitive to multiple, co-existing perspectives. Accordingly, the use of the term “emic” (which is used to mean a native or insider point of view, and which is antonymous to “etic”, or outsider – see Section 1.4: Positionality) throughout this thesis is not intended to imply a consensus position among participants, but simply that care was taken to privilege the meanings that informants attached to phenomena, rather than imposing the meaning of abstract, Western-grounded theory or ideology.

4.3.2 Interviews, Casual Conversations, and Focus Groups

Wolcott's (2008:54-55) interview typology, which divides interviews into eight separate types, helps illustrate that the place of interviews in ethnographic research, although fundamental, is more complex than in other qualitative methodologies. It has been noted that ethnographers rely heavily on more casual and unstructured interview forms, enabling them to pursue "thick description, nuance, and meaning rather than numerical data" (Johnstone, 2011: 110). Although ethnographers usually enter interviews with a pre-conceived topical agenda, it is rare for them to decide beforehand the exact questions they want to ask, and they "do not ask each interviewee the same questions" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:152). Burgess (1984:102) refers to such interactions as "conversations with a purpose", and for Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) their most distinguishing feature – in-line with the always-introspective quality of the subtle realist paradigm – is their reflexivity. Interviewers must be aware that they are not only eliciting data, they are also projecting themselves onto the data through the media of the conversation and the interviewee (Kvale, 1988).

(i) Casual Conversations

In my case, this issue was typically manifest as casual conversations with informants that veered only occasionally, and sometimes not at all, towards topics that were of clear relevance to this research. In the vast amount of cases, conversations pertaining to entrepreneurship or related issues were preceded by lengthy preambles about current affairs, sport, the weather, music, or my personal and home life; in fact, I more often found myself playing interviewee than interviewer during such interactions, as local interlocutors sated their curiosity about me and my research. Despite consuming a substantial amount of time, I considered these interactions to serve two vital purposes, which I explain in depth below.

I) Using Interviews and Conversations to preserve a broad understanding of relevance. Casual conversations provided an opportunity to gently and subtly probe subjects which may have been too sensitive to probe directly, or subjects whose relevance to the core interests of this research may, to me as an outsider, have been obscure, but to informants was much more apparent. To capture both of these possibilities by a single example, one wide-ranging conversation with four local women began with them making some inquiries into my life at home, including my family life and marital status, before turning to marital customs in Ireland and, subsequently, how those marital customs differed from those in Kenya. They asked whether men in Ireland customarily beat their wives, and expressed surprise when I told them such practices were widely condemned.

When I asked them how this compared with local custom, one of the women replied (in a notably jovial fashion which drew vocal agreement from the other women present): “Our husbands beat us, sometimes they cut [us]. If they come home and the food isn’t ready they can just [makes a slapping motion].”

Pursuing this kind of insight through direct insight is likely to have appeared intrusive, arouse suspicion, and probably led to much more limited disclosure (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:90). Furthermore, it is likely that when formulating a list of topics to cover during the interaction, domestic violence would not have featured because, apart from its sensitive nature, it would ordinarily be deemed to exist outside the scope of an entrepreneurship study. However, on a subsequent visit the subject was raised again, and one of the women articulated a link between entrepreneurship and domestic violence that an outsider may fail to even consider searching for: “It is not good that you wait every day in the house, you go and look for [money] yourself. That’s why they usually slap you. You are just sitting there waiting for him to bring [money] to you.” In many cases, these influences would lead women to establish small businesses; as already noted, the possibility of cultivating an awareness of influences like this is preserved only through engaging in softly structured interviews and purposeful but ostensibly casual conversations, which are at least partially led by the informant.¹¹

II) Using Interviews and Conversations to Cultivate Researcher-Informant Trust. In the example given above, I describe a situation where a casual, wide-ranging conversation led to an informative disclosure to which relevance – in the context of a study of entrepreneurship – could reasonably be ascribed. Although this was not a one-time occurrence, neither was it normal: in the great majority of cases, where the direction of conversation was allowed to meander and role allocation (interviewer/interviewee) was ambiguous or fluid, such relevant and incisive data did not ensue.

Nevertheless, these interactions constituted “conversations with a purpose” (Burgess, 1984:102) in equal measure to the topical, agenda-driven conversation that yielded most of the verbatim quotes which appear in subsequent chapters of this thesis. Rather than serving the purpose of eliciting the kind of vital data upon which theoretical claims could be made, however, these conversations served the more foundational purpose of building trust and rapport. Reflecting the participatory – even collaborative (Bocagni, 2011) – nature of ethnography, cultivation of good

¹¹ For this reason, ethnographers sometimes prefer the label of ‘participant’ over ‘informant’, in recognition that the part they play in the creation of knowledge is active and not passive. While acknowledging and largely concurring with this perspective, I use the terms ‘informant’, ‘participant’, and ‘research participant’ interchangeably throughout this thesis.

field relations is viewed as a universal prerequisite for the solicitation of good data, and the cultivation of trust is seen as “the traditional magic key to building good field relations” (Ryen, 2004:234) hence, the significant portion of my time which was spent in informal conversation with informants, being introduced to their friends and family, or visiting their homes, hang-outs, or places of worship, is not time which I believe was wasted. Apart from providing a window of insight into aspects of my informants’ lives which more structured interactions could not (see Section 4.3.3 on Transgressing Boundaries), these occasions allowed informants to grow accustomed to my presence, free of the contrived etiquette associated with a formal interview (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995).

As well as considerations of trust, I was aware that long periods of time spent answering business-related questions was cognitively demanding for my informants, as it often called for them to recollect, reflect, or speculate in ways that required all of their attention. To make such demands of my informants – particularly those who I visited every day – would have been unethical and, in the long-term, counter-productive. Most research interactions took place at informants’ place of business during working hours, and to continuously distract informants from their professional duties with probing questions about their livelihoods would have been significantly disruptive, and is likely to have caused many, or all, participants to withdraw from the research before it was completed. Moreover, by easing the cognitive demands on me as a researcher, I could observe my informants’ natural patterns of behaviour much more attentively, something I will explore in more depth in the upcoming section on participant observation.

(ii) Semi-Structured and Formal Interviews, Joint Interviews, and Focus Groups

Since the casual interactions of the type described above were taking place almost constantly in the field, it was not feasible to record them all verbatim, either by means of electronic recording device (a Dictaphone) or by writing down what was being said, as it was being said. Most of the verbatim quotes that appear in the later chapters of this thesis are instead drawn from semi-structured interviews which were recorded and transcribed in full. The topics covered in these interviews were pre-determined and often stemmed – like in the earlier example – from issues which arose during prior, more casual conversations. These semi-structured interviews therefore represented a valuable opportunity to explore in more depth the empirical themes which seemed important or recurrent in routine observations and interactions in the field. In addition, by providing a platform for me to articulate my own emerging impressions of the research context, they served as a critical gateway in the continuous, in-field cycling between data collection and analysis (Wolcott, 2008; Johnstone, 2008). At its most basic, they enabled concrete facts relating

to informants and their businesses to be validated whenever necessary, but in many cases it also helped to refine, redirect, or infuse added depth to, abstract and embryonic ideas that were forming as data collection progressed.

For a number of reasons, I was selective in my deployment of these semi-structured, electronically-recorded interviews. As alluded to earlier, they imposed significant demands on the attention of my informants, and to overuse them would have been unethical and harmful to my relationship with informants. Secondly, the electronic recorder was often highly conspicuous when it was in use, and even if it was not laid in a prominent place, some informants, or even their customers or passers-by, would pass comment on it or pick it up and examine it (albeit with curiosity more than suspicion). Aware that it sometimes interfered with the dynamic of the conversation (Flick, 2009:295), I opted to use it sparingly, and to prepare as thoroughly as possible for those interviews where it would be used to maximise its value. Thirdly, it was helpful to maintain a time period between these semi-structured interviews, in which fresh insights could emerge and be observed. Most often, these observations, relating not only to informants and their businesses but to various other facets of the community at large, formed the thematic basis for the semi-structured interviews. However, in order to fully capture the changes unfolding in the circumstances, entrepreneurial processes, or discourse of informants during the fieldwork periods, comprehensive, semi-structured interviews were conducted and recorded at more than one time-point. Three exceptions to this are noted: informants that became involved towards the end of the fieldwork period, some members of Collective 1 (see Table 5b in Section 4.5.5), and the members of the development community that I interviewed, from whom I sought background insight regarding the slum and the development sector's presence there. In these cases, at least one semi-structured interview was conducted, and this was supplemented by varying amounts of more casual conversations from which supporting insights were also gleaned. For all other informants, between two and four semi-structured interviews, interspersed with regular casual conversation and informal interviews, were conducted and recorded electronically.

On occasion, focus groups and joint interviews were also conducted in the field. These techniques served as a useful complement to conventional, individual interviews by 'shrinking' my role from that of interviewer to that of facilitator, and allowing instead for conversation to be driven by prompts and exchanges among focus group participants (Wilkinson, 2016). As focus groups were typically conducted among groups of friends – their most notable use involved members of the two entrepreneurial collectives – lively conversations tended to be generated quickly and organically, leading to in-depth discussions of social issues like crime, poverty, corruption, and discrimination. The familiarity of focus group participants with each other, and the fact that, in many cases, they actually engaged in entrepreneurship together, also made them a very useful means to verify what had been said to me in individual interviews; if, for example, one member

of either of the entrepreneurial collectives claimed, in an individual interview, a disproportionate share of credit for the collective's success, this claim could easily be put to the test in a focus group setting, where it could be contested or verified by the claimant's peers.

Conversely, focus groups alone, especially those conducted with the collectives, did not yield sufficient depth of insight, as discussions therein usually accentuated the positive aspects of close social and economic affiliation with these loosely structured peer-based groups. The intimate confidentiality of individual interviews was an essential complement to these open discussions, enabling individuals to speak in a more critical, or at least balanced, way about the difficulties associated with collective entrepreneurship. In this light, focus groups can be seen as part of the broad repertoire of qualitative methods that ethnography can draw from to provide a holistic, contextual, and emic account of empirical phenomena (Barley, 1996; Mitchell, 2007); however, they do so largely by lending added richness and meaning to data gathered by other means, rather than producing those qualities endogenously (Morgan, 1997; Agar and MacDonald, 1995).

As well as utilising groups already participating in entrepreneurial activities such as the collectives, multiple focus groups were carried out with prospective entrepreneurs that were undertaking a vocational training course offered by a developmental organisation based locally. All of these participants lived in the research community and, because theirs were business ventures that had yet to be actualised, they had a strong working knowledge of the challenges encountered by prospective entrepreneurs in the research context.

4.3.3 Participant Observation

Participant observation is widely perceived to be a key component of ethnographic fieldwork, and a characteristic which distinguishes the methodology from other, more detached, qualitative approaches (Brewer, 2000; Watson and Till, 2010). However, as Wolcott (2008:46) emphasises, participant observation is, in itself, a vague and quite useless term,¹² and its ambiguity is a primary reason why ethnography is frequently misunderstood or regarded with scepticism.

Additionally, as Delamont (2004:218, emphasis in original) acknowledges, it can also be misleading: "The term '*participant*' observation does not usually mean real participation: researchers do not usually catch fish, teach classes or dig coal, rather they watch these things being done and 'help' occasionally ... So '*participant*' does not mean doing what those being observed do, but interacting with them while *they* do it." Translating these ideas into practice, two

¹² I stress here that Wolcott is talking about the *term* 'participant observation' and not the *practice* of participant observation when he describes it as being useless.

things are evident: first, the distinction between participant observation and informal interviews is a hazy one (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995), especially in the context of the present study where both observations and interviews typically took place at the informants' place of business; and, second, participant observation can be interpreted broadly, and its value can be gauged only once it is clarified how exactly it was deployed and what kind of insight it unearthed. The remainder of this section will address these issues as they relate to the present study.

(i) Participant Observation and Informal Interviews

Many of the issues which were explored in depth in the earlier section on informal interviews, such as positionality and the amount of time devoted to the cultivation of trust and rapport are common to both informal interviews and to participant observation; since Section 4.3.2 covers these issues, I will simply acknowledge their continued relevance rather than repeat them.

In practice, informal interviewing and participant observation rarely occurred exclusively of each other. Informal interviews tended to happen while informants were performing menial tasks or interacting with customers (behaviours which were simultaneously being observed), and likewise, part of the process of observation included questioning (e.g., “where did you learn to use the equipment you’re using?” or “is it normal for you to have this many customers?”); therefore what began as a participant observation exercise could quickly come to resemble an informal interview. In fact, this issue encapsulates neatly the opportunistic and often serendipitous nature of ethnographic research, highlighting the need for the researcher to be alert and flexible in approach (Spradley, 1980). For the purpose of tracking my research activity and the nature of my interaction with participants, I recognised an arbitrary and quite loose distinction between informal interviews and participant observation based on:

- The length of time the interaction took, and what my informant was doing during the interaction – if my informant was occupied with a task or concentrating primarily on interacting with others and not me, it would most likely be classified as participant observation; if I was largely granted my informant’s attention, such that we were sitting beside each other and could converse with little interruption, for example, it would be classified as an informal interview.
- The topic of conversation – as noted above, participant observation rarely took place in silence, and if the conversation revolved largely around the tasks being undertaken by my informant at that time, the interaction would be classified as participant observation. At the other extreme, if the conversation amounted to little more than idle chat – about my life at home, sport, or the weather, for example – this also suggests participant

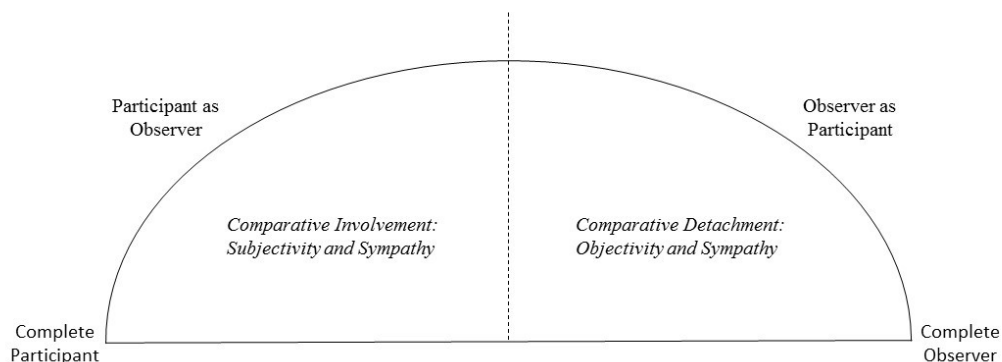
observation, since the ‘data’ clearly resides in what is being seen rather than what is being said and heard. If the topic of conversation centred on an aspect of their business other than the task at hand, the interaction would be designated an informal interview.

According to these classifications, 102 ‘informal interviews’ and 53 (separate) instances of participant observation took place during fieldwork.¹³

(ii) Clarifying the Nature and Outcomes of Participant Observation

Owing to the many forms that participant observation can take, it might be more usefully conceived as a spectrum rather than a monolithic technique (Wolcott, 2008). With the aid of Junker’s (1960:36) rudimentary typology of participant observation (Figure 2, below), I will attempt to clarify, with examples, the nature of my participation in the day-to-day activities of informants. It is important to note that a researcher’s position on this spectrum may differ across participants and even across interactions with the same participant.

Figure 2: Participant-Observation as a Spectrum of involvement, adapted from Junker (1960:68)



By way of summary, ‘complete participant’ and ‘participant as observer’ usually imply that the researcher is either an insider vis-à-vis the population s/he is studying, or has sufficient knowledge of, or competency in, the day-to-day routines of his/her informants that s/he can largely blend in.

¹³ In the above figures I have only counted those instances where insight which was of discernible relevance to this research was obtained, either through observation or conversation. The total number of interactions with research participants and with other members of the community is an unknown multiple of the sum of these two numbers. I have reported only those instances in which topic-relevant data was sought or obtained because: (i) in the normal course of fieldwork, interactions were so frequent, and sometimes so fleeting, that it was impossible to record them all, and (ii) I believe it is worth attempting to make a distinction between those interactions which actually yielded data (which were the minority) and those which amounted largely to a trust-building exercise (the majority), even if this distinction is sometimes ambiguous.

In cases of covert research, complete participation can be used as a tool for secrecy: Holdaway's (1983) study of the British police service, in which he was a serving officer, is a widely-cited example of this approach. At the other end of the spectrum sits the complete observer, which is a category to which much of my field activity conformed. Complete observation is sometimes associated with the metaphorical (or actual, e.g. Corsaro, 1981) 'one-way mirror', where the researcher "has no contact at all with those he or she is observing" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:107). My working interpretation of this observational style is slightly less restrictive, in that it does permit interaction between the researcher and informant, for example the researcher asking specific 'how', 'why', or 'what' questions about the tasks currently being undertaken by the informant; it does retain the implication, however, that the researcher is only observing those tasks, and that s/he is not actually participating. Recognising again the clear similarities in both the nature and the outcomes of these interactions to informal interviews (which are covered in depth across Section 4.3.2), I will focus instead on the more distinctive category of 'observer as participant'.

Implied by the label 'observer as participant' is an acceptance on the part of insiders that the researcher is, to a meaningful extent, unfamiliar with their society or a particular part of it, and is openly participating in day-to-day activities within that society in order to deepen his/her understanding of "what is going on [t]here?" (Wolcott, 2008:74). Below, I summarise three ways in which participating in this way yielded insights which interviews alone, or interviews coupled with complete observation, could not.

1) Allowing me to transgress boundaries. An important consideration in both interviews and observation is that the socio-spatial setting of the interaction can make informants feel constrained, consciously or subconsciously, as to what they can say and how they can behave (Rapley, 2004:18). Engaging with informants in a variety of different settings is an effective way to overcome this problem (Wolcott, 2008), but the feasibility of this hinges on two things: first, there must be more than one research interaction, and second, there must be sufficient rapport between the researcher and the informant such that the informant is comfortable in the presence of the researcher, and vice-versa, in different kinds of socio-spatial settings. Ethnography, as previous sections have explained, satisfies both of these criteria; in this study, as a result, several research interactions took place outside of the orthodox setting of informants' business premises.

I visited many of my informants' homes, for example, which often gave me the opportunity to meet their families and to explore what role, if any, they played in the formation or management of the business. Similarly, simply taking a long walk around the community with an informant often yielded surprising depth of insight into their background and their interpersonal relationships, as encounters with people or places would draw comments or anecdotes (see

Viswanathan, et al., 2016). On two specific occasions, I accompanied informants to Gikomba, a labyrinthine, open-air clothes and fabrics market in central Nairobi. Including travel time, time spent at the market, and ‘debriefing’ interviews upon our return to the informant’s place of business, each of these research interactions lasted around six hours, and each one added significant depth to my understanding of the logic and sustainability of each informant’s business model. I could see, for example, the range of products they had to choose from, the limited bargaining power that they had, and the variety of costs that had to be met, including the purchase price of the goods, transportation costs, and – when those goods came in the form of *mutumbas*¹⁴ – the cost of having them altered and ironed so that they would look and feel less worn, and therefore be more desirable to customers. The more subtle value of these interactions lay in their illustration of how these businesses fitted into the lives of their founders and what their founders derived from them over and above the frequently meagre profits they yielded.

II) Building tacit knowledge by blending in. As noted earlier, the conspicuousness of my presence was ineradicable, but taking an active part in ongoing activities, whenever possible and however fleetingly, did allow me to at least straddle the boundary between ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ (Burgess, 1982). Such participation took on various forms. On visits to a small-scale jewellery maker, for example, I would sometimes be invited to lend a hand by flattening out undulating pieces of metal with a small plastic mallet, or smoothing the rough edges of a crescent-shaped, semi-completed earring. Meanwhile, my engagement with members of Collective 1 (see Section 4.6.5) frequently took place around an outdoor pool table, where they would gather on days when they could not work because of power outages, there was no demand for their services, or because it was the turn of someone else in the group to work. To stimulate conversation with and among the group, I would sometimes put a 20 shilling (20c) coin in the pool table and play a game with two or three of them at once. Participating in this way, like I did whilst filing down metal cut-outs for the jeweller, enabled me – paradoxically – to lessen my own ‘visibility’ by directly involving myself in the activities of my informants. In this respect, I was able to reposition my role in the field by using “‘normal’ social intercourse” (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:89) to moderate my “ascribed characteristics”, meaning those traits that I have no power to change, like my race and educational background, and which, in this setting, were somewhat glaring.

¹⁴ *Mutumba*, the Swahili word for second-hand, is typically used to mean worn clothes which are donated by American or European charities such as St Vincent de Paul. Places like Gikomba, which is the largest open-air clothes market in East Africa, represent a kind of secondary market for these clothes. Large ‘bales’ of clothing items (one bale may contain one hundred t-shirts, for example) are procured at a low cost by traders who sell them in smaller parcels to hawkers and other low-level traders, who in-turn sell them, plus a small margin, to the end-customer.

Establishing this “working identity” (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:87) meant that the social disruption engendered by my presence could be minimised, allowing routine social interaction between informants and others in the community – customers, employees, friends, and family – to continue as normal. This stands in marked contrast to the socially contrived nature of an interview, and facilitates the assimilation of the kind of tacit knowledge which is essential to emic description (Wolcott, 2008).

III) Normalising my presence in the community. Because of the importance which this study places on context, a good deal of insight needed to be drawn from the ‘spaces between informants’ as well as from informants themselves. In these spaces lay schools, developmental organisations, churches, legal and political entities, large businesses, and many more of society’s artefacts which together helped to shape the social and institutional landscape for entrepreneurship. To understand entrepreneurship in the context of these social structures required not only that I seek out entrepreneurs’ perspectives towards them, it also required that, to the greatest extent possible, and again, with an awareness of divergent views, I explore how those that inhabit these organisations perceive entrepreneurship. Bearing in mind that most of these organisations, even those concerned with development, are overwhelmingly populated by locals, gaining access to them largely rested on becoming an active participant in the community.

Helping out at a local primary school was my initial access point. Rather by accident – I first worked at this school four years before I began to do research in the community – this simple association also lent immediate and widespread legitimacy to my presence, because the notion of an outsider visiting in a philanthropic capacity is normalised to a much greater degree than the notion of an outsider visiting to conduct research. Relatedly, playing football matches for a local team enabled me to connect – in the most visible of ways, since the matches were attended by a couple of hundred people – with locals in a jovial and equitable setting (Parker, 1974). These matches allowed me to trade on my personal abilities to narrow the perceived social distance between members of the study community and I (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:87), but this was not achieved only by demonstrating that I shared some of their interests; these matches also served to illustrate my human fallibility, which sometimes seemed to defy local expectations. It was often assumed that, as a European with an active interest in soccer, it would have been relatively easy for me to gain entry to an elite soccer academy, and when my performances gave lie to this assumption and my absent superiority was exposed, the notion that my personal opportunity set entailed such kinds of privilege was eroded. In the process of ‘normalising’ my presence in the study community, taking part in community events like football matches and musical performances, or even by eating in some of the ramshackle eateries in the slum, I could

simultaneously cultivate proximity to this community and distance myself from the ‘university class’ and, even more importantly, from the mysterious, occasional foreign visitors that engaged with the community from the cloistered position of oasis-like development projects.

Such forms of participation, in addition to providing rites of passage to various domains of society, yielded interesting data in their own right. I was able to draw useful insights regarding the entrepreneurial environment from a group of vocational trainees whose programme I was helping to deliver, for example. More directly, some members of the community remarked to me that the football team which I played for, which ostensibly represented the community, was governed by a tight-knit group of local elites, and that the opportunity to take part hinged more on an individual’s ability to pay a bribe than on their sporting ability. Indeed, such exclusivity was perceived to play out across several facets of society, including the jobs market – both public and private sector – and, on a more restricted basis, the developmental sector and education system. Its link to the career choices, and career options, of a large section of the community’s population of entrepreneurs, was frequently noted.

As Miles and Huberman (1994:34) advise: “it is also important to work a bit at the peripheries – to talk with people who are not central to the phenomena but are neighbours to it”; in the course of fieldwork, I was able to explore entrepreneurship, and many of the facets of society which impact it, from the alternative perspective of multiple community stakeholders, including: students in secondary education (by teaching in a local school); prospective business owners taking part in vocational training (by assisting in the delivery of their course); church leaders (by speaking to their congregation); casual and formal workers in local light-industry firms; teachers and school administrators; police personnel; aspiring politicians; community health and child protection officers; developmental experts; and business leaders that employ members of the slum community but who do not themselves live there. Although, for practical and ethical reasons, most of these myriad contributions are not relayed verbatim in the later sections of this paper, they represent an important empirical resource in this study, specifically by lending context to entrepreneurs’ statements relating to matters like alternative employment opportunities, crime, and marginalisation. By choosing not to limit this study to entrepreneurs, and instead exploring the social structures that lie between and behind them, this study is able to draw on multiple, and often opposing, perspectives towards these and other matters.

4.3.4 Fieldnotes and Diary Keeping

Because only a relatively small fraction of fieldwork interactions are recorded electronically, ethnographers rely heavily on fieldnotes and diaries to document their observations and

conversations (Barley, 1996; Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 2001). As well as serving as a contemporaneous account of such interactions, fieldnotes and diary entries also serve as a record of the subjective influences that shape ethnographic representation by elucidating various aspects of the context of interactions, like where and when they took place, the mood of the researcher and the informant, the purpose of the interaction, and so on (Spradley, 1980).

Emerson, et al. (2001:354) note that writing fieldnotes is an evolutionary process which generally precludes stringent conventions and results instead in styles crafted to suit individual researchers or projects. For this study, fieldwork was documented in two separate ways, and examples of both are provided in the appendices (Appendix 1a and 1b).

The primary means of chronicling fieldwork was a detailed field diary (Appendix 1a), which could be added to every day upon returning from the field. The diary recorded all noteworthy interactions, my activities during and between these interactions, general observations, personal reflections, and supplementary insights generated from sources like newspapers or local media. Conscious that “fieldnotes accumulate set-by-set over time into a larger *corpus* ... which will never be incorporated into a finished text” (Emerson, et al., 2001:353), my goal with this diary was to textually reproduce, as exhaustively and as faithfully as was reasonable, my time spent in the field. Since most of the data presented in this thesis comes in the form of verbatim quotes, this faithful representation of field experiences is largely embodied by the presentation of informants’ speech. My field diary was used to document short and memorable passages of direct speech in instances where a Dictaphone was not being used to electronically record a conversation. To ensure the integrity of the data, however, I have drawn direct speech from fieldnotes very sparingly; the vast majority of passages of verbatim speech which are quoted in this thesis are taken from electronic recordings of interviews.

For the first three months of fieldwork (Phase 1), I borrowed, in complement to my field diary, a framework for the recording of data suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994:76). Based on the widely accepted condition that the reductive nature of ethnographic fieldnotes (Emerson, et al., 2001) constituted a preliminary form of analysis, Miles and Huberman’s framework (Appendix 1b) makes room for ideas relating to the formation of concepts and codes as well as for the basic function of recording data.

The framework was helpful in ensuring that the early stages of fieldwork were structured and progressive. In time, as the structure of note-keeping became more intuitive, the framework became increasingly duplicative of the diary. This, coupled with the substantial time demands of fieldwork, made it more practical to incorporate the principal of Miles and Huberman’s framework into the research diary, and for the second phase of fieldwork, all fieldnotes were recorded here.

4.4 Positionality

“A key part of the ethnographic ethic is how we account for ourselves” (Altheide and Johnson, 2011: 591). This means that critical engagement with our data impels us to reflect on how our positionality – ‘who we are’ whilst in the field, and the interrelations which link us to our informants – impacts on how we are perceived, the participants we have access to, and ultimately, the data we gather and the knowledge we claim (Heyl, 2011). In the table, below, I draw from Brewer (2000:132) to provide a critical and reflexive account of how this research, both in its formulation and execution, was influenced by my positionality (see Table 4, below). Since the audience for this research will be predominantly Western, this section also serves as an opportunity to identify and scrutinise particular cultural ideologies that were challenged in the course of this research.

Table 4: An Overview of Key Positionality Considerations as they pertain to the Present Study

Element	Nature	Leading Assumptions	Influence on Research Formulation/Execution	Other Notes
Business School background	Cultural	Entrepreneurship is good, can be a means of escaping/alleviating poverty	Assumption that entrepreneurship can be effective in alleviating poverty was a key motivational factor for the research	Fieldwork challenged the assumption that escape from poverty was necessarily seen as the objective of entrepreneurship, and that entrepreneurs had to exhibit constant creativity in order to survive; instead, the importance of routine and stability was much more apparent
Donor-Country vantage point	Cultural	Entrepreneurship-support facilities such as microfinance have proliferated to such an extent that they widely accessible in deeply impoverished contexts such as Mukuru	It was expected that a substantial proportion of entrepreneurs in the study community would have some association with the development community, possibly enabling the study to include a comparative component	Although the development community had a reasonably strong presence, its core focus was in areas such as education and health; some organisations did provide assistance to entrepreneurs (finance or training), but as a proportion of the community's population of entrepreneurs this group was miniscule
Pursuing an 'emic' (insider) perspective	Perspectival	The assumption that there is a monolithic or unitary 'insider view' was not carried into fieldwork; nonetheless, the diverse array of perspectives and processes with which people approached entrepreneurship was somewhat surprising	The importance of qualifying claims of emicism with the caveat that no singular approach to entrepreneurship exists, even in an apparently homogenous context, became increasingly evident	Wolcott (2008:147) calls this "the ultimate conceit of fieldwork" and introduces the concept of "soft-eticism" as a substitute for emicism.
(In)ability to help informants	Perspectival	N/a	During fieldwork, I was variously perceived as a developmental professional, employment provider, business expert, advocate for the community, and Santa Claus figure. Occasionally, prospective informants were passed over if it appeared their expectations regarding my presence were out of sync with the reality of it.	Resources designed to clarify my purpose, such as Informed Consent forms and Plain Language Statements were of limited use, and it was only with the passage of time and repeated explanation that these ambiguities were cleared.
My choice to conduct this research in an immersive way, which involved me walking around the community, eating there, interacting with locals, etc., almost always unescorted	Methodological	N/a	Almost all informants remarked that they appreciated the fact that I had approached this study in this way. One informant drew a comparison between this approach and that employed by another (Kenyan) researcher, who knocked on his door, proceeded to ask him a series of questions, then left. My informants noted that the answers he gave to this researcher's questions were not guided by fact, but by how quickly he could get the researcher to go away.	N/a

Table 4 (continued): An overview of key positionality considerations as they pertain to the present study.

Element	Nature	Leading Assumptions	Influence on Research Formulation/Execution	Other Notes
Being an outsider to the research setting (white, educated, relatively wealthy)	Individual	That my status as outsider may make informants reluctant to divulge important or personal information	Local informants, for the most part, exhibited a remarkable willingness to discuss sensitive topics, and frequently divulged personal information with little prompt (see Section 4.3.2(i))	Divulging personal information was always a two-way street, and participants routinely questioned me about my own background and circumstances. Topics including my income, marital status/intentions, and how much I paid in rent for my shared apartment in Nairobi, frequently dominated conversations at the expense of entrepreneurship-related topics.
Language	Individual	N/a	English and Swahili are the national languages of Kenya, and most Kenyans speak both (as well as at least one other 'tribal' language) fluently. However, some of the slum's older residents (particularly women) did not speak English well and, because I do not speak Swahili, I could not converse with them.	I experimented with the use of a local translator but found this to be an impediment to the development of rapport and the free flow of conversation which is important in ethnographic interviews. Therefore, my sample is restricted to informants that were able to speak English. Since most interactions between locals were conducted in Swahili and English was not especially useful in the everyday course of business, it is unlikely that this introduced any meaningful bias into my sample.
Gender	Individual	Gender would not impact significantly on participant recruitment	In practice, being male (coupled with being an outsider) made it more of a challenge to recruit female participants. Since participants were mostly retained for the entire duration of fieldwork, the fact that most of my early informants were men means that, even if my sample is approximately balanced, the majority of my actual research interactions were with men.	As it became evident that the gender imbalance in my early-stage sample was systematic, I sought the help of a female friend that lived locally. By accompanying me on visits to the research community, she gave local women who were perhaps reticent to speak directly to me the opportunity to find out about who I was and what I was doing by speaking to her instead. This directly facilitated the recruitment of two of my female informants.
Developmental experience in the community (in 2012, and during fieldwork for this study, I provided assistance at two local schools)	Individual	My prior contacts could be leveraged to help identify and recruit participants in the early stages of fieldwork	My relationship with local organisations in fact proved of limited use in identifying participants; however, it did provide me with a large measure of legitimacy, since I was not only a researcher (which was an unfamiliar role for many of my participants), I was also a volunteer (which was a much more familiar role, particularly for an outsider).	Assisting at these two schools also served as an avenue for me to 'give back', in which benefits were not being concentrated on the small number of people that I was studying (which would have been ethically sensitive), but were more broadly spread.

4.5 Research Setting and Sample

“First Ethnographer: Where are you going to do your fieldwork?”

Second Ethnographer: I don’t know yet.

First Ethnographer: What are you going to study?”

Second Ethnographer: That depends on where I go” (Wolcott, 2008:15)

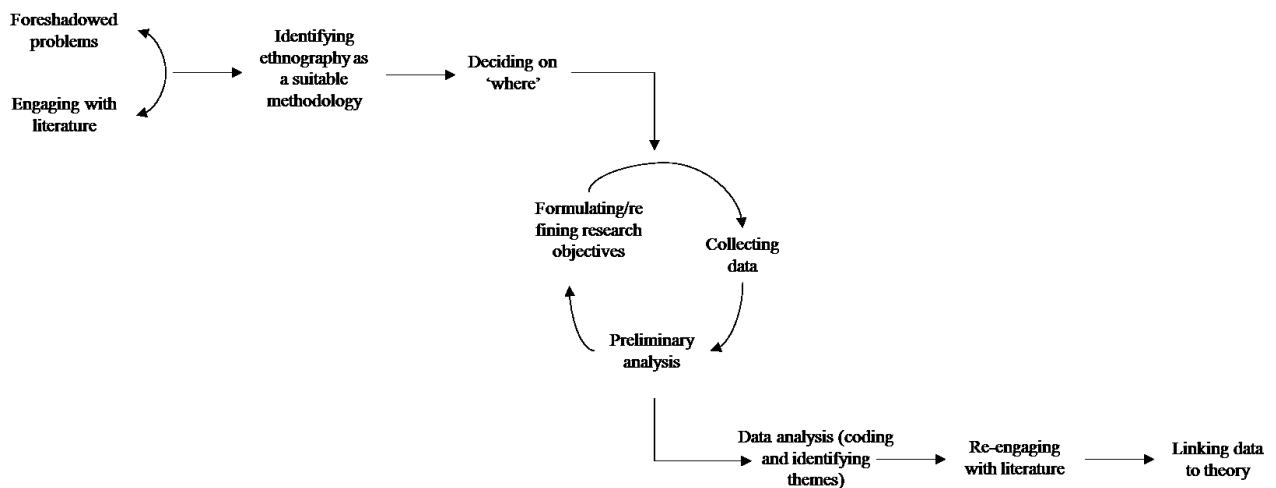
In this section I outline how the research setting was chosen based on both practical and theoretical considerations, and how the study’s sample was assembled.

4.5.1 Foreshadowed Problems

The concept of “foreshadowed problems” originates in early anthropology (Malinowski, 1922), and can be explained in relation to the ideal sequencing of the orthodox steps involved in executing an empirical research study, namely: identifying a problem that may motivate a research study, engaging with extant literature on that problem, formulating a clear research question or set of research objectives, choosing an appropriate methodology to tackle the question, and implementing the methodology to collect data. Indeed, most studies, especially those of a positivist and/or deductive orientation, conform to this sequence. Ethnographic studies, as well as studies conducted using comparable qualitative methods like Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), often chart a different sequence, where data collection sometimes commences before a concise research question has been hit upon, or where engaging with theory is postponed until the researcher has completed fieldwork lest “preordained theoretical perspectives or propositions ... bias and limit the findings” (Eisenhardt, 1989: 536).

Figure 3 (below) summarises the methodological sequence of this study. Two particular implications of this sequence are noteworthy: first, I deemed that it was preferable to engage with extant literature before entering the field, which distanced this research from classic Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) at an early stage, and second, the inductive underpinnings of this study apply not only to its findings but also to its precise research objectives, which were developed through first-hand observation in the field rather than as a means to test or extend any single pre-identified theory.

Figure 3: Research Sequence



Crucial to the success of this approach is the selection of a research setting in which manifestations of foreshadowed problems can be examined up-close, until they can be refined “into a set of questions to which answers can be given” (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:29), or into clear and concise research objectives. Hence, for ethnographers – who have a long history of studying peripheral regions and populations about which little is known (Wolcott, 2008) – the question of where to locate a study routinely takes precedence over the question of what to study when s/he gets there (Geertz, 1995). Rarely are the key factors in this decision only theoretical: pragmatic matters like contacts and familiarity also have an important role to play (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:36). After providing a high-level overview of the research setting for this study – Mukuru – I will describe how some of these practicalities influenced my decision to locate this study in Mukuru, before proceeding to describe why Mukuru constituted an appropriate theoretical choice in light of the foreshadowed problems outlined earlier.

4.5.2 Mukuru

Mukuru is an informal settlement situated eight kilometres south-east of Nairobi’s Central Business District. Reflecting the practical challenges and the political implications of enumerating slum populations (Marx, et al., 2013), estimates of the number of residents living in Mukuru show significant variation, with figures of 110,000 (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2010), 250,000 (Agaya and Asunza, 2015), and 500,000 (Wouters, et al., 2015) being cited in various sources.¹⁵ Mukuru is made up of eleven neighbouring villages, which traverse five administrative

¹⁵ Across this thesis I cite the higher figure of 500,000 because it is recent, it is drawn from a credible source (the World Bank Legal Review), and it acknowledges and explicitly disputes the Government Census figure of 110,000. However, I accept that 500,000 cannot be taken as a definitive population measure, and I simply quote it as a ‘best-guess’.

wards, although similar living conditions, service access, and rents prevail across these villages, and they are generally viewed as being part of a singular whole (Agaya and Asunza, 2013; Blanco, Wanyoike, Mwilaria, and Onyango, 2012).

Data collection for this study centred on one of these villages, namely Mukuru kwa Reuben, which takes its name from the colonial settler that farmed the land in the pre- and post-independence period (Kenya became an independent nation in 1963, around the same time as a slew of other Sub-Saharan nations). Reuben later established a transport business on the land, and many of his employees began to settle on it, including a Mzee (or Mister) Njenga, after which a large tract of neighbouring land is now named ('Mukuru kwa Njenga'). In the early years of the settlement, squatting, which was then taking place on a modest scale, was not expressly prohibited. The land had returned to the ownership of the State, and settlement under a "tenancy at will" arrangement, where squatters would occupy the land so long as authorities did not need it for other purposes (Lamba, 2005: 62), was permitted. In the early 1990s, however, the government chose to allocate parcels of land in Mukuru to light industry companies, effectively privatising the ownership of the land and illegalising the slum which had developed on it (Wouters, et al., 2015; UN-Habitat, 2003).

The long-term consequences of this move continue to be felt, often in paradoxical ways. Although just a small portion of the slum was cleared to make way for the development of light industry firms, the threat of widespread clearance has lingered. Public protests against slum clearance have garnered international attention (Economist, 2012) while test cases – supported by international bodies – continue to go before the courts on the grounds that the light industry firms breached the terms of the land allocation by failing to develop premises within two years, and/or that plans to clear settlements did not adhere to international law (Wouters, et al., 2015).¹⁶ Nonetheless, the uncertainty concerning the legal status of the slum has not deterred later waves of incoming labour migrants from making their homes there over the past two decades.

In fact, the decision to redevelop the slum as a centre for light industry has undoubtedly been a major contributing factor to the continued existence and growth of Mukuru, since it now attracts hordes of casual labourers hoping to find employment in the light industry firms that did become established after being granted land in the area (Blanco, et al., 2012). A new national constitution, introduced in 2010, appears to provide an additional measure of protection to slum residents by

¹⁶ These cases have delivered mixed results in terms of securing the residents' claim to the land. *Ayuma and 11 others v The Registered Trustees of the Kenya Railway Staff Retirement Benefits Scheme and 2 others* (2011), for example, which opposed the clearance of particular tracts of Mukuru by the Kenya Railway Corporation on the grounds that it would contravene international law, was upheld. However, *Muungano wa Wanavijiji and 40 others v Attorney General and 17 others* (2014), which sought a *res judicata* judgment affirming that a prior judgment made in favour of the residents of a neighbouring slum also protected the residents of Mukuru kwa Reuben, was dismissed.

stipulating the right of every Kenyan to “accessible and adequate housing” (Constitution of Kenya, 2010). On the other hand, the legalities of land ownership in Mukuru are highly complex. Wouters, et al. (2015: 233), for example, report that “92 percent of all inhabitants are tenants who pay rent to absentee landlords who often own the structures but not the land underneath” and acknowledge how challenging it would be to determine who owns the land were the courts to revoke the deeds allocated to the light industry firms, with the residents, the landlords (who were typically early or well-connected settlers that ‘grabbed’ tracts of land upon which they would build metal houses for rental purposes), and the State all likely to lay claim to it.

In terms of government policy, Mukuru’s status as an ‘illegal’ settlement – which it obtained by virtue of the fact that it is located on lands which were re-designated as privately owned – meant that, for most of its history, it did not benefit from slum upgrading programs in the same way as other slums in Nairobi, like Kibera or Korogocho (Wouters, et al., 2015). However, Mukuru was declared a “Special Planning Area” by Nairobi County Council in 2017, which created special “consortiums” tasked with improving the areas of water, sanitation, and energy; finance; land and institutional arrangements; health services’ education, youth, and culture; environment and natural resources; housing, infrastructure, and commerce; and community organisation, coordination, and communication (Dodman, 2017).¹⁷

4.5.3 Practical Considerations in Choosing Mukuru as a Research Setting

Having spent time in Mukuru previously (see Section 4.4, Positionality), I could approach fieldwork with an extensive experiential knowledge of the physical territory and socioeconomic conditions of the community. The network of contacts that I had established in my earlier capacity of volunteer could be leveraged as a point of access for this research. Moreover, although I wasn’t known widely in the community, the handful of locals that I did know were able and willing to vouch for my overall integrity, meaning that I was keen to see the living conditions of the slum improve and that I did not have any hidden agendas. This provided me with an advantageous starting point, even if, as noted earlier, the cultivation of trust and rapport continued through the entire duration of fieldwork.

Overall, the practical considerations for selecting Mukuru as a research site can be distilled into two easily articulated points. First, it was the only prospective research site which embodied the foreshadowed problems outlined earlier and in which I could arrive and almost immediately begin

¹⁷ This Special Planning Area was announced just before the second phase of fieldwork, meaning that any improvements it might deliver had yet to materialise. For the most part, informants were either unaware of this development or were sceptical that it would be properly implemented.

fieldwork. Alternative locations were considered (particular regions of India and Bangladesh were given consideration primarily because they featured heavily in empirical literature on this topic), but the difficulties of achieving research access ‘from scratch’ represented a potentially insurmountable obstacle to the satisfactory execution of this study. Second, Mukuru *interested* me. The tendency, identified in the preceding section, of ethnographers to fixate on place as much as problem often reflects an implicit conviction that interesting places are home to interesting, research-worthy problems. As Wolcott (2008:30, emphasis in original) writes: “If there is a place, a setting of genuine interest to you, I hope you can find it in a way to get there under circumstances that allow you to identify your focus *in the course of your fieldwork*. That seems preferable to conducting a study in a setting that holds no interest but has lots of suitable problems to address”. In extreme cases, researchers admit that the question of place is so pivotal that it serves as the key determinant in their choice to pursue an ethnographic methodology (Pollard, 1985); in the present study this was not the case, and if Mukuru could not have been justified in theoretical as well as practical terms, I would have selected another location. Nevertheless, the fact that it held a personal interest for me was a factor in its selection, and as such warrants mention here.

4.5.4 Theoretical Considerations in Choosing Mukuru as a Research Setting

(i) *Regional Factors*. Before going into detail on the community of Mukuru itself, I will first provide a brief illustration of the broader geographical context of the study.

Nairobi is the seventh largest city in Sub-Saharan Africa, and epitomises well the accelerating trends of urbanisation and inequality in the region (UN-Habitat, 2015). The city’s population, now just above 4m, is fourteen times larger than it was in 1960, which is actually below the average rate of population growth in Sub-Saharan Africa’s capital cities (22x); the equivalent figure for high-income countries in Europe and North America is just 1.63x (World Bank, 2016a). Looking ahead, these trends show little sign of abating; Sub-Saharan Africa’s urban population is expected to double by 2035 and triple by 2050, while in Western Europe and North America, increases will be of a much more modest magnitude of 10-30% (United Nations, 2014).

In more comprehensible terms, economists have likened the global shift from rural to urban living, in terms of the scale of its social and economic impacts, to the industrial revolution of the 19th Century (de Soto, 2000). Although urban population growth is seen to be a necessary driver for national-level economic growth (Rafei, 2014), the severity of current trends and their disproportionate manifestation in Developing Countries mean that governments and developmental agencies must contend with rampant urban inequality. Again, urban inequality is

most acutely felt in Sub-Saharan Africa. Measured by Gini Coefficient, a standard measure of wealth inequality, only three countries contain cities that are more unequal than Nairobi, and two of those countries (Nigeria and South Africa) are in Sub-Saharan Africa (the other is Brazil).

On the ground, this coincidence of surging urbanisation and inequality finds most tangible expression in sprawling informal settlements, or ‘slums’. The popular definition of a slum, as articulated in a landmark UN-Habitat (2003:12) publication, is of “an area that combines, to various extents, the following characteristics: (i) inadequate access to safe water; (ii) inadequate access to sanitation and other infrastructure; (iii) poor structural quality of housing; (iv) overcrowding; (v) insecure residential status”. Although Nairobi is “an international, regional, national, and local hub for commerce, transport, regional cooperation and economic development”, more than sixty per cent of the city’s population is housed in slum areas (UN-Habitat, 2006:4&5). It has been reported that some of Nairobi’s slum districts have, as an average, 318 households per acre, versus an average of just one household per acre in some of its more affluent districts (Economist, 2012). Such statistics are supported by mapping studies which show that Nairobi’s 200 informal villages,¹⁸ in which almost two-thirds of its population live, cover only 1.62 per cent of the city’s land area (Wouters, et al., 2015). Long-term shortcomings in services and infrastructure provision in these communities have served to deepen the gaping disparities between them and their more affluent neighbours: rates of infant mortality are two-and-a-half times higher in the slums than elsewhere; water, which typically needs to be purchased in modest quantities from informal vendors, is 4-5 times more expensive; and residents are poorly served by sewerage and sanitation infrastructure (Oxfam GB, et al., 2009).

At a broad level, Nairobi was deemed to be a suitable place in which to carry out this research because not only did it *share* many of the contemporary challenges that currently face large swathes of the Developing World, it appeared to *embody* them better than most others. Nairobi, and indeed Kenya at large, has long been seen as a portal to the underlying condition of the wider region. As Wrong (2010:8) writes: “Kenya is one of a handful of African nations which have always possessed a significance out of keeping with their size and population, whose twists and turns are monitored by outsiders for clues as to which direction the continent itself is taking”. No single city, country, or even region represents the entirety of the Developing World in perfect microcosm; the histories, cultures, institutions, and economic trajectories of this disparate ‘block’ are much too diverse for that. however, Sub-Saharan Africa, with the exception of a handful of

¹⁸ The term “slum” or “informal settlement” is frequently used to capture an agglomeration of smaller, informal villages: Mukuru, for example, is technically an agglomeration of twelve villages, while Kibera contains thirteen. It is important, in order to communicate the prevalence of slum communities in Nairobi without inadvertently bloating the figure, to note that the figure of 200 which is given here is intended to capture the number of slum villages, not the number of slum agglomerations, in Nairobi. These villages are clustered to form eighteen agglomerations (Oxfam GB, et al., 2009), of which Mukuru is one.

its nations, is widely perceived to be languishing relative to other developmental regions, and it is where the sharp edge of poverty will be most deeply felt in decades to come (Collier, 2007). Nairobi, currently experiencing sharp rises in poverty and inequality, provides a window of insight to, if not a perfect mirror image of, the difficulties facing the region.

(ii) Poverty and Marginality in Mukuru. In Section 4.5.2 I provided an overview of Mukuru's origins in the late colonial era and of how its re-designation as private lands in the early 1990s has led to prolonged legal uncertainty and contestation. Here, I will pick up the themes of urbanisation and inequality that were discussed in relation to the regional context, and illustrate how they have played out in the more local context of Mukuru across recent years.

It is estimated that, across the world, a minimum of 880 million people currently live in slums, representing one-ninth of the world's population (UN-Habitat, 2016a). Fifty-five per cent of this number live in Sub-Saharan Africa, where unfettered urbanisation is expected to cause the region's slum population to grow by seven million each year (UN-Habitat, 2016a). The aerial photographs of Mukuru which are reproduced below illustrate just how drastically such regional trends can manifest at a local level. Notice the contrast between Image 1a and Image 1b, where over the course of eight years large tracts of wasteland have been subject to intensive development. In subsequent years (spanning images 1b and 1c), development has persisted on increasingly insecure parcels of land; note, for example, how the quarry which is prominent in the top-centre of Image 1b has completely disappeared beneath tightly packed houses, and how development has edged precariously close to the river which bisects the left-hand side of the photos (this is also depicted in Appendices 2a and 2b).

Image 1a: Mukuru kwa Reuben and Mukuru kwa Njenga in 2002 (source: Google Maps)



Image 1b: Mukuru kwa Reuben and Mukuru kwa Njenga in 2010 (source: Google Maps)



Image 1c: Mukuru kwa Reuben and Mukuru kwa Njenga in 2016 (source: Google Maps)



Mukuru's land area, at around 450 acres or 1.85kmsq, paired with the population figures quotes in Section 4.5.2, indicates a population density in the range of 60,000 to 270,000 people per square kilometre (157,000-715,000 people per square mile).¹⁹ Such extreme population densities render the rudimentary services and infrastructure in Mukuru desperately inadequate. Almost all of the area's roads are unpaved and deteriorate drastically during the bi-annual rainy season. Most roads are laced with open drainage channels which, owing to deficient domestic sanitation facilities, are allowed to gather rubbish and human waste, large accumulations of which, combined with chemical runoff from nearby industrial plants, are also found in local rivers and streams (Blanco, et al., 2012; refer also to Appendices 2a-2c for photographic depictions of some of these issues). These problems are exacerbated by Mukuru's mostly flat terrain, which inhibits natural drainage and causes intermittent flooding.

Almost all of Mukuru's houses are constructed from sheets of corrugate metal, mounted on a wooden frame and secured by a concrete floor. Houses are mostly standardised, and consist of a single 10x10ft room which is divided by a hanging sheet or curtain to create a sleeping area, consisting of a bed, and a living area, typically containing some furniture, cooking utensils (usually in the form of a charcoal stove), and household electronics (a TV, computer, or stereo). Electricity supply has long been largely comprehensive in Mukuru (Wouters, et al., 2015), although a recent initiative, projected to cost \$1.4bn and part-financed by the World Bank, has seen the installation of individual usage meters in every household, while simultaneously upgrading external electricity wiring to mitigate the risk of fire (World Bank, 2010, 2017b). As noted earlier, most of Mukuru's residents do not own their own house, and insecurity of tenure is a persistent and complex problem (Wouters, et al., 2015). Rents in Mukuru range from around \$15-20 and eviction for non-payment of rent or to allow for upgraded construction is common, often humiliating to the evictee, and occasionally escalates to fatal disputes (Lamba, 2005; Wouters, et al., 2015).

As the next section will explain, a large portion of Mukuru's population earns a living from informal microenterprises, while the remainder are mostly employed, depending on gender, either in light-industry firms or as domestic servants in middle-class areas nearby (Agaya and Asunza, 2013; Blanco, et al., 2012). Reliable income statistics are scarce, and estimates that around one-third of adult residents live on less than \$3 per day (Blanco, et al., 2012) are – based on comparable

¹⁹ A recent mapping project which attempted to count the number of households in Mukuru, and which arrived at a figure of just over 137,000, provides corroboration for this estimate (Nyambuga, et al., 2015), while more extensive studies of other prominent slums in Nairobi have yielded broadly similar figures. The population density of Kibera, for example, has been estimated at 50,000-300,000 people per square kilometre (UN-Habitat, 2006; Desgroppes and Taupin, 2011). As a base for comparison, the population density in Manhattan, where most residents live in high-rise apartments, is less than 27,500 people per square kilometre (World Population Review, 2018b).

studies from other slums (Desgropes and Taupin, 2011) – likely to underrepresent the actual size of this cohort. In a study encompassing six of Kenya’s urban slums, including Mukuru, Amendah, Buigut, and Mohamed (2014) found that, over the course of a four-week period leading up to the study, 69 per cent of slum residents resorted to eating fewer meals as a financial coping strategy, while an additional 17 per cent went entire days without eating anything at all. Other commonly employed coping strategies included taking loans, buying goods on credit, and removing children from school (Amendah, et al., 2014).

Lastly, it is important to place the deprivation which characterises Mukuru and other slum settlements in Nairobi within their wider temporal and geographical context. Per capita GDP in Kenya has risen steadily since the turn of the millennium, and in 2015 the World Bank re-designated Kenya’s status from ‘low-income country’ to ‘lower-middle income country’ (World Bank, 2015). Such progress is reflected in changes in the developmental stance of First World nations such as the Netherlands, who are currently transitioning towards the implementation of a ‘trade over aid’ strategy in Kenya. It is important, therefore, not to allow labels such as the Global South, the Base of the Pyramid, or the Developing World to mask deep social and economic inequalities within these regions (Chambers, 1997). De Soto (2000:27) expresses the view that development agencies “that jet their consultants to the elegant quadrants of [Developing-World cities] to meet with the local ‘private sector’ are talking to only a fraction of the entrepreneurial world”, and it is arguable that entrepreneurship research has failed in a similar way to properly engage with marginalised settings and populations. In light of the deprivation set out in this section, Mukuru was deemed to be a suitably marginal setting for this research; in the following section, I explore the prevalence of entrepreneurship in Mukuru, with a view to clarifying its fundamental importance in the absence of widespread access to employment or social welfare.

(iii) Entrepreneurship and the Informal Economy in Mukuru. The informal economy is defined here as “the activities through which entrepreneurs operate and transact specifically outside of formal institutional boundaries yet remain within the boundaries of informal institutions” (Webb, et al., 2014: 2). By transacting outside of formal institutional boundaries, it is meant that the enterprise “is not constituted as a legal entity independent of the individual (or group of individuals) who owns it ... [and/or] ... it is not registered under specific forms of national legislation (e.g. tax or security laws)” (Williams and Shahid, 2016: 3). Importantly, the definition employed here does not exempt activities which are illegal *per se* (c.f. De Castro, et al., 2014; McGahan, 2012; Williams and Horodnic, 2015), but does exempt activities which are widely condemned by society, i.e. those which exist outside of the informal institutions of society, or which may be considered part of the “renegade economy” rather than the “informal economy”

(Webb, et al., 2009). In practice, this means that some entrepreneurs in my sample engaged in practices such as bribery or media piracy, or participated in the manufacture of illicit alcohol (I deem these to be illegal but legitimate, in that they exist outside the formal institutions of society but were engaged in openly and often in full view, so can therefore be seen to exist within the informal institutions of society); however, activities like robbery and people trafficking (which were not considered acceptable within either the formal or institutional frameworks of society) were excluded (Welter, et al 2015).

According to this rudimentary typology, most economic activity in Mukuru takes place outside the formal sector (Blanco, et al., 2012). The intrinsically opaque nature of the informal sector means that it is almost impossible to quantify the number of informal enterprises operating in a given society or their aggregated economic output; as such, aggregate-level economic statistics for Mukuru are severely lacking. However, it is reported that two-thirds of Nairobi's adult population is active in the informal economy, and that this figure is likely to be significantly higher in the city's slums (UN-Habitat, 2006). Moreover, the proportion of people that are self-employed (as opposed to being employed on an informal or casual basis), is much higher in slum districts (ILO, 2012), making them a uniquely abundant context for entrepreneurial activity and, therefore, an attractive setting for an ethnographic study on entrepreneurship. Mukuru, like other slum communities, supports a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem (Blanco, et al., 2012; Economist, 2012), and micro-enterprises – almost all of which are housed in open-fronted stalls constructed from corrugated metal or tarpaulin-covered wood-frames – line both sides of almost every thoroughfare. Sellers of clothes, food, charcoal, household items, small electronics, and handcrafts, added to barbers, medical practitioners, M-Pesa kiosks²⁰, movie parlours, and cyber-service business account for almost all of the vast number of street-side enterprises in the slum (Blanco, et al., 2012; Muoki, Tumuli, and Rombo, 2008).

(iv) Homogeneity in Mukuru. Extant research carried out in BoP settings has frequently employed extremely heterogeneous empirical samples. Honig (1998), for example, samples participants from low-, middle-, and high-income neighbourhoods in Jamaica; De Castro, et al. (2014) study thirty-one food vendors in the Dominican Republic with annual sales ranging from less than \$1,000 up to \$1.2m; and, in Ghana, Boso, Storey, and Cadogan's (2013) study included firms with sales ranging from \$52,000 to \$9.5m. such an extent of in-sample heterogeneity impinges severely on the contextual dimension of the research, since the effects of size, rather than being

²⁰ M-Pesa is a mobile-phone based payment platform provided by Kenya's largest telecommunications firm, Safaricom. Small kiosks, at which subscribers convert cash to 'credit', and vice-versa, proliferate in every population centre and now number more than 40,000. See World Bank (2016b) for added detail.

explored in relation to things like power and networks, and their value premium in weak institutional settings, become obscured or controlled away (Bamberger, 2008; Johns, 2001, 2006; Welter, 2011).

Choosing to locate this study in a bounded empirical context in which institutional constraints applied in a largely equitable way across all actors enabled it to satisfy demands for greater sampling homogeneity in entrepreneurship research (Wiklund and Shepherd, 2011; Chalmers and Shaw, 2017; Miller, 2011). Moreover, the immersive and intersubjective approach to data collection allowed the apparent uniformity of the study context to be scrutinised more fully, and revealed, over the course of fieldwork, a pervasive complex of divisions and inequalities which mirror the observations of studies conducted in settings of marginality all over the world (Martí, et al., 2013; Barrios and Blocker, 2015; Viswanathan, et al., 2014; Kodithuwakku and Rosa, 2002). As Thieme (2015: 234) writes, external vantage points usually impose “deceptively homogenising” parameters on entrepreneurs in slum settings, which frequently mask subtle but important variations in ambition, resource endowment, ability, process, and performance (Welter and Smallbone, 2011; Zhao and Lounsbury, 2006), as well as social factions grounded in relative wealth, tribal loyalties, or perceptions towards formal institutions (Godfrey, 2011; UN-Habitat, 2006). The suitability of the research site is therefore underpinned by the fact that, as a whole, it is characterised by deep-seated poverty and marginality; however, the methodology of ethnography recognises that no research site is completely internally homogenous (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:50), and that, even within marginalised societies, emergent social imbalances and power dynamics are important and inevitable (Chambers, 1997).

4.5.5 The Sample

Sampling in ethnography takes place at two levels. First, researchers must decide upon a setting (or settings) in which to locate the research; then, they must identify suitable cases for observation within that setting. In the preceding sections, I set out the theoretical case for choosing Mukuru as a research setting, focusing on how it embodied key features of contemporary poverty (namely urbanisation and inequality), how entrepreneurship was integral to the functioning of society, and how, *prima facie*, it constituted a largely homogenous population. Now, I will move on to explain the more emergent process of selecting individual cases.

In contrast to prior studies conducted in comparable settings (e.g. Khavul, et al., 2009; Field, Papp, Pande, and Rigol, 2013; Gras and Nason, 2015; Sutter, Webb, Kistruck, and Bailey, 2013), access to an empirical sample was not facilitated here by a local support organisation, such as micro-finance organisation, as the proportion of entrepreneurs in Mukuru that were in receipt of

this kind of support was unknown, and it was felt that by concentrating on those in the community that did, I may have entrenched even further the marginality of those that did not.²¹ This, coupled with the fact that most enterprises in Mukuru are informal and do not appear in any business directories, made it effectively impossible to identify and recruit research participants in advance of fieldwork.

Having identified Mukuru as an appropriate study setting, partly on the grounds that prior research has neglected contexts characterised by such entrenched poverty and marginalisation, it made greater logical sense to sample primarily for “similarity” rather than for “difference” (Gobo, 2004:445). That is, the empirical sample was not purposefully comprised of cases which exhibited marked difference from what might be considered ‘the norm’ for this community, meaning, for example, that I did not prioritise the pursuit of high-performing entrepreneurs or entrepreneurs that in some way sought to leverage new technological possibilities. Although such “extreme” or “deviant” cases (Flyvbjerg, 2011) were included as a means to explore what entrepreneurship *can do* in such settings, they were viewed as being peripheral to the majority of cases which illustrated what entrepreneurship *actually does*. Thus, sampling procedures pursued the “emblematic case” (Gobo, 2004:449), which is concerned with the typical case rather than the deviant case. This represented a critical design choice which enabled the study to address mounting calls for entrepreneurship research, in both established and non-traditional contexts, to focus less on the “gazelles and unicorns” of the discipline, and more on the “cows and horses” that in fact make up its vast majority (Welter, et al., 2017: 313; see also Watson, 2013; Imas, et al., 2012; Hjorth and Steyaert, 2004).

Despite the importance given to the ‘typical’ in emblematic sampling, it does not necessitate that the final sample must be statistically representative (Gobo, 2004). The conventional means of achieving a representative sample, i.e. through the use of probabilistic sampling techniques, transfers poorly to small-sample qualitative studies, and more flexible, pragmatic approaches are generally preferred (Marshall, 1996). Therefore, rather than random sampling conducted at the outset of fieldwork, participants were identified as fieldwork progressed, and inclusion decisions reflected, and aimed to redress, emergent imbalances in the sample (e.g., gender, age, income, and business type).

²¹ As fieldwork progressed, it became increasingly evident that the proportion of entrepreneurs which benefitted from any kind of developmental assistance was miniscule in relation to the community’s entire population of entrepreneurs. This largely serves as a broad reflection of regional microfinance availability – only 12.7 per cent of the poorest families in Africa have access to microfinance, versus 78.5 per cent in Asia (United Nations, 2013) – but a paucity of available statistics makes it almost impossible to know whether individual communities like Mukuru conform to these trends.

The process of recruitment itself was often opportunistic, with snowball techniques – where informants are identified and recruited with the assistance of other informants (Noy, 2008) – used occasionally but sparingly. For the most part, initial contact with informants was organic or serendipitous; in some cases (e.g. E1, E12, E15), people would beckon me as I walked past their businesses, and inquire about my background and the reason for my sudden appearance in their community; in others, like that of the barber (E17), I began as a customer; in the case of Collective 1, I was known to several members of the group because I had been a volunteer at their school some years prior, while they were still pupils.

In-line with prior studies conducted in non-Western and BoP settings, an entrepreneur is defined here as “somebody [that is] actively involved in starting an enterprise or the owner/manager of an enterprise” (Williams and Shahid, 2016: 3; see also Gras and Nason, 2015; Honig, 1998, 2011; Imas, et al., 2012). It is noted that some scholars have called for entrepreneurship research to limit itself to the study of new ventures in order to focus attention on start-up processes (Gartner, 1988); however, for present purposes it was felt that a less restrictive operationalisation was apposite because the precarity which is typically associated with embryonic ventures is often shared by established ventures in subsistence contexts. Also, it has been argued that, in penurious and apparently uniform contexts, managerial-type skills like delaying consumption to allow resources to accumulate are of equal importance to entrepreneurship skills – innovation and recognising new opportunities – in achieving success (Kodithuwakku and Rosa, 2002). Based on these considerations, the conceptual distinction between entrepreneurship and small business ownership is likely to be less clear-cut in underdeveloped settings (de Mel, McKenzie, and Woodruff, 2008); it is therefore posited that the more inclusive definition of ‘entrepreneur’ employed by this study, and by other studies conducted in comparable contexts, is justified.

In the table below, I provide summary data for the nineteen entrepreneurs (Table 5a), plus the two entrepreneurial collectives (Table 5b), that comprised the core sample for this study. Additional to the list below, interviews were conducted with two development professionals with extensive experience of working in Mukuru, a community elder who was in fact a founding member of the community, a local activist engaged in issues of gender inequality, and an employee who, at the time fieldwork was being conducted, was in the planning stages of venture start-up (Table 5c). Insights were contributed by countless others that are not listed below, but for practical reasons I have limited this list to those informants that are quoted in the empirical chapters of this thesis. In Table 5d, I explain the notation that is used for the anonymous attribution of quotations in those empirical chapters.

Table 5a: Entrepreneurial Sample, Part 1 of 2 – ‘Individual Entrepreneurs’ (Chapters 5 and 6)

Anonymous Designation*	Gender	Age	Business Type
E1	M	49	Tailoring and selling men’s clothes.
E2	M	37	Selling charcoal
E3	F	Late-20s	Selling assorted small goods (socks, padlocks, toiletries)
E4	F	Late-20s	Selling second-hand shoes
E5 (E5 ₁ , E5 ₂ , E5 ₃)	F, F, F (owner and employees)	Early-20s & early-30s	Hair and beauty salon
E6 (E6 ₁ , E6 ₂)	M, F (co-founders)	Early-30s	Chemist
E7	F	22	Selling OTC medication and beauty products
E8 (E8 ₁ , E8 ₂ , E8 ₃)	F, M, M (mother & sons)	40s & early-20s	Selling household utensils (e.g. plates, cutlery, and washbasins)
E9	M	26	Barber
E10	M	Mid-40s	Selling backpacks and suitcases
E11	M	50	Making jewellery by hand
E12	M	Mid-20s	Selling sugarcane
E13	F	Late-30s	Selling assorted small goods (cutlery, toiletries, shoe polish, stationary)
E14	F	Mid-30s	Selling OTC medication and beauty products
E15	M	Early-50s	Selling water
E16	M	33	Selling second-hand t-shirts
E17	M	Late-30s	Barber, selling small hardware products, owns a ‘casino’ (consisting of 7 slot machines)
E18	M	Early-30s	Selling potatoes and second-hand shoes
E19	F	Early-30s	Selling second-hand women’s clothes

**Used in the attribution of quotes in empirical chapters.*

Table 5b: Entrepreneurial Sample, Part 2 of 2 – ‘Entrepreneurial Collectives’ (Chapters 7 and 8), which are defined as groups of like-minded friends pursuing economic profits through self-initiated, market-based ventures

Group	Number of Participants	Anon. Designation of Key Informants	Ownership Structure	Gender	Age Group	Number of Premises	Business Activity
Collective 1	6-14 (variable)	C1 ₁ , C1 ₂ , C1 ₃ , ... , C1 ₁₃	Completely flat and informal; income opportunities are rotated amongst participants	All male	Late-teens & early-20s	None (car wash is operated from the street)	Operates car-wash services; delivers sugarcane for illicit alcohol production
Collective 2	3 owners (plus up to six ‘associates’ and employees)	C2 ₁ , C2 ₂ , C2 ₃ , C2 ₄	Formal, with equity divided amongst C2 ₁ , C2 ₂ , and C2 ₃ ; income is pooled and members are paid a monthly salary	All male	Mid-20s	3	Computer services (photocopying, help with online forms, music and film downloads)

Table 5c: Other informants

Anonymous Designation	Gender	Description
O1	F	Development Professional
O2	F	Development Professional
O3	M	Development Professional
O4	M	Community Elder
O5	M	Local Activist
O6	M	Employee at local light-industry firm; planning to launch business venture
O7	M	Participant in entrepreneurship training initiative run by local NGO
O8	M	Entrepreneur in another slum in Nairobi (Kibera)
O9 (O9 ₁ , O9 ₂)	M, F (Husband and wife)	Entrepreneurs in another slum in Nairobi (Kayaba)

Table 5d: Key for coded identifiers used for the anonymous attribution of quotes in data analysis chapter

Anonymous Designation	Descriptor	Upper-case Number	Subscript Number
E (e.g., E8 ₁)	Entrepreneur	Unique, venture-level designation. Since ventures in this category had only one person involved, this number can also be assumed to denote that person.	Used where more than one informant was drawn from the same business. This number specifies the informant that is being quoted, e.g. E8 ₁ and E8 ₂ are two informants from the same business.
C (e.g., C1 ₄)	Collective	C1 = Collective 1; C2 = Collective 2	As above, this number specifies the informant that is being quoted, e.g., C1 ₁ and C1 ₂ are both informants from Collective 1.
O (e.g., O3)	Other (non-entrepreneur)	Each informant assigned a number.	As above.

4.6 Data Analysis

Extended periods of immersive ethnographic fieldwork can yield data which is nuanced and granular in its detail, and which is intrinsically contextualised (Hammersley, 1990). Because of these qualities, the insights that ethnographers unearth and the data upon which they rely to answer their chosen research question(s) are often surprising, as disparities between the literature and the empirical world – or between their own world and the world they are now immersed within – come to the fore. As well as yielding answers which are unexpected or non-intuitive, the lived reality of the ethnographic experience can cause ethnographers to re-thing, sometimes dramatically, the questions which they think are worthwhile or prudent to ask. As the epigraph to Section 4.5 (‘Research Setting and Sample’) indicates, it is common practice for ethnographers to formulate research questions in tandem with the process of data collection itself (Wolcott, 2008). As such, analysis does not begin once a final data corpus has been pieced together; rather, the piecing together of that data corpus – deciding on what to include and what not to include in fieldnotes, on what research opportunities should be prioritised over others, and on where to direct data collection in terms of topics and themes explored – must be thought of as constitutive of, not an antecedent to, the analytical process (Watson, 2013a). To reflect this, I begin this section by detailing the somewhat ‘messy’ process through which my research objectives emerged and crystallised, before moving on to explain how this gave way to a more procedural approach once I found myself removed from the field.

4.6.1 Towards an Understanding of ‘What Actually Matters’

Based on my initial engagement with this literature, I entered the field with the intention of answering the following question: “How does affiliation with an NGO, microfinance, or other enterprise-supporting organisation impact on the entrepreneurial process (in terms of things like resource access over and above what is obtained from the organisation itself, propensity to differentiate and take risks, social legitimacy and embeddedness, and so on)?” Given the depth of interest in the role of such organisations in facilitating and promoting entrepreneurship in market settings which might be characterised as ‘institutional voids’ (Mair and Marti, 2009), this appeared to be a relevant and worthwhile research pursuit. Upon arrival to the field, however, it became quickly apparent that the proportion of entrepreneurs in the study community that had any kind of affiliation of this kind was negligibly small, and while I could have tracked down this miniscule cohort by working through the organisations themselves, I opted instead to jettison this particular question and formulate another which better represented the reality of the overwhelming majority of micro-entrepreneurs in this community.

Rather than treating this re-formulation as a matter of urgency, I afforded it time to take shape organically, allowing data collection to be guided by the classically ethnographic objective of understanding “what it’s like” to be an entrepreneur in this community (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). In doing so, I could ensure that the issues of interest that were central in this study were of genuine importance in the lives of those taking part.

However, I regarded as something of a problem the extent of heterogeneity that I observed. The plurality of motivations, strategies, and outcomes that were apparent among the micro-entrepreneurs of the slum – despite the relatively uniform hardships that they experienced – rendered it impossible to approach the “what it’s like” question as one which might ultimately yield a singular, monolithic answer (Wolcott, 2008: 144). Capturing the extent of this heterogeneity was extremely challenging when the focus centred on the micro-processes of the entrepreneurs themselves, i.e. their methods of orchestrating resources and accessing capital, their approach to risk, and their aspirations for growth. To accommodate this heterogeneity, I made a conscious effort to ‘retract the lens’ of observation, seeing this community in panorama, as an ecosystem composed of greater diversity than an outsider might be inclined to imagine (Autio and Levie, 2017; Davidsson, et al., forthcoming; Lounsbury, Gehman, and Glynn, forthcoming; Viswanathan, et al., 2016).

Such perspectives lend themselves naturally to themes of identity such as those that I pursue in the chapters to follow (Hsu and Hannon, 2005). Whilst still in the field, however, I did not place an explicit or limited focus on themes of identity. Rather, the theoretical positioning of this work – as I cycled constantly between data collection and extant research – was most influenced by recent work on ‘context’ in entrepreneurship, the overall gyst of which being that scholars need to do more to locate their observations within the social, institutional, spatial, and temporal contexts that they were made (Bamberger, 2006; Johns, 2001, 2006; Welter, 2011; Zahra and Wright, 2011). Doing this well, and advancing what I regard as an important cause in entrepreneurship and management scholarship, became a key theoretical objective of the study.²²

These concerns with context are deeply intertwined with the ‘identity’ framing of this thesis. Identity is inherently contextualised, since identities are naturally rooted within sociospatial settings: ‘what it means to be an entrepreneur’ is likely different in Silicon Valley from what it is in Mukuru. Moreover, membership of each of these two social groups (the communities of Silicon Valley and Mukuru) are likely to afford access to very different sets of resources, entail contrastive institutional constraints, and ultimately give rise to highly discrepant social and

²² By theoretical, I mean that this transcends the empirical context itself, i.e., I am aiming to do more than simply understand *this context* (empirical objective), I am in fact aiming to understand how we can better account for how *context in general* intersects with the entrepreneurship process.

entrepreneurial practices. Employing identity as a theoretical lens for this study allowed for it to connect to, and build upon, an ongoing academic conversation (Webb, et al., 2009; Slade Schantz, 2018) which revolves around a nucleus of well-established theories and constructs (set out in Table 3, Section 3.2), but – of equal importance – it allowed for of the rich contextual detail that ethnography delivers to remain in the foreground.

The second part of this section, which follows below, deals with the more formal, procedural aspect of the analysis process which got underway after data collection had been completed. As I will show, this aspect of the analysis process adhered to a well-defined series of discrete ‘steps’ (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Nonetheless, these steps should be seen as a continuation of the constant, real-time analysis that was taking place while I was in the field, rather than an exercise to make that analytical phase redundant. The gradual evolution of high-level research objectives into concise research questions, for example, is one facet of this process that bridged the divide between in-field and post-fieldwork analysis.

4.6.2 Thematic Analysis

The primary data gathered during fieldwork was analysed using inductive thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is an analytical technique which is used by qualitative researchers across a comprehensive spectrum of social science disciplines, although it is often poorly demarcated from similar techniques of qualitative analysis (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun and Clarke, 2006). It involves “the searching *across* a data set – be that a number of interviews or focus groups, or a range of texts – to find repeated patterns of meaning” (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 86, emphasis in original) When applied inductively, thematic analysis involves the development of codes, categories, and themes, which originate in observations and data and are incrementally abstracted to generate new theory or conceptual linkages to existing theory (Emerson, 2004).²³

The analytical steps taken in this study followed the widely used template of Braun and Clarke (2006). It has been suggested that many, if not most, qualitative studies use thematic analysis in some form, but that analytical procedures frequently go unnamed or undescribed, making it

²³ The terminology employed for the three concepts explained here – codes, categories, and themes – are notoriously variant across authors and approaches. Miles and Huberman (1994:57), for example, use the labels ‘descriptive coding’, ‘interpretive coding’, and ‘pattern coding’, while Grounded Theorists refer to ‘open coding’, ‘axial coding’, and ‘selective coding’ (Corbin and Strauss, 1990). While in their conceptual form the differences in terms may be more than just semantic, in practice – and in large sections of literature, too – the overlap is significant if not absolute (Saldaña, 2013). Others prefer the simpler terminology of first-, second-, and third-order coding, while others still use some or all of the terms that I have, but affix them with slightly different meanings (Dey, 1993). Therefore, I use these terms in recognition that there is no accepted, singular meaning to which they conform, but attempt to clarify, in this paragraph, how they intended to be understood in the context of this study.

difficult to determine how meaning was extracted from raw data (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun and Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke's six-step guidelines serve as a structure which is communicable but not rigid; the process is iterative, and the repeated cycling between raw data and codes, categories, and themes ensures that the flexibility necessary for inductive theorising is not lost (Vaismoradi, Turunen, and Bondas, 2013) The six steps, or "phases" of thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006), and how they were operationalised in this study, are outlined below:

(i) *Becoming familiar with the data.* Re-reading fieldnotes and transcribing interviews, and making annotations in each that denote important aspects of context (like sarcasm or emphasis in an audio file that may be lost in conversion to text) or preliminary coding ideas, is an effective way to develop early-stage familiarity with one's data (Flick, 2009). In the weeks following my return from fieldwork, I transcribed all recorded interviews carried out in the field, consisting of sixty interviews and 36 hours of recording, yielding 264 pages of single-spaced, typed transcripts. These transcripts were paired with 150 pages of fieldnotes to create a rich, intersubjective corpus of primary data.

It is accepted that transcription is not simply a process of passive reproduction, but is a form of translation and is therefore an early step in interpretation and analysis (Flick, 2009; Gibbs, 2007). However, where other analytical approaches, such as linguistic or conversation analysis, demand that highly detailed transcriptions be produced, thematic analysis typically assumes that meanings are conveyed by words themselves, rather than, for example, pauses, stutters, or interjections (Vaismoradi, et al., 2013). Thus, the transcripts produced for this study represented a full verbatim account of what was said between the interviewer and interviewee, with annotations for additional, clear verbal cues such as emphasis, laughter, or sarcasm.

All transcribed interviews, plus my field diaries from the two phases of fieldwork, were transferred to NVIVO for coding and analysis.

(ii) *Generating Initial Codes.* "Codes are tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study [and are] usually ... attached to 'chunks' of varying size – words, phrases, sentences, or whole paragraphs" (Miles and Huberman, 1994:56). Consonant with the inductive format of this analysis, initial codes were "data driven" rather than "theory driven" (Braun and Clarke, 2006:87), meaning that they were generated through engagement with the data rather than with extant literature. As Boyatzis (1994:4) notes, thematic analysis "begins with capturing the codable moment", where "seeing" something in the data crosses the subjective threshold of seeing it "as" important and choosing to codify it for

further scrutiny. Because of this inherent subjectivity, inductive thematic analysis is compatible with the constructivist epistemology to which this study subscribes.

Initial codes were generated according to Saldaña's (2013:87-91) guidelines for first-cycle descriptive coding. This is a relatively straightforward and intuitive approach to early-stage coding which involves assigning a 'code' to a passage of qualitative data, then extracting all chunks of text that have been assigned codes from their initial sources and reassembling them in separate folders according to their code. Once all data – including transcripts and field diaries – have been carefully examined, codes are linked, refined, and combined to create overarching categories, which contain individual codes and sub-codes (see Appendix 3 for the full list of categories, codes, and sub-codes generated from field data). Finally, all codes and categories are defined to establish clear conceptual boundaries between them, and the data items therein are re-checked against these definitions to ensure adherence (see Appendix 3 for a list of all definitions). It should be noted that the exercise of clarifying the boundaries between the codes and categories does not preclude the same unit of text being assigned to more than one code; at this stage of coding, this continues to be permissible (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

(iii) Searching for Themes. Phase 3 begins with the numerous and discrete codes and categories generated in the preceding phase and aims to connect these “to develop a coherent metasynthesis of the data corpus” (Saldaña, 2013:207). The distinction between developing codes and developing themes is sometimes analogised as “splitting” and “splicing” (Joffe and Yardley, 2004; Dey, 1993). Splitting, which is equated with the development of codes, involves breaking data down into bitesize analytical fragments; splicing, equated with the development of themes, involves fusion. As Dey (1993:147) writes, “[w]hen we splice ropes, we join them by interweaving different strands. When we splice categories, we join them by interweaving the different strands in our analysis.”

The creation of themes represents a significant step in the inductive process of abstraction from data to concepts, and the themes produced at this stage may – although it's not essential – implicate elements of extant literature as well as empirically grounded insights. It was at this point that I began to gravitate away from the broader literature on entrepreneurial context and engaged in a more earnest way with the identity literature. In doing so, I gained a growing sense that the theories and constructs in this space could provide helpful new insights for my data and, more importantly, that the inverse – that what I observed might also help address important gaps in this literature – may also be true. Through continuous iteration between data and literature, my research questions, centred explicitly on identity and how it overlaps with the entrepreneurship process, began to take shape.

On a more technical note, it has been noted that thematic maps and other forms of display are a useful tool in building and linking themes (Braun and Clarke, 2008:89; Dey, 1993; Miles and Huberman, 1994:11). By illustrating which codes and categories are most pivotal – that is, have a demonstrable effect on others – visual displays can provide a much richer insight than numerical displays alone (Vaismoradi, et al., 2013). Using NVIVO, I created three separate thematic maps (Appendices 4a-4c), loosely representing the micro-, meso-, and macro-levels of analysis. Note that some codes appear in more than one map.

(iv) Reviewing Themes. Saldaña (2013:12) proposes that “when the major categories are compared with each other and consolidated in various ways, you begin to transcend the ‘reality’ of your data and progress toward the thematic, conceptual, and theoretical”. Following this line of thought, I treat Phase 4 as a verification and a bridging exercise, where themes are examined against raw data to affirm their internal coherence *and* are examined in relation to extant literature to identify potential theoretical relevance.

It was at this point that I decided to treat the ‘entrepreneurial collectives’ as analytically distinct from individual entrepreneurs. Data suggested that categorical differences between the two warranted a clearer separation than would be achieved simply by viewing the collectives as larger incarnations of single-founder micro-enterprises. In fact, it was not the number of people involved so much as the origins and content of their interpersonal relationships that appeared to set these entities apart from the others. (In Section 4.8.1, I outline in more detail the reasoning behind this distinction; for now, I concentrate on its implications for data analysis.)

Enacting this distinction meant that one set of codes, categories, and themes became two. Cyclic iteration between raw data, emergent themes, and extant literature helped to clarify the discrete theoretical focus of each of these strands, as well as to provide an overall narrative ark for the empirical sections of this thesis. The first strand, pertaining to the individual entrepreneurs, would aim to make good on the fundamental theoretical objective of the study, which was to better understand the bearing that collective identity had on entrepreneurship. Per the emergent themes, this would encompass, in broad terms, co-existing perceptions of togetherness and division, institutional arrangements, and norms of solidarity. The second strand, pertaining to the entrepreneurial collectives, provided the opportunity to examine collective identity at a lower level of analysis. As well as advancing the study’s primary objective by incorporating the dimension of change, the collective strand would aim to enrich the literature on entrepreneurship teams, both in general and in the BoP context. Substantive themes in this section would include the emergence of the entrepreneurial collective as an organisational form, the co-evolution of collective identity and entrepreneurship, and the ‘negotiation’ of individual agency within the

confined identity space of the collectives. Please refer here to Tables 6a and 6b, which show the empirical content of the emergent themes.

Finally, this phase involved re-reading the entire data corpus to ensure (i) that all relevant fragments of data had been coded to the appropriate theme, and (ii) that emergent themes were a faithful representation of the empirical phenomena that they described, as represented by the raw data.

Table 6a: Emergent Themes and their Empirical Content, Chapter 5 (Individual Entrepreneurs)

Collective Identity	
<p><i>Grounded in poverty, hardship, exclusion, etc.</i></p>	<p>"In Mukuru, a lot of things are, it's like they are planless, the structures, the water. Everything in Mukuru, it's like everything is shaggy. Life here is not permanent."--E2.</p> <p>"Chris told me then that Dominic (is cousin) has a master's in Leadership and Science, but still he was unable to find decent work. 'Because this is how Kenya's government wants us to be.'"--O4.</p> <p>"They are aware that there are people living here because, when it comes to elections, they have created wards that have representatives, so from my understanding they know we are here. Because there are government offices around here. So it is negligent that they don't think of how to make us developed, build good houses, provide us with water, and have a good drain when it comes to rain. So I hope we shall be developed in a way."--E10.</p> <p>"Right now we have Ruben FM, we can express our needs, our feelings in our slum. Just talk. ... It's helpful. We just mingle, we just exchange views, we just talk those problems that we face. Right now, the way this road is just like that, I know and I understand people are talking about this. They are discussing these leaders, 'Where are those [leaders]?' Because one road, from this side to the other side, you will not pass because of mud, because of water."--E12.</p> <p>"We are here, young people with abilities, young people with opportunities. But because of those people who are in government, those people that have everything, we cannot get a job. Here in Kenya accessing the government you have to work hard, you have to have somebody who is in that government who will just hold you the hand so you will get into that government. Just getting there like a stanger, I'm coming here, I'm looking for a job, you will get nothing. Our country Kenya is a good country but because of governance we have nothing."--E12.</p> <p>"It's not good [here] but what can you do? Because even, that place I'm telling you [Kibera slum], when you go there, even people, the way they do their business, the way people do things are different. There are not so many clubs like this, they do not drink, people are sleeping. ... [In] Kibera, you must have a good business. If you have a bookshop, a cyber cafe, cyber cafes are so many in Kibera. So many. We have banks there. ... Good roads. ... When you have your car you drive very well, it's not like this place. This has not developed."--E5₂.</p> <p>"We support them [the politicians] but they still don't do anything [for] us. ... They can't give even a shilling towards your business, or to grow. No. You have to earn your own money whichever way. ... The community, it's like we are poor in the community. You see the way the <i>kejiji</i> [neighbourhood] is so dirty, yeah, because people could be making this community clean, but no money to pay them. That money is eaten by the big people, the big fish."--E14.</p> <p>"During that time, the communities who were just staying in these slums, they were forgotten. ... Within this settlement, in Mukuru, we don't have drainages. We don't have proper sanitation. If not donors, there would have been no school. With no donors there would have been no sanitation, sanitation meaning water, means drainage."--O4.</p>
<p><i>Grounded in perceived differences to communities of comparable socioeconomic status</i></p>	<p>"We also spoke again about how kwa Reuben compares with other slums. He said that there is little difference between it and the other neighbouring slums like kwa Njenga, but that there are worse ones in Nairobi. He said that Korogocho is the worst, and the rate of crime is very high. He told me that there are men that sit at the side of the road, and negotiate with prospective buyers for shoes that are being worn by passers by. If they reach agreement on an acceptable price, the man will then steal the shoes and make the sale."--C1₁.</p> <p>E8₂: "They are divided, [Mukuru] is not divided. We are one."</p> <p>[Interviewer: Do you think that's part of the reason that after the elections Kawangware, Mathare, Kibera, other places are having problems but here in Mukuru things seem to be calm?]</p> <p>E8₂: "You can't fight here because we are brothers, but in Kawangware there are fights of Jaluos, of Kikuyus. they are divided. But here at Mukuru we are one "</p> <p>"Mukuru is a good place. One thing, when we have this crisis of politics, we people who stay in Mukuru we don't engage in any way with other people. We see somebody, we see you like our brother. We don't ask somebody what are you doing here, where are you from?"--E12.</p> <p>"Just Mukuru, people of Mukuru of Mukuru are not like people of other places. When it comes to things like election, I haven't seen here Mukuru people fighting, but other places you can hear that boys have been shot, that people are fighting, but in Mukuru I have never seen anything like that."--C1₆.</p>

Table 6a – Emergent Themes and their Empirical Content, Chapter 5 (Individual Entrepreneurs; continued)

Informal Institutions	
<i>Supremacy of informal institutions over formal institutions in the slum</i>	<p>"Most businesses in Mukuru, here in Mukuru, are informal. Almost, let's say, 80% of businesses in Mukuru are informal, meaning they are not registered, they don't... they are not registered for tax, and they do not have a formal account."--O7</p> <p>"Do you know if you come here, like you, you want to put a business here, even [right there], nobody comes [to see your registrations]."--E1.</p> <p>"Every village has a different power structure, and every village has a mafia on top. And these are elders of the village, supposedly elected by the people."--O2.</p>
<i>Venturing with minimal capital stock (human, financial, social) facilitated by pervasive informality</i>	<p>"Some companies there are women who are working around, knitting shorts or whatever, if they drop from the company they just buy these sewing machines, they do small business ... Because I have told you, everybody around here, it is not just young people, all people are [insecure in their livelihoods]."--E2.</p> <p>"While I was talking to [E12] another man came up and told me that he had no work today because it was raining, so the construction company that he was working for just decided it would not take him today, and of course that meant he wouldn't be paid. So instead he bought about ten stalks of sugarcane from Justine (discounted price of 5/= apiece) and took them to the corner of Falcon Rd and Enterprise Rd to sell himself."--Field-notes extract.</p> <p>"You know you start with a small amount, you don't start with so much. You start with a little, then you go multiply."--E10.</p> <p>"If you open a business in Kibera even if it is small, even if it is selling <i>sukuma</i> [cabbage], you must pay 50 shillings [50c] per day. And here, you don't pay. You don't pay anything, just open business and continue. ... Here if you open a business, even if you want to put sweets outside there, they don't care. Nobody will ask you."--E5₂.</p> <p>"[Starting a business here] is not difficult. If you have some capital it is not difficult. 10,000, 15,000, 20,000 is enough."--E13.</p> <p>"Here you can set a person up in a business very very easily, you buy them three or four big sacks of detergent they sell it by the cup ... They can even buy tea and sugar, and make a business from tea and sugar. So that part is very good, that people can make a business very very easily."--O2.</p> <p>"If you think about business, you wake up and open. ... There's no common process. But somewhere where the government can access you have to pay. But simple business, you just open here."--E17.</p>
<i>Community 'self-regulation' through informal institutions</i>	<p>"Even these clothes here, somebody can take [them overnight]. There are some watchmans, Maasai watchmans, and if they found you taking somebody's things... [We pay them] 20 shillings, every day, just to protect... [Maasai] are very honest people, the most honest. Not like our tribe. If you keep our tribe here, you can find nothing at morning [it would be all stolen]."--E1.</p> <p>"I mean, there is mob. Even last year, we lost two guys there. They had stolen a television and a recorder from one of the notes there, down there. They were mobbed to death. It was a while go, like two months ago. They were mobbed. ... [The mob] beat them with stones, they stone them to death. They even burn them, using tyres. They even burn them. Others, you see there at the flats at Pipeline, when they catch a thief there they throw him off the flats."--FR.</p> <p>"We have to use this protocol. Here in our [community] here we have a chairman ... So when you want to sell [property], you know we don't have title deeds, we own it yes but we don't have title deeds. But you have to use this protocol, you go to [the] chairman, you say, 'Oh, I want to sell this, we have just talked to this guy [who wishes to buy the property]'. So you write down, you go to chief, ... and just like that. When somebody will come back and say, 'You didn't give me any money, this my property', you will say, 'Okay, we have some documents, these show that you sold your property.' ... That's the only protocol you use."--E12.</p> <p>"Chief is trusted more than the police. Chief is someone who will determine if you will stay here or you will move. When chief says, 'this guy, I don't want him in my area, he's not a good guy,' you have no alternative. Leaving. Cos chief, the government understands chief most than other people. Chief talks the truth."--E12.</p> <p>"You can even meet them on the roadside, if it's an emergency like during the nighttime you can even go to the house of the elder of the chief. At other times you can get your problem addressed, even on the roadside."--O7.</p>

Table 6a – Emergent Themes and their Empirical Content, Chapter 5 (Individual Entrepreneurs; continued)

<i>Informal Institutions (continued)</i>	
<i>Shortcomings in informal institutions</i>	<p>"Yeah, most of the people do that but they fail to understand that these people [City Council] are trying to help them, because when your business is registered, when anything happens to your business, it will be very easy for the government, even the local government, to give you something to start up your business. Even to seek a loan from any microfinance -fail. When you don't register your business, when you don't want these people to help you register your business, it seems like you are running a dark business which you don't want to see grow, and you don't have the good security."--O4.</p> <p>"Got an interesting demonstration of the proximity of crime today while sitting alongside [E1] in his shop. A man of around 30 passed in a hurry, and as he passed he took an orange fleece that he was carrying and hid it under a pile of trousers and jackets that were lying on the ground beside [E1]'s ironing board ... Even before he had left, [E1] nodded to him and told me that he is a 'thief'. I thought he was joking but it quickly became clear that the disdain was authentic. He told me, 'there is something in there.' 'In the jumper?' 'Yes.' 'Money?' 'It could be money, could be a gun.' He said that if the police come 'he will be caught [arrested]', but he was clearly too intimidated to protest. The intimidation didn't come through as fear, it was more a sense of 'look at what this nuisance is making me do.' I asked him why he had left it there, at his shop, and [E1] said that this man knows everybody around, he could just have easily have left it at a shop across the road. This was in the morning, and when I came back in the afternoon I remarked that the fleece was still there. He said he looked inside and found KES10,000 [100], but said that 'if I took even one [shilling], the man will shoot me.'"--Field-notes extract.</p> <p>"We spoke a bit then about the benefits of being an entrepreneur versus the benefits of being an employee, and how those vary by geography. I said that in Ireland many people see security in paid employment because they are protected by strong labour laws. [O4] said that they labour laws in Kenya are completely undermined by corruption. 'If you are let go from a job and you go to the employer going looking for, for example, KES100k [in severance], the employer will not pay you. Instead he will go to the office for the labour courts and pay a bribe of maybe KES25k so that when you go there [to make your complaint] you will be told to go and speak to your employer [and sort it out among yourselves]. Then the employer might offer you KES5k, so instead of having to pay KES100k, has paid only KES30k.'"--Field-notes extract.</p> <p>"There were 100 boys in my class at school, there are only 20 remaining. The rest are gone, gunned down by the mob or by the police."--O5.</p> <p>"She said that it is not a safe place to be after dark, as "there are boys there that can cut your neck and take your money, or even kill you'."--E19.</p> <p>"While we were standing and talking two men came up and bought some sugarcane. When they left he told me, "those men have, what we call chemists, but as I understand it a chemist is someone that gives you the proper medicine when you are sick. These people will give you any kind of medicine that they have. People go to them when they are sick and tell them what is wrong and they will say, 'oh, you have a headache', this is the problem, you should take this medicine [even if it has no effect on the patient's ailment]."--Field-notes extract, relating to E12.</p> <p>"One day when I was going at the market there, I met three guys. they hit me with something here (at the back of the head). I fell down and they stole my money, 2,500. I was going to do a stock of these sifurias. But I didn't that day, that's the challenge. Insecurity, within the business area there is much insecurity."--E8₂.</p> <p>"Yes, very difficult. You come here at night, you have some women are raped here, others are beaten, others are robbed, so many things are happening. so it's not a safe place."--E5₂.</p> <p>"But mostly those elders are people who are very close to the administration, that's the chief and the DO. And they go in cahoots together to rob the land of the people, even to take over parcels of land that people are living on. So a lot of the time those elders are very corrupt but not all of the time."--O2.</p> <p>"Human trafficking, as much as we talk about it, it is shocking in the slums. You have people, you have a woman coming to Reuben, and she'd say to the little girls of 12, 'Would you like to be saved?' 'Oh yes, we want to be saved.' 'And do you want to be saved to come to my church in Kibera?' 'Or come to my church in somewhere', and when they go there they're taken and they're raped and bullied and everything."--O2.</p> <p>"I think it's a good idea [moving micro-vendors into a central market], because this place, a lot of robbers here. But that place is secure, you know. They secure it because you pay. So you are secured. So many police men, and if somebody comes to rob you, the come, quickly. They respond quickly. But here, they just rob you and they go. Like the other day, when the president was [being inaugurated, protestors] passed here, they robbed everybody. Even those people selling bananas, they robbed. That is the problem in this place, yes. They just take everything and they go. Like another mother there, another woman, they take some bags, big bags, fifteen of them. They take, that day. That's the problem."--E13.</p>
<i>Informal institutions embedded in collective identity</i>	<p>"This is a slum. A slum cannot be, the government cannot be so strict. But South B [a nearby middle-class neighbourhood], do you see these [slot] machines?"--E17.</p> <p>"If they [the authorities] were competent, we would pay tax."--E2.</p> <p>"You know police they are there, tomorrow they will not be there. But Chief, we determine the chief because he is a long-lasting person in the community."--E12.</p> <p>"'Everyone in Kenya is negatively creative,' he says. He said that also when we were having a conversation about the electricity, which was coming and going as we were talking. People are still wiring electricity to their homes and businesses directly to avoid paying the metered charges. 'Everyone in Kenya looks for shortcuts. Everyone here is negatively creative.'"--Field-notes extract, relating to C2₁.</p>
<i>Preserving the institutional status quo</i>	<p>"Here no, you won't be caught. In Kawangware it's different, everybody has to be registered, but there was a time when the <i>Kanyo</i> [county government] people came here to register all the businesses and people started to throw stones that them. So they said 'hey, we cannot go there'."--C1₁.</p> <p>"The police say that the businesses that operate around here, they just help people to be busy ... so that they don't involve in the crimes. So they don't ask for these registration certificates and all that."--C2₄.</p> <p>"<i>Kanyo</i> are so afraid of this place! They don't come they don't come. How can you come and tax someone that is selling sukuma wikki, ungas, these small small things. You want 50 bob and maybe he earns like 150 a day. So if you take 50 bob it's like you're killing him. These businesses, they are just down, you can't start taxing people."--C2₂.</p> <p>"I can call a <i>Sacco</i> [a form of financial co-operative that is popular in East-Africa], it's a club for the rich people ... [Slum businesses] were not paying tax, so when the Sacco joins them they are identifiable. So the Sacco benefits the revenue [commissioner] ... I'll tell you one thing Philip. The slum people never like to pay tax. But the conditionality [of being a Sacco member] will force them to pay."--O4.</p>

Table 6a – Emergent Themes and their Empirical Content, Chapter 5 (Individual Entrepreneurs; continued)

Illegal but Legitimate Economic Activity	
<i>Legitimising Activities</i>	<p>"Because you will depend on [illegal delivery work] conveniently. By the end of the day you know you will have made 500 or 600. But we who work the way we do here, it's not predictable, because you can wake up in the morning without a job ... If you still a whole day without getting money, it is very difficult."--E2.</p> <p>"But you find that, ... most of the people like [that the <i>chang'aa</i> industry exists in Mukuru] because you find that we are not idle. Many boys take it as their work. You see its not like a long time ago, you'd be here, and [it was] some place boys would go to steal because they don't have work, or people they keep on complaining because at night they can't pass this group because those [boys] hang there at night and take their things, but ... [because people can make a living from <i>chang'aa</i>] we are cool."--C14.</p> <p>"[People of this community], I can't say they see something good in <i>chang'aa</i>. But you know, ... this <i>chang'aa</i>, it's helped many people since it came here. You will see, I'm here, I don't have anything, to get even one bob [1c] is hard. You don't have any food, so you [may be tempted to] take [things], [to] do many crimes. ... When you come to your house you will find something like TV, or your computer, or something, has been stolen [because people are so desperate for money]. But now, it helps. Because now, many people have a job by a day. If you are [busy] there with <i>chang'aa</i>, you can't leave there without your 1,000 or 500 [\$10 or \$5]."--C111.</p> <p>"Something like the liquor is accepted by a certain group, cultural group. And because they, they refer to this kind of business as something that starts from the backyard."--O7.</p> <p>"Okay they were banned, they are not allowed. You see after the election, I know the government will disturb us, but we talked to the police and the chief. That's why we are still operating. When the government will be in place I don't know what the government will decide. But we shall continue talking with them."--E17.</p> <p>"You know so many businesses here, in the slums, operate illegally. They don't have license, they just operate. So you can't blame."--E17.</p>
<i>Legitimising People</i>	<p>"We switch between businesses, if one is doing well we spend our time at it, if the other is doing well we spend our time at that, the businesses are unified."--E17.</p> <p>"In five years I will vie for a seat. MCA. If I do my business well, I will have money. After that five years I will have money, so I can represent, because I know it, all the problems."--E17.</p> <p>"[Since the truck crash] many, many customers gone. And many people in this area, I was loaning them charcoal. If you are a frequent customer, if you need like 5 bags, you can buy three cash, then I give you two [on credit], then you sell after two days, you give me money ... These areas have a lot of jobless people, many, many, many jobless people. People are suffering because of joblessness ... We have to struggle, because there is no-one who is going to bring money to me, and other people are depending on [the <i>chang'aa</i> industry too]. So we have to struggle ..."--E2.</p>
<i>Formal-informal feedback loop</i>	<p>"No people don't see that as criminal, because even the police they usually find us doing the work and they don't see it as a crime. We just pass, he is doing his business and I am doing my business."--C14.</p> <p>"But, for you to start a business in Mukuru ... if your business is illegal, like the one that John was talking about, or liquor drinking, or there are those businesses like gambling. So, such businesses ... they first, they must first report to the police stations and to the chief for them to be legalised in our slums."--O7.</p>

Table 6a – Emergent Themes and their Empirical Content, Chapter 5 (Individual Entrepreneurs; continued)

	Contingencies of Collective Identity
<p><i>Ethnicity and the urban-rural 'double life'</i></p>	<p>[Things are] better here [than in my rural home area]. You know, people from rural [areas], they depend on [city] money. If somebody gets a month's salary, he brings to his wife [in the rural place]. The wife buys for children. But me, I get here before they get."--E1.</p> <p>"Even Kikuyu, they are the most dangerous. ... They prefer stealing. They prefer stealing than working."--E1.</p> <p>E2: "Because the companies, if somebody gets the chance for two people or three people, he will take people from his side, whether from home ... And if I have a job here, I will call my cousin, my brother, whatever, I will explain to them, then you know ..."</p> <p>[Interviewer: Even in these companies in Mukuru tribalism is still there?]</p> <p>E2: "Very much. In Kenya tribalism is, very much, it's a problem."</p> <p>"Corruption is everywhere. It seems like everyone needs to be thinking on the same wavelength. If all these people are doing it then it's ok. Corruption is just so accepted. And everyone here reads the newspaper, they are so politically attuned. Spend one day over in the weaving room and listen to the political commentary – they know exactly what everyone has been saying and why they have said it. It doesn't matter if it's Uhuru or Rala or whoever, they want to know about it all. And yet because of tribalism it doesn't matter, because you know who a child will vote for when they grow up before they even get out of nappies. People vote along with their own tribe, everyone in the family votes the same way."--O1.</p> <p>"I think there's also another area to look at with people in Mukuru itself, and that is the fact that for many of them they have been farmers. They have been people that have relied very much on the land and have come here looking for work."--O1.</p> <p>[Interviewer: Do you think you might have problems next week with Rala's unofficial 'swearing in'?</p> <p>E3: "We don't know [laughs]. We don't know. We can't talk about it, because we don't know what is happening ... But we will not open our job. The other day they [Rala's supporters] were running here, they took our things, then they run away. It's so bad."--E3.</p> <p>[Indicating other business-owners nearby:] He's David from Kisii, the one with the cap there is Muriah from Machakos [laughs] ... Yeah, they are from all over the world!"--E7.</p> <p>"We need a leader from another tribe so that we may know what he or she can do for us. Not even all the time Kikuyu is the president. Kikuyu is the president, why?"--E7.</p> <p>"In Kenya, ethnicity is big, ethnicity is big."--O3.</p> <p>"Ah, Luos and Kikuyus can never come together ... You can find Kikuyus everywhere, wherever there is something [money] they will go there. That is why, during the post-election violence in 2007-08 so many Kikuyus were killed, it's because they are in every place.' I asked him why there wasn't unrest in Mukuru as there was in other places. 'Mukuru has a lot of Kikambas, a lot of Kisii. Kikambas don't like war. When I think back to all of history I can't remember a time where Kikambas fought.'"--C2.</p> <p>E8₂: "The elections? Ah, so much problems. One, is the tribalism. Politics, politics is affecting us. You can't buy here when a Ja'luo is there, where a Luhya is there, you know we have so many tribes here."</p> <p>[Interviewer: You're a kamba?]</p> <p>E8₂: "Kikuyu."</p> <p>[Interviewer: Okay, so if a Luhya comes here they will buy here [at a Luhya-owned shop], if a Kikuyu comes they will buy from you? A Luo won't come and buy from you?]</p> <p>E8₂: "Yea, Luhya won't come, a Ja'luo won't come here. A Kikuyu will."</p> <p>"Even Kambas are the business holders in this Mukuru. Kisii. A lot of Luhya, a lot of Kisii, we are mixed tribes. It's very mixed [in Mukuru]."--E8₂.</p> <p>E11: "When we back here in Luhya is usual."</p> <p>Other: "People don't trust each other."</p> <p>E11: "You can't trust somebody to keep your money because tomorrow you won't find them. So there is no trust." ...</p> <p>[Interviewer: And how do you find Mukuru compared to Mathare.]</p> <p>E11: "Mathare is well up [wealthier]. It's a old valley, the people there they are well up than here. ... In Mathare people have co-operation."</p> <p>[Interviewer: They have more co-operation? Why do you think that is?]</p> <p>E11: "See like Kibera, it's another 'old Mukuru' [older than Mukuru], but even there you see the peoples they are co-operating. Here you can't see people co-operating because they are, Mukuru are growing day by day, so they don't know each other very well."</p> <p>[Interviewer: So Mukuru is a younger place.]</p> <p>E11: "New people come every day."</p> <p>[Interviewer: And so it takes time for trust to be established.]</p> <p>E11: "Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah."</p> <p>[Interviewer: In places like Kibera and Mathare, they have had the time for that trust to develop.]</p> <p>E11: "Those are the people, they are the older people, they know each other from childhood, they have grown up [together]. So they know each other very ..."</p> <p>"But here we live, many many communities. We live, community from Kisii, where I belong, we have the community from Kambas, where my brothers belong, we have [people] from Luhya [and] from Luo areas."--E12.</p> <p>"Here you know that Kikuyu community that I told you they're just disturbing people. They just go somewhere they grab, they call it their own, and then they sell. They come here they grab it because they were not known people, they grab it, they just sell it. That's the way they operate."--E12.</p> <p>"Because right now life, even here in Nairobi, we meet with many people, we meet with many communities. They are claiming they're your friends, but when you, you know this life, we are looking life, we are coming from our rural homes, we are coming to Nairobi looking for life. ... So you squeeze yourself looking [for] money."--E12.</p> <p>[Interviewer: Did you have problems when people came through here after the Rala homecoming?]</p> <p>E13: "That day we had more problems, unfortunately we closed the job. On 10th. They were stoning us. Very harsh. ... They wanted the Kikuyu people. They asked everybody, where are the Kikuyu? Where are they?"</p> <p>"But every village has a different mix, like for example, if you go to Lunga Lunga side it's mostly Kamba, and in Reuben I forget the mix but a lot of Kambas. But here in this side there's Kikuyus, Luos, Luyhas, a lot of all three of them. And then, not that many Kambas, there are some."--O2.</p> <p>Kikuyu Intruder: "In Kenya, there is Indians and Kikuyus who know business. A Kikuyu knows business. And Kikuyus are everywhere. In every place there is a Kikuyu."</p> <p>Intruder 2: "The rich and the poor in Kenya, the poor are Kikuyu, the rich is Kikuyu."</p> <p>E17: "Beggars in town, Kikuyu. [Inaudible] in town, Kikuyu. Prostitute in town, Kikuyu."</p> <p>Intruder 2: "Killing their husbands, Kikuyu."</p> <p>E17: "If you walk around in town, you will see. Do your own research."</p> <p>"I think the people here are hard working people because, you know, many people here they come from farms, from businesses, that's why I think those are hard working, self-dependent. The reason I can say that is because, I think usually they are not together with their parents or spouses."--E18.</p> <p>"Kikuyus are left alone. Kikuyus and Kalenjins. So you can find if another person from another tribe comes and finds that I'm a Kikuyu they go and find the same good I'm selling [somewhere else]. It's very hard to find another tribe coming to [buy stock from me]. Very few are coming. That is why I'm telling you nowadays business is very hard."--E17.</p>

Table 6a – Emergent Themes and their Empirical Content, Chapter 5 (Individual Entrepreneurs; continued)

Contingencies of Collective Identity (continued)	
<p><i>Narratives Difference predicated on entrepreneurial capabilities/success</i></p>	<p>"If somebody from Dunholm likes a trouser, he came direct to here. But now, from Dunholm to here, he can meet even 20 businesses [selling trousers], so he can't reach here. At the time we were only two people, but now we are almost 100 and something, selling trousers. So ... [next year I will] mix the business, ladies and mens. And shirts also, because someone can buy a long [trousers] and they need a shirt and I don't have it so he goes. But if he buy a long shirt, belt, socks, I have to earn a lot of money. ... What I come to find out, if you mix business differences [sell a range of different things], you can make money. Because somebody can fail to buy a trouser. He buy a shirt, or he buy another thing ... You have to check what can attract many people."--F1</p> <p>"These ones [showing me a pair of trousers] are ours, they are good because we make them designed. There [other businesses], they make them just to sell."--E1.</p> <p>E2: "Because <i>jua kali</i> is a managed business, because in <i>jua kali</i> you are settled somehow, like here. Like you see, hustling, you are just meandering wherever you get money. You may get something you may not get. Hustling you may, what can I tell you?"</p> <p>[Interviewer: I think I know what you mean, you are not static in the one place, you are not focused on the same business, from day to day things change.]</p> <p>E2: "Exactly that is it, you are not focused on the one thing. Different issues, business, whatever. Because on hustling you cannot say you are assured of getting money, it depends on how the day has [gone]."</p> <p>"You see that guy [he was going door to door selling eggs], he is just hustling, he is a <i>jua kali</i> sector member. He is hustling to get something small on his upkeep. Here, we are just working, I am not a hustler."--E2.</p> <p>E2: "You cannot sell at a higher price, the other one is selling at a cheaper price, and you expect a customer. So, there best thing you have to know, you have to bring a good quality of the charcoal. Quality. Quality is the only thing. Quality is the matter of the business. Not quantity, quality. Because if you have good quality you have the customers [coming to you], they leave the others, they come to you because they know your charcoal is very fine."</p> <p>[Interviewer: And how do you ensure that the charcoal you get is good quality?]</p> <p>E2: "When I go to the market, that's the big issue. I have to select the best quality. ... "</p> <p>[Interviewer: What makes good quality charcoal? Is it that the pieces are big?]</p> <p>E2: "No. It depends on the tree. The tree of the charcoal. You know in the bush there are different trees, because we know the trees. This is the charcoal of this quality, this of... If I'm not going to the market I'll call the guys upcountry. I'll tell them if you bring bad quality I will not take you. So you bring the good thing, you get your money, my customer will judge the quality, then ..."</p> <p>[Interviewer: And do you think the other people that sell charcoal around here, do they care as much about quality as you do?]</p> <p>E2: "No, that is their weakness now, upon my advantage [laughs]. That cannot be leaked to them, because if I leak they will challenge me."</p> <p>"She was adamant that some entrepreneurs were good at what they do, and their businesses would survive in the long term, and other entrepreneurs were destined to fail. As she was making this point we were walking through a thoroughfare lined on both sides with stalls. She pointed out the difference between a stall on the left hand side and a stall on the right. On the left hand side the two proprietors were sitting out front, visible to passers by and available for interaction. In the stall on the right the two proprietors were sitting in the back, almost out of sight, and talking to each other. When its this densely populated with similar businesses, such are the margins, she said, although she didn't see the difference between the two as being small – to her there was a clear example of a good proprietor and a clear example of a bad one."--Field-notes extract.</p> <p>"He showed me a book of receipts bearing the name of the business, which he has just had printed (I am very serious', he said)."--Field-notes extract, relating to E1.</p> <p>E8: "You have a lot of businesses around here, the one just across [almost directly facing them, around 15 metres away] sells the same things as us, that one [pointing to another one facing them] sells furniture."</p> <p>[Interviewer: It must be difficult to have this many businesses around, like that one selling the same things as you?]</p> <p>E8: "Competition, yes, the competition here is high."</p> <p>[Interviewer: How do you make customers come to you and not to them?]</p> <p>E8: "You have to be good with your tongue, to communicate with customers and show them what you have."</p> <p>E11: "Here in Kenya we have got many different <i>jua kalis</i> ... Like me, here I have me own <i>jua kali</i>."</p> <p>Other: "It depends with your hustle ... It's like a stiff competition."</p> <p>E11: "But <i>jua kali</i> now it's many different industries, so you have <i>jua kali</i> making jewellery and you have <i>jua kali</i> selling clothes so <i>jua kali</i> in history would have been people doing this or other kind of metalwork but now even somebody that has a small hotel or a tailor is <i>jua kali</i>."</p> <p>Other: "You know <i>jua kali</i> Kenya, here in Kenya it depends on your talent."</p> <p>"The way he handles people is not the same [as] I handle people. There is those people knows to talk with customers, you know we deal with different people. There is those people [that] like to sit down and talk, like most people who are used to somebody who loves politics. Me I don't show them I am this side or this side, I play neutral so that I get the feelings of each one. So they love that."--E12.</p> <p>E13: "No, my business, it doesn't have much competition."</p> <p>[Interviewer: So the other businesses they are slightly different?]</p> <p>E13: "They are very different."</p> <p>[Interviewer: So do you purposely buy different things so that your business is different?]</p> <p>E13: "The difference of my business is this Philip: many people they don't like small things, you see, like this kiwi [polish] this is for shoes, do you know it? So, they don't want small things, they want big big things. All these big things they don't have, the big things they don't attract people like the small ones. ... You see Philip, people like these small things, like watch, biro, ten shillings, and many people see their business are big they have bags, they have this, they don't attract people."</p> <p>"What I normally do, I talk with them softly, and with love. So they come because of that. They come, they come to my place because they know they will get love, they will be attended well. You see those things, that is the secret of how I am making my business."--E14.</p> <p>"Me I know a lot of business. I can work in the shop, I can manage the plots, I can manage the hotel. ... What you do is to welcome the customer, entertain them. You surprise a customer so as to buy. And you confuse them. You can tell him or her these clothes you are selling, they cost 1,200 and now you are selling 400."--E19.</p>

Table 6a – Emergent Themes and their Empirical Content, Chapter 5 (Individual Entrepreneurs; continued)

Contingencies of Collective Identity (continued)	
<i>Narratives of Sameness predicated on Entrepreneurial struggles</i>	<p>"Especially this year, it has been a hard year for us because of election, those things. People have no money, the economy is so down, you see, so we are struggling so much."--E14.</p> <p>"I can't be employed. But even this work I don't like it, I don't like it. I married when I was too young, 17 years old. Us Kenyan women we are very stupid. We have no control over our future, we never plan anything."--E13.</p> <p>"We are struggling to survive, the money that we get is little."--E10.</p> <p>"In fact we are not in a better life. We just putting more effort to gain our life but it is very hard. Very very hard. We just pray god to bless us because we are struggling a lot here Philip. They are still hustlers like me."--E13.</p>
<i>Apirations to escape undermining collective identity</i>	<p>"For now it's good. But with time, the business of charcoal can be here, but I can stay somewhere else, but the upkeep of the business must, must, here. But it is not a must I live here."--E2</p> <p>"And I think it's seen more as a transitional place, where poeple come for a specific period of time and then they go away."--O2.</p> <p>"I can move to another place in the morning. ... I can leave a job for somebody else to just stay here and sell for me, then I'll move to another place."--E7.</p> <p>"I hope to get enough money to leave this <i>kajiji</i> [neighbourhood]. ... It's a bad place, we have all this mud."--E13.</p> <p>"It was not my wish to leave there [where I was based before], it was not my wish. But circumstances forced me to come here."--E10.</p> <p>"Next year I will be someone else. I'm trying my best to be someone else. I don't want to be in this <i>matope</i> [mud] all the time."--E13.</p> <p>"Here is where I come to find money. When I grow old I will just disappear."--E16.</p> <p>"I want my business to expand. Even I don't want to like in this <i>kajiji</i> [neighbourhood]. I don't want. ... My business can stay here, because there is a lot of people. There is a lot of people. The movement from the morning to evening, they are still [passing by]."--E19.</p> <p>E14: "I will get out from here. It's just a starting point for my life." [Interviewer: Hopefully if I come back I will get to speak to you again.] E14: "Yes, and hopefully that time you will not find me here, by God's grace! I might move!"</p>
<i>Economic Isolation</i>	<p>[Interviewer: And tell me, if this business started to go down, is there anyone you could go to around here for money?] E1: "If it goes down? Nobody can help, nobody." [Interviewer: You are alone?] E1: "All alone." [Interviewer: What about your brother, or other people around?] E1: "Ah no, everybody stuggles for him[self] because he has childrens, he have problems, he has his children to [take care of]" ... [Interviewer: Is Mukuru like that as a community, do people help eachother?] E1: "Nobody helps others." "and if you have an idea of doing anything, you can start it. If you have an idea and you have money. You cannot stay idle, you benefit yourself, you want to cater for yourself."--E2.</p> <p>"You know, one thing [about being a woman here], people just ignore you, they say that you are a minor. Just you don't have anything."--E7.</p> <p>"I haven't seen her [E19] for three months. I think she has gone from here. I think she went home [upcountry]. I don't think you will see her around here."--E13, whose stall was adjacent to that of E19, and who spoke regularly.</p> <p>"We are still struggling, hoping that some customers come to buy. Outside of that we have no power. If the customers come, it will be good; if they do not come, it will still be good [there's nothing we can do]."--E10.</p> <p>"And now with our business so low, you cannot save, you cannot save ... I have not borrowed from those banks ... You know sometimes my business might not be favourable. And suppose you have borrowed 100,000 [\$1,000], whereby you are supposed to pay almost 5,000 [\$50] per month, or 10,000 [\$100] per month, and the business is not favourable. What should you do? That's why I don't borrow, I do manage myself with the little I have."--E13.</p> <p>"You know, the government is all about their people, the government is taking care of their people, but not taking care of your interests. I see like European, I see like US, when you touch one US person, you touch the whole country. But here in Kenya, things are normal, whether you die, whether you'll be there. You just move on, and that's not right ... In our country, Kenya, we are not crying for eachother, you are crying for your own interest ... You know, I don't know if you know Tanzania. That country I love it. One thing in Tanzania, their first president, he said, 'See your brother, see your friend as your brother, see who this guy as your sister, see ...' That's what Tanzanian people know. ... But here in Kenya it's so difficult, you just sleep here, this is your neighbour, but your neighbour wakes up he just goes ... They don't have the solidarities."--E12.</p> <p>"No they can't [be counted on to help in times of crisis], because even them they are struggling in their families so they can't help you. ... Sometimes it's insecure, because maybe you need somebody, you need something that is very urgent in your life, maybe the business is so down you need to borrow some money from your friends, but they don't have. So you feel so down, because the friends they don't have. You need money, nobody to help you, that one is a challenge for us. ... They will come and say, 'Oh, I'm so sorry', but they don't give anything, so you have to look [for] your own means."--E14.</p> <p>E16: "Even now eating is too ... I'm just not giving up, so not eating is just ... instead of my child to eat, even to eat, and I just eat to me a little." [Interviewer: Did you eat anything for breakfast this morning?] E16: "I just ate plain <i>ugali</i>. With water, with water. It doesn't even [allow me to] feel like a man. Just struggling. Surviving." [Interviewer: Will you eat more <i>ugali</i> later?] E16: "It will depend on if I get money." [Interviewer: And if your business here started to go down, is there anybody that you could go to here for assistance?] E19: "Who would assist me? Nobody. Nobody. It's just me."</p>

Table 6b: Emergent Themes and their Empirical Content, Chapter 7 (Collectives)

Structural Embedding	
<p><i>Severing of family ties has more profound emotional, relational, and economic ramifications for the (younger) second generation than for the (older) first generation</i></p>	<p>"He grew up 500 miles away from Nairobi, but he came to Nairobi and lived in Mathare for a while, and he said he would take me to show me around. He came to Maendeleo in Form 1, but when he was in Form 3 or 4 his father died and he dropped out so he could earn some money and support himself. I don't think he has any family around now."--Field-notes extract, relating to C1₉.</p> <p>"[C1₂] spoke of how his generation had been failed by their fathers."--Field-notes extract.</p> <p>"I have been boarding in this school since the day that I came in Mukuru. Until that day that I finished. And by the time that I left the school, we took one house, we were staying like 5 guys. Those days that we were here, we were staying like 5, hustling and paying rent.--C1₁₀.</p> <p>"I hurt my back carrying those bags on Monday, and since then I am not able [to work]. I cannot go to a clinic because I have nobody to take me. ... "I have no father, no mother, I am on my own."--C1₁₀.</p> <p>"I'm 17 ... But our house is small so I can't live with my mother, so I'm trying to hustle so I can pay for my own house."--C1₆.</p>
<p><i>Ties emanating of ties from local sources that were available to the second generation but not to the first, like school and recreation</i></p>	<p>"Yeah, I came to know them. Okay I knew them because of the football. Sometimes I can be there, and bored, and I'm like, 'hey, they are playing football, why can't I join them and play?' So it was like that we started as a football and stuff and stuff."--C1₁.</p> <p>"Almost all of the people who we are with outside, they were studying here, they finished school, so they are trying just to hustle."--C1₆.</p> <p>"As you know we are Dawasisi, so that's a very long friendship, from 2010, 2009, up to now we are still friends."C2₂.</p>
<p><i>Emotional significance to members of the second generation of local, peer-based ties</i></p>	<p>"But this is where I come to do my hustling. I come here to see my boys, they are my family."--C1₅.</p> <p>"She is in strong agreement that there is a difference in culture among the youth of Mukuru (that have spent much of their lives there) and the older ones (that have spent most of their life elsewhere). For the younger ones there is a much greater sense of community. They watch eachother's backs, and ensure that nobody goes without the necessities, even if they have little to share themselves."--Field-notes extract, relating to O1.</p>
<p><i>Local, peer-based ties as a source of economic resources among the second generation</i></p>	<p>"When you see one of your own struggling you have to help."--C1₂.</p> <p>"Because even if you dont have a computer you can go and borrow [from] a friend. If there's a project you need to do, you think this project is going to give back handsomely then you can jsut go and borrow. 'Help me with your machine.'"--C2₁.</p> <p>"The good news from [C1₂] was that the car wash was back up and running. They paid an official Sh2k to install a direct, illegal connection to the car wash. Then the other car wash across the road began to threaten to call the police, as they were afraid of losing customers. So [C1₂] was patrolling the area throughout the afternoon, ensuring that the peace was kept and that if any police or officials came he could reason with them. Eventually one did come (another official) and he was paid another Sh1k to reinstall the wires, as the previous ones were poorly wired and were a major fire risk. [C1₂] was pleased with this outcome. I asked him whether everyone had paid an equal share of this fee and he said no, some paid Sh200, some paid only 50/=.</p> <p>'People bring whatever they have.'"--Field-notes extract.</p> <p>"It would be hard just to hustle, to find money, but since we are together like this I can do work easily because I know I have some friends who I live with like brothers."--C1₆.</p>

Table 6b – Emergent Themes and their Empirical Content, Chapter 7 (Collectives; continued)

Cognitive Embedding	
<i>Limited exposure to business practices outside of the slum</i>	<p>"There is a beautiful park just 3km from here, you can get there for 20/= by matatu, but people from here don't go there. We had to teach people doing the weaving where to go to buy thread and who to buy it from, otherwise they just wouldn't leave the slum."--O1.</p> <p>"I believe the mentoring is there with eachother, and that's peer-group as I was talking about before, however I think that because it's not supported enough, not informed enough, then you can get all of these negative bases that people move from rather than a positive or a right base to move from."--O1.</p>
<i>Adverse selection bias within the slum</i>	<p>"So the brightest and the most entrepreneurial are gone. You don't see them. ... Our tragedy is that all our brains move out. If you have Form 4 [final year of secondary school] this year three quarters of the will do quite well and get something, after training they'll get something. They'll move out with the whole family. Now you're left with the quarter that's not that brainy, not that successful."--O2.</p> <p>"Yeah, so for me, that's a stepping block that the people here can't really draw from, say, expertise of people who have stepped up into the entrepreneurial, because once they've stepped up into the entrepreneurial, it seems they go away from Mukuru. And so therefore ... they don't have the people around them to actually feed them with the good stories."--O1.</p>
<i>Tendency to replicate</i>	<p>"If you have this good idea, if you come and share it with me, I'll take it up, do it if I have the resources, go ahead of you, and start it off."--O1.</p> <p>"I have seen so many people come here and try to do this. People they see you, that you are doing well, they can just say, "I can't sit at home, I will get a machine", and then they will start ... but people don't know my processes [so many fail]."--C2₂.</p> <p>"You can see, beside Kobil, there are many people selling those eggs. So you know, if someone says they want one of those he knows he can just go there and he will get one. ... There is a similar thing in Kawangare with ground nuts. If I want ground nuts I just say 'I'll go to [such and such a place] and I know I will find them there'."--C1₁.</p> <p>"For me around here, there were no role models around here ... Another thing here people copy people, when you are doing something he wants to do it but he don't know why you're doing it."--C2₁.</p> <p>"He is currently 'consulting' with business that failed to understand why they did. I asked him what he was finding out through these consultations: 'People are doing what their friends are doing; they fail because they are just copying their friends. If you don't have vision... vision is the most important thing, you can't just work for the stomach [you have to see beyond the present].'"--O6.</p> <p>"There was a boy called James, he was the first guy to start this computer programme. Most guys ... they were just there, seeing how he was doing his work and that's, I think that's where they got the idea and they decided to open their branches [cyber businesses]. So I think, he was the guy who started and they were after him."--C1₁.</p>
<i>'Group Cert envy'</i>	<p>"If you get the certificate there is a lot of chances that comes. You know, there is another group down here, it is called <i>Bakeat</i>, so this <i>Bakeat</i>, they have a certificate. When our councillor comes, you know he calls the group [and contracts them to do local jobs], because they have a certificate that has been signed. But we, we don't have [a certificate], so we can't go anywhere. ... If we get the certificate, you know our governor, Mike Sonko, he has the team that's called Sonko Rescue Team, so if we can have the certificate we can go there and tell him, 'Sonko, this is our certificate, our group, then we'll want jobs [with] Sonko rescue team ... It's good. It's better than even NYS [National Youth Service], it's better.'"--C1₇.</p> <p>"Now, if you don't have that certificate, you cannot [avail of official business supports]."--C1₄.</p> <p>"You know last time, Philip, we told you if you want to get a cheque, maybe from government, you need to have a group certificate. If you get a group certificate, maybe you have cash from government, from youth funds maybe."--C1₂.</p> <p>"We have tried before [to get microfinance support]. You need a group certificate."--C1₂.</p>

Table 6b – Emergent Themes and their Empirical Content, Chapter 7 (Collectives; continued)

Cultural Embedding	
<p><i>The extreme susceptibility of young people to crime, drugs, destitution, etc.</i></p>	<p>"People here they gravitate towards working in a group for protection, there's that safety in numbers mentality."--O1.</p> <p>"The two of us took a long walk around the shum, first all the way over to the rubbish dump at the end of Falcon Rd, where he used to scavenge when he was younger. Now he says that even he is afraid to go back, because there are "angry" boys there that might attack him."--Field-notes extract, relating to C1₃.</p> <p>"It's important to be doing something with your time. You know, here, when you're spending the day sitting around you can become involved in a lot of problems like drugs. That is why it's important to do things with your time."--C1₁.</p> <p>"I have no father, no mother, I am on my own. My father passed away in '07, one day he had a swelling on his leg, the next day he died. And then we buried my father, five weeks later my mother got blind, and she was blind until 2015 [when she died]. I was attending [named a secondary school] but after my mother died I had to drop out because I could not afford the school fees. Now I am just a hustler, I have to support myself... and we can't be thieves."--C1₁₀.</p> <p>"While we were passing the quarry, he said to me: 'This is the place that you cannot walk at night.' 'Even you?' 'Even me I was [mugged] just the other day ... I was walking home, there were around 4 of us [meaning he was walking with three people that he didn't know]. After some time these people started to produce weapons, and I realised, 'Oh, these people are together.' So I gave them my phone, that's why you see me walking with this little phone ... Then, a few nights after that I was walking this way again, except this time we were three, and we were prepared ... we had hammers. But then we met the police, and they said, 'Oh, you are the boys that have been disturbing people on this road,' so I said, 'No, I was attacked by those boys the other night'. The policeman told us to keep walking and don't turn around.'"--Field-notes extract, relating to C2₂.</p> <p>"[C1₁] is letting [C1₃] stay at his place at the moment because [C1₃] cannot afford to pay rent on a place of his own."</p>
<p><i>The proliferation of discourse that does not recognise clear distinctions between friends and family</i></p>	<p>"What I can tell you is we've grown together like brothers, so the group is good. We love each other like brothers. If you don't have [something], your brother can help you."--C1₇.</p> <p>"It would be hard just to hustle, to find money, but since we are together like this, I can do work easily because I know I have some friends who I live with like brothers."--C1₆.</p>
<p><i>Expectations of interpersonal solidarity among peers in the second generation</i></p>	<p>"You know this tight knit of young people that will do anything virtually for each other, and it seems to me all because they have a bond."--O1.</p> <p>"I had like four friends with me, and the only reason they came, they were telling me: 'You've been given something, you need to share it'. So I bought meat and ugali for us all."--C2₂.</p> <p>C1₇: "It's difficult, very difficult, because you know in our group, maybe I have 200 shillings and someone like Brio doesn't have, so I decide to give him 50 shillings, so that's how we have..."</p> <p>[Interviewer: And do you always feel that you'll get that back?]</p> <p>C1₇: "No, no, no, he's my friend so I don't need it back."</p>
<p><i>Being subjected to similar sets of challenging experiences</i></p>	<p>"He spoke about the necklacings that he has seen, where men who are accused of things like theft get beaten up, wrapped in tyres, and burnt alive. He said he saw that for the first time, on the street in broad daylight, when he was 13, and couldn't sleep afterwards. Someone from his class in [school] was caught stealing a TV from a nightclub and was beaten to death. I think he said he was 15."--Field-notes extract, relating to C1₂.</p> <p>"[C1₂]'s eyes were bloodshot and at first I thought he must have been drinking last night. "How are things?" "Things are good... but not really. You know Peter, the 23-year old boy that you saw us playing football with, he's gone. He passed away this morning." ... [C1₂] told me what had happened to him. Late last night/early this morning Peter, as part of a group, tried to steal two of those Chinese slot machines from a business. He was caught in the act, and mob justice took its course. He was beaten to death at the football pitch behind Ruben Ctr, probably around 6am."--Field-notes extract.</p>
<p><i>Emerging narratives of mutual disenfranchisement</i></p>	<p>C1₃: "And the cops don't understand boys. They think we all are thieves."</p> <p>C1₁: "Being in the slums, Philip, once you are a boy, a youth, you're always a suspect. Even if you're doing your own stuff."</p> <p>C1₃: "Even if you're small[time]".</p> <p>C1₁: "Any time they can just gun you down."</p> <p>"Kenya is the first best country in the world for corruption... marathon running and corruption, we are the best... You have come into this country and you have seen: the government doesn't help any youth[s]. They are just lying. They are just lying. They are just lying to big companies and telling them, "We are helping youths from the ghetto." But you see in [the] ghetto we struggle for ourselves to survive. The government doesn't help us. It doesn't help us. It doesn't help us for real."--C1₃.</p> <p>"Both of them repeatedly drew attention to the difficulty of survival in Mukuru, but they railed against outside judgement about their character or against the community at large. They know that outside perceptions of Mukuru and places like it are brutally negative, and that Wazungu [white people] tend not to go there, certainly not alone. Therefore they were pleased to hear that I had gone alone and had shown myself to be willing to find out for myself ... C1₃: "Experience is the best teacher. Don't judge a book by its cover, just come and see for yourself." They spoke of the 8 young men that were shot dead by a policeman in Mukuru last year. They said that they were friends of theirs, and that the policeman shot them for being thieves. They said that these people were not thieves, their lives were just worthless to the man that took them."--Field-notes extract, relating to C1₁ and C1₃.</p> <p>"Walking down the road from that swimming pool we passed a lot of very expensive looking apartments, and Steve and Brian said that they wouldn't even be able to walk on those streets without being bothered if I wasn't with them."--Field-notes extract, relating to C1₁ and C1₃.</p> <p>"You see to get a job in Kenya is very competitive. You might come with one certificate and find that the other guy has five!"--C1₂.</p> <p>"Mukuru is expanding quicker, and the ones who are making it to expand are the ones who came before. You know, somebody who has been here for more than 15 years knows more cutouts of Mukuru, knows that this place belongs to who and who, so they just grab, because they have been here for a long time and we are not from here."--C1₄.</p>
<p><i>The mutuality of business and social interests</i></p>	<p>"I asked Anthony if he pooled his profits with [C2₂] and co. as well as Marcus, but he said no, because Anthony's 'group' are dancers, and [C2₂]'s group are not dancers (they're singers)."--Field-notes extract.</p> <p>"But we have a project, we have a project, I think it's a bit one. ... It's a music project and a business project too. ... We are thinking of something"--C2₂.</p> <p>"We are musicians, we joined together like four years ago. But we used to get some disadvantages [sic] as a group - maybe we're going somewhere we don't have fare, we don't have transportation fee and all that. So we just decided to start up something that will maybe get that money for us. So that if we go somewhere we have something in our pocket..."--C2₁.</p>

Table 6b – Emergent Themes and their Empirical Content, Chapter 7 (Collectives; continued)

Positive Distinctiveness	
<i>Pre-existing</i>	<p>"So we started as a team of three, and our aim to start that business was to get that petty cash to cater for our transport when we go to events, because we sing, we are a music group, a gospel music group."--C2₁.</p> <p>"I think, we can be just, in this our group, we don't use drugs because we have hustling, so we are not that idle, so we are trying to hustle. Even that idea of coming with footballs, we can't be idle, because when we feel like we have something to do, we can come here, we do some training."--C1₆.</p> <p>"We are together, we don't take other people like, we say because he comes from another area [that he can't be with us], it is not like that. We live like brothers."--C1₄.</p> <p>"We will continue until the last minute ... The one who brings a joke, take them out ... because we want those who are serious to do [things] the way we want."--C1₁₃.</p> <p>"The group is cool. I can say that we've grown together like brothers, we like each other so much, so the group is good, and we love each other. ... So we say friends come first, that's why we love each other like friends, like brothers."--C1₇.</p>
<i>Initial detachment of positive distinctiveness from entrepreneurship</i>	<p>"He said that the positive thing about Mukuru is that he can always hustle 50/= or 100/= each day [\$50c or \$1], which wouldn't be the case in other, less populated areas. This provides quite a lot of economic security, even if it is only a small amount of money."--C1₁₂.</p> <p>"So our aim was not to do business it was to do something that may give us some transportation fees to go somewhere. So when we ventured into this thing we didn't know that it would grow big. We didn't know that it would be big."--C2₁.</p> <p>"For me I started with a team of three members. And our aim was to get a little finance from what we were doing. I wasn't that into business [then]."--C2₂.</p> <p>"Yeah, when I started I didn't have a target, I just... yeah, ok, we had our targets in a way that we wanted something for our pocket, something to sustain our music band."--C2₁.</p>

Table 6b – Emergent Themes and their Empirical Content, Chapter 7 (Collectives; continued)

Positive Distinctiveness (continued)	
<i>Positive performance feedback</i>	<p>C2₁: "We started very low. ... Yeah, at the roadside." [Interviewer: Were you involved at that time too [C2₂]?" C2₂: "Yeah, I was." C2₁: "He was there since I was there. It was funny, I wish you could see it now, there is a photo I took, I don't know where the photo went." C2₂: "It was just a computer, just a computer like that. No printer, no nothing. ... [Laughs] Just outside somewhere." C2₁: "When there was rain, we closed it. Then after the rains we [opened it again]. It was very funny." ... C2₂: "You know, those days we had nothing, that was the only source that we had. So we worked hard on it." C2₁: "When you work hard on something you will get the results, I tell you. Because, me personally I can't believe what happened." "So when we were here we worked for let's say three months. And then everything started to change, the business minds started coming. I was like, 'Yeah, this thing is good, it's happening,' and I was like 'Ah, we can do something about this'."--C2₁. "We opened that place, we connected electricity and all that so we started working at noon. And people started coming and asking "what is this?" And we're telling them "this is a computer services centre, we can help you do this and this and this. And then someone would just say "can you do this for me?" And then we do it, and the person gets interested and starts paying. in two weeks time, we managed to raise like 10,000. Something that we were not even expecting. There was a time when we made like 5,000 a day. It was on a Sunday. We made like 5,000."--C2₁. "On and off life started changing, like the business was so good, and we started developing some skills through the experiences that we were getting. That is when I started to learn about business, I started to google about how to manage a business and all that. And at the end of the day, we decided to take it to a professional level, and we registered the business."--C2₁. "Let's say, like, here we do something like, we print the passport. Normally cybers around they don't do passports. So we've taken that opportunity and many customers come to us."--C2₄.</p>
<i>Positive performance feedback as an affirmation that this group is positively distinct</i>	<p>"You know that the only thing that keeps us moving is the fact that we were together before having anything, and we made sure that we have goals and we have dreams that we make sure we want to achieve."--C2₁. "Exactly, we are doing something different. And that's why we have our who clients who always come to us no matter what, and that's our advantage. So we know what we want and we know where we're going so we are focused."--C2₁. "The people here they can't think about tomorrow, they can only think about today."--C2₃. "So that's the problem with the people here. They don't want to work hard to achieve the life that they want. They just want some shortcuts to get the life that they've been wanting to live. So that's the problem here."--C2₁. "[The group connection is] very important, because if you have a protective group you are going to grow positive. But if you have a negative one then you will end up somewhere bad. Being a hustler you have to choose what to do, who to be with. Because a hustler is someone who gets wages, little wages from here and there, so you have to max the wages to make something out of it. So that's what we normally do. As for me, my group, we don't use any kind of drugs, we don't smoke, we don't drink. So when we are somewhere we think something productive. When we are somewhere sitting, talking, or doing something, we do something productive, something that will build me and my group."--C2₁. "You know, one thing with working as a group, you have to understand each other. You have to come to agreement before doing anything, not just do things blind. And when you are in as a group and you support it as a group you just do it the way it is. You see, but if it's a personal thing you can just do it because you are the one controlling everything, but as a group, because you know, we need each other tomorrow, we still need each other. So with that we must be trusting each other any time, any way. So when we have something we have to agree as a group, just don't do things from our own style of doing them. We just have to consult the group and make sure that everybody is okay with it, then we proceed."--C2₁. "This is the thing that brings us together. This is the, you know, music works funny. Music brings us together no matter what. It normally brings us together, because sometimes we have challenges and maybe sometimes misunderstandings, but when we just come together after practicing music we go back to business. That's how we work as a team. So it's very easy when music is involved."--C2₁.</p>
<i>Entrepreneurial progress is an effective and realistic means to sustain or enhance positive distinctiveness</i>	<p>"I've trained [most of my competitors in how to use computers] and if they have cybers I should think of something else to do apart from this ... So what I'm going to do, what we are planning the three of us is we want to bring the network ... what we are going to do is give them this wifi for three days, for free, so that everybody can test it, can see the best of it. After that, we just [tell them] that if you want to continue the same service, please pay such amount. Because I cannot keep on competing with these guys."--C2₂. "We have projects that we are going to, we want to start come next year. We want to boost our business, at least make it more, like expand it a little. Because you know, working as a team gives you a morale. There is a morale that you normally have."--C2₁. "But when you are a businessman, you don't think of being in the same place for like two years or three years. You expand. You come up with new targets. You come up with new plans that you execute to go to another level."--C2₁. "I came to realise that when you are in the business fraternity, you have to make sure that you have something that drives you to do that business. You have something that tells you that you have to move from here to here, so that it can motivate you from achieving what you want."--C2₁. "And we are always looking forward to doing something big, to expand our minds."--C2₁.</p>

Table 6b – Emergent Themes and their Empirical Content, Chapter 7 (Collectives; continued)

Positive Distinctiveness (continued)	
<p><i>Negative performance feedback</i></p>	<p>"You know there is some challenges man, it is not every day that you find that it's a good day. You find a day that you go to the house [after a shift] with 100 shillings. That's what you need for food. You don't have [enough money to say] this is for this, and this is for this. It's a challenge."--C1₄.</p> <p>"If you get money, hand to mouth. Hand to Mouth."--C1₃.</p> <p>"The things I could tell you about this place - you think you've gotten somewhere, then something happens and you're right back to the start."--C2₂.</p> <p>"No deliveries today, and [C2₂] told me there hasn't been any since Wednesday (today is Saturday). 'So we're all just broke'. [C2₂] later told me also that the police were planning to come today to raid the place where the chang'aa is made – they will take the drums and the product and there will be no more delivery work for the next two or three months. I subtly suggested that this would economically cripple them. He said, 'Yeah, we will just be broke. We're used to it'."--Field-notes extract.</p> <p>"They didn't succeed in getting the electricity back to run the car wash, they haven't had deliveries for a couple of days. ... The sense of being idle is almost crushing."--Field-notes extract.</p> <p>"[C1₁₂] took me to his house to meet his girlfriend, and on the way back told me that there are rumours of the cops cracking down on the <i>chang'aa</i> brewery, so there were no deliveries today. He's not sure if it will carry on into tomorrow. He said that he hadn't earned anything today and that was the reason there was nothing to "take" (eat/drink) at his house."--Field-notes extract.</p> <p>"I asked [C1₁] how things were going and he said not so good. He said that it's Friday evening and he should be preparing to go "raving" but instead he didn't even have money for food."--Field-notes extract.</p> <p>"I also asked [C1₃] if the car wash was still closed. 'Yeah, it's closed, there is no water. But we will open it.' 'When?' 'When the ground dries,' which may not be for six weeks."--Field-notes extract.</p> <p>"Sometimes you can make about 600, 500 shillings, another day you don't get anything."--C1₃.</p>
<p><i>Negative performance feedback challenges positive distinctiveness, leading the group to emphasise its social (rather than economic) facets</i></p>	<p>C1₁: "We know eachother very well, we do hustle together. Yeah. When it's time to enjoy ourselves..."</p> <p>C1₃: "Just go and enjoy ourselves..."</p> <p>C1₁: "Come back, no violence. It's a social group."</p> <p>"You know people die. People do die. You can find, maybe, Voste [which is himself] passed on last year [hypothetically]. Everybody in the group will go in my burial."--C1₃.</p>
<p><i>Emphasis on solidarity, not progress, as a source of positive distinctiveness also characterises entrepreneurial activities, leading to rapid, inefficient expansion in participants</i></p>	<p>"The car wash, I can say, 'You are protected'. When you're just waking up and be like 'I'll be working', as in, when you wake up, you'll be like, you have somewhere to work, you have somewhere to depend on... But people like us, you know we depend on sugarcane, and it can come maybe once in a week. So it is very difficult to handle that situation. But mostly, we handle it, we go with it, and that little we get, we appreciate."--C1₁.</p> <p>"Yeah so we were like that, and the more we were working, and the more the group was getting bigger and bigger and bigger, so we were like, this day, it will be like this. On Monday, it will be this guy and this guy. On Tuesday it's this guy and this guy, so that's how it was."--C1₁.</p> <p>"We are six to ten boys, we always change shift. ... There is some days, like I can decide to work today, tomorrow, then I leave for you the next day. We share."--C1₄.</p> <p>"We talked about the car wash, and he said that there are around 14 in the group. They work only in twos, so every person gets one day's work out of it per week (or sometimes two). ... Income from a given day is split by three – each of the two workers and the owner of the car wash get a split. The cost of rental is 600/= [\$6] per day, and a typical day's income ... is around 1,000/= each for the workers, and that money, supplemented by their delivery-work income, usually amounts to the entirety of their weekly income. It's clearly not economic to have a group that large. Each of the boys would prefer to be working more than one day per week (and obviously it would be more lucrative for them individually if they were); the only real advantage is that the cost of renting the car wash is divided among more people, making it cheaper per person. However, this doesn't come close to making up for the dilution of income that comes from having that many 'equity holders'. Regarding this, [C1₁]'s explanation was that 'you cannot deny someone a job'."--Field-notes extract</p> <p>"It's... let me say it like this. We are one group. ... We have to take care of everyone in the group."--C1₁.</p> <p>"We don't have more things that we are planning. Other boys like [C1₂] they have finished their education last year. ... Those are the people that are always working on car wash, because they don't know how to hustle in this area. Now we leave for them car wash so that they get every day something. ... Car wash is like a beginning, a start, yeah. Because all of us, we have been passing on that car wash."--C1₁₀.</p>

Table 6b – Emergent Themes and their Empirical Content, Chapter 7 (Collectives; continued)

Individual Agency	
<i>Desire to undertake lone venturing or feelings of entrepreneurial constraints within the collectives</i>	<p>"[Mobilising a group this size can be] very difficult. Like there was a time I said to the group, 'Let's go to the police and get the group recognised [obtain the cert], that way there will be no disturbance from the police'. They all said, 'Yeah, let's do it'. Then a couple of times I went to them and said, 'Let's go, let's do it now'. Some of them weren't available or they didn't want to. So I just said to them, 'leave it'."--C1₁.</p> <p>"On the way towards Maendeleo he told me about two businesses that he would like to pursue. The first is a wholesale type business in which he would take orders for electronic items (like plugs) from small businesses in Mukuru and buy them in town. The second is an M-Pesa kiosk, for which he has already identified a location (close to [C2₃]'s cyber)."--Field-notes extract, relating to C2₁.</p> <p>"When you want to be creative, just be creative everywhere you are. Like creativity is solo ... I normally come out with creative ideas, just wherever I am, when I'm in my house, or in a matatu or something, I just be creative."--C2₁.</p>
<i>Identity integration as a means to negotiate personal agency</i>	<p>"You see the people that I bring to work with me, I don't just choose anybody, I choose people that want to go somewhere. There are many people in Mukuru that are not satisfied with what they have [and those are the people that I bring]. Many people in Mukuru they are only interested in having fun. Me I don't drink, I don't do drugs, and it's not that all drinking is bad, it's just that I choose to be around people that are like that, that are focused. I see many of the people my age that are into drugs, and then they show up and they're high."--C2₁.</p> <p>"Personally I normally believe that as an individual I can, yes I can go far, but as a group we can go farther. We have a dream for this group of ours, and we have targets and we have ambitions so that in the future everything might be cool. So we have to make sure that we are responsible for the group and we are loyal to the group, so everything we do we just direct it there because so fa we don't lack anything."--C2₁.</p>
<i>Identity segmentation as a means to negotiate personal agency</i>	<p>"Yeah we've been together for like, five years, and I think even, when I start my business, I'll not be like just ignore them and start ... I'll just be coming, bonding with them, see what's up. Cos they are my friends too, friendship is better than anything, it's better to keep that bond between us."--C1₁.</p> <p>"I asked him if this plan included any of all of the other members of Collective 1 and he said no. 'I don't do <i>that</i> much with that group, the main thing is the sugarcane deliveries. That is the one main thing that binds us. But to do something like this could be hard. You could have one member of the group say 'hey, I have a friend that wants to have a party.' And then that person wants to use the equipment, but I'm the one responsible for that equipment.'"--Field-notes extract, relating to C1₁.</p>
<i>Desire to remain socially and/or economically embedded in the group</i>	<p>"I can't break. I will be in that group. I can't walk away because I have money or I have my own business. They say east or west home is the best. So my life, lets say I started inside that group, so I can't walk away. If I have my own business and I own something somewhere else."--C1₁₁.</p> <p>"Even if I start my own stuff, I cannot forget about this group."--C1₈.</p>
<i>Lone ventures oriented to benefit the group</i>	<p>"I am not selfish. If I have money and he [hypothetical friend] has none, I will not give him money, but I will show him how to get it for himself. There is this saying, 'don't give me a fish, teach me how to fish.' So if I can get this [events planning] business established then maybe I can give an opportunity to someone else. Maybe I stop being the DJ and let someone else do that."--C1₁.</p> <p>"I'm very tight [with the group] because all my, a lot of my sales are going to Vikasa."--C2₁.</p> <p>"Everything I direct back[to the group]."--C2₁.</p>

(v) *Defining and Naming Themes*. The final set of themes are listed and defined in Appendices 5a and 5b.

(vi) *Write-up*. Constant cycling between literature and empirical themes, as well as to fieldnotes and raw interview data to ensure that the context of any quotes uses was not misinterpreted.

4.6.3 Rationale for Choosing Thematic Analysis

As noted throughout the preceding section, thematic analysis has a number of characteristics which suit this project; to recap, they include:

- That it is structured yet flexible, making it particularly suitable for inductive research (Braun and Clarke, 2006), especially that which is carried out in unfamiliar contexts or on unknown phenomena (Vaismoradi, et al., 2013).
- That it acknowledges the ‘active’ role of the researcher in developing codes, categories, and themes, rather than assuming that these points of interest spontaneously arise or emerge from the data. This makes it compatible with the constructivist epistemology of subtle realism (Bazeley, 2009; Braun and Clarke, 2006).
- That it focuses on meaning rather than numbers, allowing the qualitative richness of the raw data, and the insider perspectives embedded within it, to be preserved as the analysis progresses through each of the phases (Vaismoradi, et al., 2013).
- That it does not discriminate against data created by the researcher alone. Other analytical techniques, for example, could be applied to interview data but not to fieldnotes, because they constitute the words of the researcher and/or because they do not allow for detailed analyses of speech, incorporating pauses, interjections, etc. Thus, the full corpus of data could be utilised in the analytical process (Boyatzis, 1998).
- On a pragmatic level, thematic analysis is recognised as being intuitive and transparent as well as robust, and as such, is well-suited to novice researchers (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 97; Vaismoradi, et al., 2013: 403).

Of course, other techniques for analysing qualitative data share varying degrees and combinations of these qualities, and could have been used in this study in place of thematic analysis. Having presented the argument *in favour* of thematic analysis, I will identify four rival approaches and provide a brief explanation of why I decided *against* using them.

Table 7: Alternative Analytical Techniques

Analytical Technique	Description	Deemed unsuitable because...
Content Analysis (CA)	“Content analysis involves establishing categories and then counting the number of instances in which they are used in a single text or image. It is a partially quantitative method, which determines the frequencies of the occurrence of particular strategies” (Joffe and Yardley, 2004:56). More contemporary applications of CA are less enumerative in form and pay closer attention to qualitative detail (Grbich, 2007; Hsieh and Shannon, 2005; Krippendorff, 2013); however, CA in this form appears to be almost procedurally identical to thematic analysis. Therefore, in my evaluation of CA in the cell to the right, I am viewing it in its more traditional, quantitative form (Berelson, 1952).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More suited to projects involving big data, where coding is more mechanised; • Central concern with objectivity risks the context being eliminated.
Discourse Analysis (DA) Conversation Analysis (CA)	DA is a branch of linguistic psychology in which “language [is] conceptualized as productive; that is to say, language [is] seen to construct versions of social reality, and it [is] seen to achieve social objectives” (Willig, 2003:143). Conversation analysts “proceed by transcribing conversational interactions, using highly specialized transcription conventions that enable them to capture not only words and who uttered them but also intonations, overlaps, and incompletions, as well as nonverbal behaviours such as gaze and especially silences and turns at talk” (Krippendorff, 2013:70)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both require natural conversation among participants, but when this occurred in the field it was often in Swahili. Even if all of these conversations were recorded, which would have presented both practical and ethical difficulties, the challenge of having them translated and transcribed with the precision demanded by CA would have been prohibitive. • In their focus on language within natural conversation, CA and DA were perceived to convey context too narrowly, in a way that was largely bounded to the parties of that conversation. The concern with a more holistic understanding of context which guided this study meant that these approaches were incompatible with the research objectives.
Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)	IPA “is an approach which is dedicated to the detailed exploration of personal meaning and lived experience” (Smith and Osborn, 2003:25).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many aspects of IPA, like an interest in participants’ lived experience and the pursuit of an insider perspective, are shared by ethnography and, as such, feature quite heavily in this thesis. • However, the paradigm employed here is somewhat more realist in its orientation than IPA will allow. Gartner (2008: 556) sums this up well: “If I were to label what phenomenology is about for me, it would be: my concerns about my experience experiencing research on the experience of entrepreneurs making sense of their entrepreneurial experiences told through their stories of their experiences.” • Because of this core concern with experiences, IPA is typically applied to research questions that centre on singular events or shocks that occur beyond one’s control (e.g., the death of a partner or a significant illness (Smith and Osborn, 2003)). Many of the participants in this study have never experienced circumstances other than the slum in which they currently live, and the idea that they ‘adjust’ to it might be seen in this light.
Grounded Theory (GT)	GT “is a specific, rigorous set of procedures for analysing qualitative data to produce formal, substantive theory of social phenomena. Features that, taken collectively, distinguish grounded theory from other forms of qualitative data analysis include (a) simultaneous collection and analysis of data, (b) analyses of actions and process rather than themes, (c) use of comparative methods, (d) use of multiple sources of data to develop new conceptual categories, (e) use of systematic means of analysis to develop categories inductively, (f) focus on theory construction rather than description, and (g) employing theoretical sampling” (Schwandt, 2015). In-line with this overview, I view GT here to represent a beginning-to-end approach to conductive qualitative research, not simply as a technique of analysing qualitative data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like IPA, many of the features of GT spill over into ethnography but, again, ethnography tends to discourage a fundamentalist interpretation of its rules. For example, the simultaneous collection and analysis of data is also practiced in ethnography, where it is used to guide future data collection, but this doesn’t, by necessity, translate into the in-field development of codes and categories. Therefore, ethnography is more flexible as to emergent lines of inquiry, making it more suitable to the present research objectives. • As I will explain in the later section on Sampling (Section 4.5.5), adhering to “theoretical sampling” principles of GT was not always – particularly at the outset of fieldwork – feasible. • Because of my status as an outsider and associated concerns around trust, it was considered preferable to build a sample of core participants that could be retained and added to over the duration of the study, rather than conducting interviews on a once-off basis with as many local entrepreneurs as possible. • Dey (2004:92, emphasis in original) writes of an upcoming research project: “I have no intention of <i>applying</i> grounded theory in this project, but it may nevertheless provide a useful way of <i>informing</i> my analysis.” This sentiment may also be applied to the present study, which draws selectively from ideas of GT, but which does not claim explicit conformance with its rules (Braun and Clarke, 2006:81).

4.7 Ethics

As per Kenyan requirements, a permit for data collection was obtained from the Kenyan National Council for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI; see Appendix 6). For the duration of fieldwork, I was formally linked to the University of Nairobi (as a Research Associate), which facilitated dialogue with members of the local research community. Whenever possible, field informants were presented with a Plain Language Statement (Appendix 7) outlining the purpose of the research and their rights therein, and were asked to sign an Informed Consent form (Appendix 8). In cases where this was not feasible, such as coincidental, casual, or once-off conversations, informed consent was obtained orally (Ryen, 2004). In-line with guidelines (Ryen, 2004) and with established practice (Viswanathan, et al., 2010; Bradley, et al., 2012), small gifts were given at the end of the fieldwork period to research participants that had devoted a substantial amount of time to this study. In writing up this thesis, the names of all informants have been erased to ensure their anonymity (refer to Tables 5a-5d). Photographs taken during fieldwork are included in this thesis only as a visual aid in describing particular aspects of the research setting, and are not incorporated into the analytical strategy of this study (Pink, 2004). Concerned that this research could be perceived as voyeuristic if I was seen always to have a camera in-hand, photographs were taken only when the vista was particularly vivid or when I was invited or requested to take a picture by informants; therefore, it is acknowledged that the photographs included in this thesis represent a highly selective depiction of the research context (Pink, 2004).

4.8 Structure and Sequence of Empirical Chapters (Chapters 5-8)

For reasons which are outlined below, I determined that greater empirical and theoretical impact could be achieved by 'ringfencing' analyses and discussion pertaining to the individual entrepreneurs and those pertaining to the 'entrepreneurial collectives'. Thus, the empirical analyses and findings which are set out in Chapter 5 stem from data relating to the individual entrepreneurs, as do the theoretical contributions that are detailed in the discussion chapter which follows (Chapter 6). Chapter 7 covers empirical analyses and findings relating to the entrepreneurial collectives, which are then crafted into theoretical contributions in Chapter 8. Some instances of cross-over arise (members of the collectives being quoted in the individuals' analysis and vice-versa), but are flagged in-text and in quote attributions.

4.8.1 Temporality and the Life-Course Perspective

The principal motivation in enacting this distinction was to allow for important aspects of temporal context to be captured and incorporated into this study's findings (Welter, 2011). The community's recent genesis and its subsequent expansion is the first of these temporal aspects. The second is the life stage of my informants, something that can be directly addressed by employing a 'life-course perspective' (Burton, Sorensen, and Dobrev, 2016; Elder Jr, 1994; Grotevant, 1987). The life-course perspective is an especially helpful analytical tool for studying people and phenomena that are embedded in rapidly changing societies; depending on the stage of an individual's life when s/he first becomes exposed to that society, s/he will encounter "different historical worlds", in which "social change differentiates the life patterns of successive cohorts" (Elder Jr, 1994: 5; see also Portes, et al., 2005). The adoption of a life-course perspective was motivated by the observation that the backgrounds and life histories of the slum's residents fell relatively consistently into one of two categories. In the first category were residents that had moved to the slum in later life, many of whom had lived a substantial portion of their lives in their rural birthplaces, and many retained close emotional, kinship, and economic links to these areas; for the most part, the individual entrepreneurs present in my sample belonged to this category. The second category, largely consisting of residents that had either been born in the slum or who had moved there early in life, was populated by younger inhabitants, and this is the demographic domain of the entrepreneurial collectives.

Thus, the analytical distinction between the individual entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial collectives is rooted in the desire to delve into these cohort effects more so than it is in the structural contrast between single-founder ventures and entrepreneurship teams. The following chapter, Chapter 5, focuses on individual entrepreneurs.

CHAPTER 5

Individual Entrepreneurs: Analysis and Findings

5.1 Introduction

Collective identity – a consensual understanding of ‘who we are’ and why ‘we’ are different to ‘them’ – is usually regarded as a characteristic feature of communities that experience extreme levels of hardship, neglect, and exclusion (Peredo, 2003; Webb, et al., 2009). Slum communities exhibit these problems at consistently high levels (UN-Habitat, 2003), but countervailing factors pose a challenge to the assumption that slum dwellers feel bound by a meaningful sense of ‘we-ness’. As such, slums provide a uniquely rich empirical context in which to explore the overlap between identity and entrepreneurship. The questions guiding analysis in this chapter are, ‘Do members of the study community feel bound by a collective identity and, if so, what is it predicated upon?’ and, ‘At the level of the individual venture, what bearing does collective identity have on the entrepreneurial process level?’

5.2 Collective Identity in the Slum

By collective identity, I mean a prevailing sense of “we-ness” or “one-ness” (Snow, 2001; Snow and McAdam, 2000) within a given social group. That is, that characteristics or attributes can be ascribed to that social group which are “central, enduring, and distinctive”, and which give rise to a broad consensus among members of the group regarding “who we are” (Albert and Whetten, 1985). As I explained earlier, collective identity underpins collective agency (Cerulo, 1997; Polletta and Jasper, 2001); therefore, in order for groups to *act* as one, it is first necessary for them to *feel* as if they are one. Linked to the individual-level construct of social identity, this one-ness may not be all-encompassing, but may take a more *situated* form in which it becomes triggered by environmental stimuli (Rousseau, 1998). Analysis of field data suggests that, in general, collective identity has a bearing on a very specific facet of the entrepreneurship process, namely the ease with which entrepreneurs can initiate market ventures. Additionally, collective identity was put to more specialised use by entrepreneurs engaged in activities that were illegal according to the laws of the land but were considered legitimate within the informal institutional setting of the slum. I begin with a general overview of the strength and content of collective identity in the study community.

5.2.1 Poverty and Marginality as a Basis for ‘We-ness’

Members of the study community experienced greater levels of hardship and marginality than members of other communities with which they were familiar (with the exception, perhaps, of other slum communities). Their community was poorly served by infrastructure and state services and was characterised by social problems such as widespread unemployment, deficient housing and sanitation facilities, highly variable standards of education provision, domestic abuse and single parentage, and increased mortality. Unsurprisingly, this fostered a sense among members of the community that ‘we’ share a collective identity that sets us apart from ‘them’.

“You see this [current president] Uhuru Kenyatta, his father was the father of the country. Since he was born ... he has not sat in a vehicle and driven himself, because he has a bodyguard, he has a security, luxury. He used to grow [up] in State House. When we tell them, there are people in slums, [they say], ‘What are you talking about? Slums, what slums?’”—E12.

“They [the government] are aware that there are people living here because, when it comes to elections, they have created wards that have representatives, so from my understanding they know we are here. Because there are government offices around here. So it is negligent that they don't think of how to make us developed, build good houses, provide us with water, and have a good drainage when it comes to rain.”—E10.

C17: “[O]ne day you know, in 2007, [when] our president was Mr Mwai Kibaki, so there was a fire here, down here, in Sinai [a slum adjoining the research community] but ... [when he was informed about it,] the president said, ‘Sinai? What is Sinai?’ Like they don't care about [us]. That's how Mukuru is, like they don't care about it.”

[Interviewer: That fire even made international news²⁴, a lot of people were killed that time.]

C17: “But the president doesn't even know the place. ‘Oh, that place?!’ [laughs].”

“When I was small I was thinking, ‘Ah, Nairobi is a very good place to stay.’ When I came here I was asking, ‘Is this place [really] Nairobi?’. Because you look, this [neighbourhood], even our [rural] homes are not like this. No toilets, you rent a house without toilet, without a bathroom. When you want a toilet then you go far away then you pay. But the people who stay in estates, those are the ones that can say ‘I stay in Nairobi’, but even in this [slum] you can't talk.”—E19.

Differences between Mukuru and more affluent communities were glaring, but differences between Mukuru and other slum communities were not so obvious. Still, points of distinction were found and emphasised. Even though some of these distinctions may well have had their roots in urban myth, their propagation served to reinforce not only the idea that we *are* different, but

²⁴ See, for example, BBC (2011) and CNN (2011).

also that we *do things* differently. These stories gave greater depth of meaning to ‘who we are’ by illustrating that normal conduct was different here than elsewhere.

“We also spoke again about how [Mukuru] compares with other slums. He said that ... there are worse ones in Nairobi. Korogocho is the worst [he said], and the rate of crime is very high. He told me that there are men that sit at the side of the road and negotiate with prospective buyers for shoes that are being worn by passers-by. If they reach agreement on an acceptable price, the man will then steal the shoes and make the sale.”—Field-notes extract, relating to C1₁.

“Because even, that place I’m telling you [Kibera slum], when you go there, even people, the way they do their business, the way people do things are different. There are not so many clubs like this, they do not drink, people are sleeping.”—E5₂.

National elections which were fraught with controversy (see BBC, 2017; Moore, 2016) took place between the two phases of fieldwork. The elections stirred up ethnic tensions and led to rioting and violent confrontations in many parts of Nairobi, including several of its slum communities (Duggan, Karimi, and Narayan, 2017; HRW, 2017). Although some unrest did materialise in the study community, it remained relatively placid, and the worst of the unrest was blamed on outsiders passing through en route to the city centre. Community members frequently cited this as both a point of distinction and as evidence of their togetherness.

[Interviewer: It seems to me that here in Mukuru people are mixed (in an ethnic sense), but they’re also spread out. In (other slums like) Kibera you have this part where it’s Kikuyus, this part is Jaluos, this part is Kambas.]

E8₂: “They are divided, [Mukuru] is not divided. We are one.”

[Interviewer: Do you think that’s part of the reason that, after the elections, Kawangware, Mathare, Kibera, and other places are having problems but here in Mukuru things seem to be calm?]

E8₂: “You can’t fight here because we are brothers, but in Kawangware there are fights of Jaluos, of Kikuyus. They are divided, but here at Mukuru we are one.”

“Just Mukuru, people of Mukuru are not like people of other places. When it comes to things like elections, I haven’t seen ... Mukuru people fighting, but other places you can hear that boys have been shot, that people are fighting, but in Mukuru I have never seen anything like that.”—C1₆.

The livelihood options for residents of the study community were extremely limited. Although the slum was adjacent to an industrial area which housed several manufacturing and light-industry firms, obtaining gainful employment usually required that a bribe be paid to the hiring manager, which the vast majority of community members could ill-afford.

“People are going to these companies looking for a job, but these managers in these companies they need a bribe. ‘Bring 20,000 [Kenyan Shillings, or \$200]’. When somebody asks you to bring 20,000 and you remember that last night you slept without food, it is so hard to raise some money.”—E12.

Other employment opportunities were available but offered little or no job security and often subjected employees to extremely harsh working conditions. As one informant remarked,

“They can treat you as if you are not human... it’s better to have your own business so that you are not under someone [like that], you have freedom.”—O6.

In sum, community members, mostly on the grounds that they encountered levels of hardship and marginality far in excess of those experienced by other communities, expressed a clear sense of ‘we-ness’. They believed themselves to be part of a distinctive social group that was framed by the geographical boundaries of the slum, and they assigned some degree of emotional significance to their membership of that social group.

5.2.2 Economic Informality in the Slum

Most entrepreneurs initiated market ventures either because they could not obtain salaried employment (the classic ‘necessity entrepreneur’) or because the economic security afforded by salaried employment was even less than that afforded by entrepreneurship. Others created businesses because they had acquired skills or competencies that lent themselves to self-employment (such as artisans, tailors, and mechanics), because they had strong personal aspirations to improve their circumstances, because it afforded them some measure of emancipation from an abusive or oppressive spouse, or as a means to put slack resources to productive use (e.g., salaried employees using their savings to establish ventures ‘on the side’). Virtually all of these cohorts relied on informality at some stage of the venturing process, and in the majority of cases their ventures were never formalised.²⁵ Naturally, reliance on informality was highest among the most disadvantaged cohort – those that had a low skills base, generated little income, and had no surplus capital to invest.

“While I was talking to [E12] another man came up and told us that he had no work today because it was raining, so the construction company that he was working for just decided it would not take him today, and of course that meant he wouldn’t be paid. So, instead, he bought about ten stalks of sugarcane from [E12] ... and took them to the corner of Falcon Rd and Enterprise Rd to sell himself.”—Field-notes extract.

“Some companies there are women who are working around, knitting shorts or whatever. If they drop from the company they just buy these sewing machines, they do small business.”—E2.

Not all entrepreneurs found it so easy to avoid compliance with the formal ‘rules of the game’. On the periphery of the slum, which might be thought of as the interface between two institutional

²⁵ In the sense that they never registered their business, obtained trading permits, or paid tax. Several micro-entrepreneurs kept rudimentary cash flow accounts.

fields (where the slum's informal institutions came into contact with the formal institutions of the State), operating on a fully informal basis was highly challenging. Some entrepreneurs paid a small fee to local authorities to allow them to trade undisturbed, while others tried their best to evade the authorities.

“Stopped for the first time to eat at one of the makeshift hotelis on the left-hand side of Enterprise Road ... While I was halfway through the chapatti and beans the word came in that ‘the tax people from the city council are around, pass it on!’ (paraphrased). They were at Kobil, and word of their presence spread in a chain from hoteli to hoteli all the way down to us. The lady that runs the hoteli started packing things away hurriedly, and soon she picked up my half-finished plate and told me to move along ... Once she had the food hidden, she hid herself, leaving the pots with beans and rice and ugali steaming away. Walking past all of the other hotelis between there and Kobil, every single one had been deserted.”—Field-notes extract.

“[I]f you are registered you can be able to run swiftly without [interference] ... with City Council, you know, they won't be disturbing you every time, 'Where is your certificate?' ... City Council normally come [to your place of business] weekly to see the certificate ... and the people around are always struggling because they don't have [one] ... When they are coming they close the business and you find out that they are losing a lot.”—C2₁.

These entrepreneurs, operating on the outer fringes of the slum, feared that they would incur penalties if the authorities caught them operating without any kind of permit (the first informant that is quoted above told me on a subsequent visit that inspectors visit twice a week, and that, had she been caught, she would have been fined around \$30). Even a short distance inside the slum, however, concerns about interference from local authorities were absent.

“Do you know if you come here, like you, you want to put a business here, nobody comes [to see your registration].”—E1.

“Yeah, if you open a business in Kibera, even if it is small, even if it is selling sukuma [cabbage], you must pay 50 shillings [50c] per day. And here, you don't pay. You don't pay anything, just open business and continue. But ... in Kibera you pay 50 shillings per day. If you open a big business, [like] a big salon, you pay 3,000 [\$30] per year. Yes, and you have that ... fire extinguisher, you must have it at your place of work. If you don't have it, those people from the County, they come and they take you to [court] ... Here if you open a business, even if you want to [sell] sweets outside there, they don't care. Nobody will ask you.”—E5₂.

As well as operating under extreme capital constraints, entrepreneurs in the study setting typically lacked experience of engaging with formal, bureaucratic systems. The non-procedural nature of informal venturing, coupled with its cost-saving aspect, therefore meant that market ventures could be initiated quickly, cheaply, and by virtually anyone.

[Interviewer: Was it difficult to get a business started here?]

E13: “In fact it is not difficult. If you have some capital it is not difficult. 10,000, 15,000, 20,000 [Kenyan Shillings, or \$100, \$150, \$200] is enough.”

[Interviewer: And you don't have to go through any kind of registrations or anything like that?]

E13: “No.”

[Interviewer: You just put your business here and ...]

E13: “Just you want customers, only customers.”

“Now here you can set a person up in a business very, very easily. You buy them three or four big sacks of detergent, they sell it by the cup ... So that part is very good, that people can make a business very, very easily ... I always say, if you're in Mukuru every day, the business that's going on, if you go to the centre of town it's not the same [extent of] business at all. So although they all moan and groan that the unemployment is so high, and the GDP, they don't have proper figures for anything. They're not counting the huge economy around here.”—O2.

Entrepreneurship, therefore, was a foundational and pervasive feature of life in the community, and economic informality, allowing for easy, low-cost market entry, was something that virtually every entrepreneur – and by extension, virtually every household – had come to rely upon.

5.2.3 Preserving the Institutional *Status Quo*

Within the slum, the ‘rules of the game’ facilitated low-barrier informal venturing on a much broader scale than was permissible within the formal institutional framework of the State. However, the supremacy of the informal institutions of the slum was not beyond challenge. The remit of enforcement agents like the police and local tax inspectors extended within the slum as well as to its outer edges, and the community experienced pressure to comply more fully with the formal rules that those agents were mandated to impose. A strong consensus prevailed within the community that formal rules regarding things like taxation and, to a large degree, legal compliance in respect of the services that an entrepreneur could or could not provide, did not or should not apply to them.

“If they [the authorities] were competent, we would pay tax.”—E2.

“How can you come and tax someone that is selling sukuma wikki [cabbage], Unga [corn flour], these small small things. You want 50 bob [50c] and maybe he earns like 150 [\$1.50] a day. So if you take 50 bob it's like you're killing him.”—C2₂.

Yet, the community lacked a recognised, accessible figurehead that was capable of instigating or directing collective resistance to threats to its institutional status quo. Although the community was represented at various levels of government and had a well-established internal governance structure consisting of chiefs and elders, the effectiveness of its representatives was perceived to be limited or undermined by a lack of genuine political power, vested interests, ignorance of the

real problems experienced by the people, or the sheer difficulty of attending to the vast array of complex problems that people experienced.

“Mukuru itself, it is a void. And it is a void because ... Mukuru is this place where everybody thinks there should be work, everybody thinks there shouldn't be a slum because it's in the middle of an industrial area. And everybody should have work, because where are they being employed if they shouldn't be employed from this area? But it doesn't happen. And for whatever reason, I don't know, but it doesn't happen. But we are just ignored because the voice here is the industry, kwa Reuben [the area within Mukuru where the study was conducted] is not the voice.”—O1.

“The local MCA [Member of County Assembly] developed this road because he is much invested in businesses along it.”—C1₁₂.

“Every village has a different power structure, and every village has a mafia on top. And these are elders of the village, supposedly elected by the people. But mostly those elders are people who are very close to the administration, that's the chief and the DO. And they go in cahoots together to rob the land of the people, even to take over parcels of land that people are living on. So a lot of the time those elders are very corrupt, but not all of the time.”—O2.

The lack of any centralised control in the community precluded the kind of institutional entrepreneurship that could preserve the supremacy of the community's informal institutions (Lee and Hung, 2014; Mair and Martí, 2009; Zietsma and Lawrence, 2010). Instead, efforts by members of the community to retain the perceived benefits of economic informality emerged organically and took on a more disparate form. Such efforts ranged from relatively crude forms of aggressiveness and intimidation towards authorities to more subtle, rhetorical strategies that delegitimised the authorities by casting them as outsiders or adversaries.

“Here? No, you won't be caught [for failing to register your business]. In Kawangware [another slum] it's different, everybody has to be registered. But there was a time when the Kanjo people [representatives of the County Government] came here to register all the businesses and people started to throw stones at them. So they said, 'Hey, we cannot go there'.”—C1₁.

“Kanjo are so afraid of this place! They don't come, they don't come.”—C2₂.

“He said that if you call the police to report a robbery, for example, they are likely to ask you for 500/= [\$5] 'to fuel the car' before they come to your house. He also told the story of being arrested just because 'the police didn't have enough people in custody' at the time. He said that he was in town and on his way to a class with a laptop and some papers when the police arrested him for no reason. He and everyone else in the cell had to pay 3,000/= [\$30] to be released.”—Field-notes extract.

“Because when we talk about the police, the police are there today, tomorrow you will be transferred somewhere ... How will you get [in touch with] that police [officer]? It's so difficult.”—E12.

Additionally, it was widely held that the informal institutions of the slum enabled it to largely self-regulate. For example, rather than relying on police to protect their property, almost every business owner that operated from fixed premises paid a Maasai tribesman to serve as a night watchman.²⁶ And although no title deeds existed for property in the slum, the market for the sale and purchase of houses was liquid and functional, with all property transactions recorded and enforced by the local chief. Furthermore, activities that crossed the boundaries of legitimacy (Webb, et al. 2009) were often met with lethal punishment from vigilante groups. Although such reprisals were sporadic and tended to target petty rather than serious criminals, many regarded mob justice to be no more violent or no less judicious than that meted out by the police.

“When you want to sell [a house], you know we don't have title deeds, we own it yes but we don't have title deeds. But you have to use this protocol, you go to chairman, you say, 'Oh, I want to sell this', ... so you write down, you go to chief, you write down and just like that. When somebody will come back and say, 'You didn't give me any money, this my property', you will say okay, we have some documents, these show that you sold your property'. So you don't have to demand it back because you sold it, I gave you money so go away. That's the only protocol you use.” —E12.

E1: “There are some watchmen, Maasai watchmen, and if they found you taking somebody's things...”

[Interviewer: Do you pay them?]

E1: “20 shillings [20c], every day, just to protect [my property] ... [Maasai] are very honest people, the most honest.”

E8₂: “Yeah, there is mob. Even last year, we lost two guys there. They had stolen a television and a recorder from one of the hotels there, down there. They were mobbed to death. It was a while go, like two months ago. They were mobbed.”

[Interviewer: And what exactly do the mob do, do they beat them, or ...?]

E8₂: “They beat them with stones, they stone them to death. They even burn them, using tyres ... We trust the police, but the police are very corrupted. Even when you find your case there, they will just get some small amount of money and they throw the case away.”

[Interviewer: So police punishment is ineffective?]

E8₂: “It's ineffective. The thing that we have to do here is just to keep our eyes watching them. We as the mob. And when a suspect is suspected we deal with them, accordingly.”

“There were 100 boys in my class at school, there are only 20 remaining. The rest are gone, gunned down by the mob or by the police.”—O5.

Inhabitants of the slum recognised that the community's prevailing institutional framework had significant shortcomings, which were manifest in long-standing problems ranging from domestic abuse to political cronyism. However, most believed that State authorities like the police were either incapable of attending to these issues or were somehow implicated in them. Up to a point,

²⁶ Members of the Maasai tribe were perceived to be ideally suited to the role of watchmen. As well as being renowned for their unwavering honesty, the Maasai enjoy a special constitutional exemption which allows them to carry knives and swords in public spaces.

Third Sector organisations like churches and NGOs filled this void, but they were insufficiently resourced to meet the wide-ranging and complex needs of the community. In assessing their lives in the slum, every entrepreneur in my sample acknowledged its myriad difficulties but argued that the livelihood opportunities that derived from the slum's burgeoning population and its ease of market venturing justified their choice to remain there. In fact, many cited commercial opportunity as the only reason to stay.

"For now, it's good. But with time, the business of charcoal can be here, but I can stay somewhere else, but the upkeep of the business must, must, be here. But it is not a must I live here."—E2.

Yes, I will [remain] here, then I will go ... here is where I come to find money. When I grow old I will just disappear."—E16.

"I think this is a better place for such businesses like this one, because you know, here, we usually depend, you know, when it comes to a slum, slums are usually very populated, as you know. So we want to capture those people, so we are happy to be here."—E6₂.

[Interviewer: And for you, do you think when this business grows you will stay here in Mukuru?]

E7: "No, I will not. I will get out from here. It's just a starting point for my life."

[Interviewer: Hopefully if I come back I will get to speak to you again.]

E7: "Yes, and hopefully that time you will not find me here. By God's grace, I might move!"

5.2.4 Section Summary

In summary, data shows that the ease of market venturing was firmly embedded in the slum's informal institutional framework, and that, in turn, this informal institutional framework was firmly embedded in the community's sense of who we are. Owing to its poverty and marginality, the study community saw itself as being clearly set apart within its wider social context. The prevailing institutional framework of the community and of wider society were incongruent, and members of the community acted, albeit in an uncoordinated, disparate way, to preserve the supremacy of its informal institutions.

The overall discourse of community insiders, as well as the instances of active resistance to incursions of the State (in the form of attempts to formalise businesses) into the micro-economy of the slum, suggests that economic informality was viewed as a *de facto* 'right of citizenship' in the slum. While the acute socioeconomic marginality that they experienced had an undoubtedly negative bearing on their lives, this shared exclusion had become a cornerstone of their collective understanding of 'who we are'. Closely linked to that idea of 'we-ness' was an explicit sense of entitlement relating to the rules or institutions that governed economic activity, with community

insiders consistently expressing the view that, because of their structural disadvantages relative to others in society, they ought to be able to play be a less restrictive set of institutions than those putative others. Thus, marginalisation was used to discursively counterbalance the ‘rights’ that they claimed in respect of informality. For most entrepreneurs in the slum – the exceptions being those situated on the territorial fringes of the slum, within easy reach of tax officials and other formal institutional agents, and those operating businesses that had unusually strong links to the formal sector, such as chemists – informal venturing was largely a matter of unconscious choice. Economic informality was the default mode of venturing not only because formalisation would have eaten further into razor-thin profit margins, but also because it had become normatively rooted in entrepreneurial practice among members of this bounded and highly insular social group.

In the next part of this chapter, I focus more centrally on the depth and scope of collective identity in the study community and on the bearing that it had on entrepreneurship. So far, I have found that collective identity minimised barriers to market entry by facilitating easier and less costly venture initiation. Now, I turn to the more lasting effects of collective identity on the entrepreneurship process. In doing so, I highlight that the facilitative scope of collective identity for entrepreneurship in the study community was very narrow. However, data also challenges the view that collective identity is a purely public good, i.e. something from which every entrepreneur can, at least theoretically, derive equal benefits. Instead, my findings indicate that collective identity can take the form of a semi-private good, meaning that the distribution of advantage is not equal but is skewed in favour of some individuals or groups.

5.3 Collective Identity and (Il)legality – The Practice of ‘Insulating’

In this thesis I employ a broad view of economic informality, one that includes both *legal* activities that are conducted out of sight of taxation and regulatory authorities (Branzei and Adbelnour, 2010; McGahan, 2012) as well as activities which are *illegal* according to the formal institutions of the state but which are perceived to be *legitimate* within the informal institutional framework of a given society (Lee and Hung, 2014; Webb, et al, 2009).²⁷ Although these two categories of economic activity fall under the umbrella term of ‘informality’, they are sometimes treated as qualitatively distinct (De Castro, et al., 2014; Williams and Horodnic, 2015). Data

²⁷ Yet another cohort, of course, engage in activities that are both illegal and illegitimate (Webb, et al., 2009), including things like extortion, armed robbery, and people trafficking. Such activities were conducted surreptitiously and are not considered to be within the scope of this study.

indicates that collective identity plays an important role in facilitating both, but that the nature of this role differs across legal and illegal (but legitimate) activities.

Already, I have shown that collective identity played an important part in facilitating the kind of everyday micro-entrepreneurship that was pervasive in the study community. Insiders felt that their community was distinctive (and disadvantaged) within its wider social context, and they engaged in disparate acts of resistance aimed at preserving certain ‘rules of the game’, namely those that allowed them to conduct business without undergoing registration procedures, obtaining permits, or paying tax. The vast majority of these businesses, however, traded in legal goods and services, like foodstuffs, clothes, household items, electronics, transportation, etc. A minority of businesses – although the number is large in absolute terms – traded in goods and services that were illegal under the law of the land but legitimate within the local institutional setting of the slum. For the remainder of this section, informal economic activities that are otherwise legal will be denoted “L-L” (Legal and Legitimate) and informal economic activities that are illegal but legitimate will be denoted “I-L” (Illegal but Legitimate).

Our data indicates that businesses engaged in I-L activities derived most operational benefit from the collective identity of the community. That is, these businesses were able to leverage the collective identity of the community for a more diverse set of ends than other, L-L, businesses were. This is surprising for two reasons. First, these businesses constituted a small minority of the total population of businesses in the slum, and, second, even though there was an *overall* acceptance of their legitimacy, these businesses did not enjoy universal approval within the slum. For L-L businesses, the benefits of the community’s collective identity were narrow in scope but readily accessible to all: because of acts of resistance like the stoning of City Council workers, every prospective entrepreneur could avoid the bureaucracy, costs, and regulatory scrutiny associated with formality. However, for entrepreneurs engaged in I-L activities, leveraging the benefits of collective identity was an active and continuous process. Data suggests that this process involves two iterative stages: first, entrepreneurs must affirm the legitimacy of their venture in the eyes of the community to ensure that they are ‘covered by’ its collective identity, then they must put that collective identity to use in dealings with outside authorities mandated to impose the law of the land. Taken together, these two stages might be thought of as an exercise in *insulation*, where a small proportion of entrepreneurs (I-L) used identity capital which had been forged by the wider populace of entrepreneurs (L-L) as a buffer between them and the enforcement authorities.

5.3.1 Legitimising People and Practices – Collective Identity and ‘Blending In’

Entrepreneurs engaged in illegal activities face the challenge of securing legitimacy for those activities. Otherwise, they will be cast as outsiders and any benefits that might accrue from membership of their community are likely to be withheld. Furthermore, entrepreneurs that are unable to secure legitimacy for their ventures may face social sanctions like sabotage or vigilantism. I observed two different means by which entrepreneurs sought to obtain legitimacy. The first involved attempts to legitimise the entrepreneur him/herself. By emphasising their social standing or their embeddedness in the local community, entrepreneurs sought to put the benevolence of their intentions beyond question. That way, legal transgressions, provided they weren't too sinister, could be passed off as the relatively harmless consequences of an individual's struggle to make a living. The case of E17, who, during the fieldwork period, diversified from barbering into the business of ‘casinos’,²⁸ provides a case in point.

“Because we have stayed here for long, so we know this area. But somebody new will fear [the risk of starting an illegal business]. If you are new here, you will just fear to open. But if you have stayed here and you know all of the people, just open ... You see that [slot] machine [generates] a lot of money.”—E17.

In later conversations, E17 spoke of his ambition to become a public representative during the next local election cycle.

“[E17]’s even planning to run for MCA [Member of County Assembly] in five years ... he said he knows the current MCA, who has businesses nearby, and who is apparently going to show him the ropes to prepare him before he leaves office. And his rationale for running for MCA, apart from being well-known in the area, is that he ‘knows the problems faced by the people around here’.”—Field-notes extract.

Entrepreneurs often operated legal and illegal ventures concurrently. This ensured that, at least for a portion of what they did, no moral distinctions could be made between them and other entrepreneurs that were engaged in purely legal activities. E17, the barber and casino operator, noted that,

“We switch between businesses. If one is doing well, we spend our time at it, if the other is doing well we spend our time at that. The businesses are unified.”—E17.

Indeed, illegality commonly served as a temporary fallback option for entrepreneurs whose legal ventures ran into difficulty, which, given the precarity of their operating environment, was not an unusual occurrence. As I illustrate in Chapter 7, this was the case for a group of youths that ran a car wash enterprise that was intermittently paralysed, sometimes for several weeks at a time, by

²⁸ Small ‘casinos’ like E17’s, consisting of a handful of slot machines, were relatively common in the slum, despite recently being subjected to a co-ordinated police crackdown.

electricity outages. It was also the case for E2, who sold charcoal, a venture which, during the first phase of fieldwork, was one of the most stable and lucrative ventures in this study's sample. Between the first and second phases of fieldwork, however, a truck that he and a group of others had hired to transport charcoal back from the bush crashed and, while the driver was unconscious, an opportunistic thief (or thieves) robbed him of the money that E2 had given him to purchase the charcoal. With barely any stock remaining, and with no capital with which to replenish it, E2 set about rebuilding his livelihood in the same line of work as the car wash group – hand-delivering boiled sugarcane for use in the production of illicit alcohol (known locally as *chang'aa*²⁹). Given his track record as a reputable entrepreneur, he did not fear that anyone would challenge his legitimacy.

“[Since the truck crash] many, many customers gone. And many people in this area, I was loaning them charcoal. If you are a frequent customer, if you need like 5 bags, you can buy three cash, then I give you two [on credit], then you sell after two days, you give me money ... These areas have a lot of jobless people, many, many, many jobless people. People are suffering because of joblessness ... We have to struggle, because there is no-one who is going to bring money to me, and other people are depending on [the chang'aa industry too]. So we have to struggle ...”—E2.

The second strategy used to legitimise illegal business ventures was to seek legitimacy for the activities themselves. Rather than attempting to depict the entrepreneur as a figure of merit that happened to be operating outside the law, this strategy placed the emphasis on the merit of the activities themselves, even if they were illegal by virtue of their process and/or produce. For some activities, like the illegal download and distribution of copyrighted music and films, demand was so widespread and the service so normalised that few, outside of the entrepreneurs themselves, appeared to be aware that the practice was illegal. Other ventures, like the illicit production of alcohol, occupied a darker shade of grey, since the harm that they caused was both severe and visible. Yet, *chang'aa* was one of the study community's few thriving industries – it was something of an open secret that much of Nairobi's *chang'aa* originated in Mukuru, and several spin-off ventures emerged at various points of the supply chain. In this case, legitimacy came to be associated with the diffusion of economic and social benefits, such that the community at large – and not just a focal entrepreneur – was demonstrably better off because of these illegal activities. The informants quoted here (their venture is examined in more depth in Chapter 7) delivered boiled sugarcane to local distilleries for use in the illicit production of *chang'aa*.

²⁹ *Chang'aa*, sometimes referred to as “kill me quick”, is an alcoholic homebrew which is widely produced and consumed in the slums. It is no longer illegal to distil or sell *chang'aa*, but producers must adhere to strict regulations. In the slums, producers typically evade regulatory scrutiny, and the indiscriminate use of unclean water and of chemicals designed to expedite the fermentation process means the product is a notorious health risk. Numerous cases of destitution are linked to *chang'aa*, as are many deaths; one single incident of poisoning in 2000 killed more than 140 people (de Smedt, 2009).

“[People of this community], I can't say they see something good in chang'aa. But you know, ... this chang'aa, it's helped many people since it came here. You will see, I'm here, I don't have anything, to get even one bob [1c] is hard. You don't have any food, so you [may be tempted to] take [things], [to] do many crimes. ... When you come to your house you will find something like TV, or your computer, or something, has been stolen [because people are so desperate for money]. But now, it helps. Because now, many people have a job by a day. If you are [busy] there with chang'aa, you can't leave there without your 1,000 or 500 [\$10 or \$5].”—C11.

“People around here don't see it as a crime. Although, not many, just a few. But you find that ... most of the people like it because you find that we are not idle. Many boys take it as their work. You see, it's not like a long time ago, you'd be here, and [it was the kind of place where] boys would go to steal because they don't have work. Or people, they [would] keep on complaining because at night they can't pass this group because those [boys] hang there at night and take their things, but ... here, we are cool.”—C14.

Legitimising illegal activities was made easier by the ready availability of cultural resources that were embedded in the entrepreneurs' social context (Lounsbury, et al., forthcoming; Navis and Glynn, 2010). Entrepreneurs could simply manipulate and appropriate the sort of anti-establishment discourse that was already pervasive in the slum (see Section 3.2 above). Had entrepreneurs been required to formulate this discourse *tabula rasa* and to convince the wider community of its veracity, it is likely that few, if any, would have been able to obtain any meaningful degree of social legitimacy for their illegal ventures.

5.3.2 The Formal-Informal Feedback Loop

L-L entrepreneurs operated with a strong degree of certainty that if they did not do anything untoward that might attract the attention of the authorities, they could proceed almost completely undisturbed. This luxury did not extend to entrepreneurs engaged in I-L activities. Moreover, unlike those in the criminal economy, I-L entrepreneurs did not operate underground. On the contrary, some I-L businesses were highly conspicuous; the distinctive smell of fermenting sugarcane, for example, signalled to passers-by that a nearby house was being used as a makeshift *chang'aa* distillery. Alternatively, a distillery could be tracked down simply by following the trail of a deliveryman transporting boiled sugarcane on an open pushcart, which, even in broad daylight, was a routine sight.

As a result of their eminent visibility, entrepreneurs engaged in I-L activities interacted frequently with local authorities, most notably the police. Failure to secure the tacit and continued approval of the police would almost certainly result in confiscation of assets and closure, and, towards this end, bribery was rampant.

CI₃: *“We need to bribe [the police] every day.”*

CI₁: *“Every day, and the police come and say give us a small stuff [bribe]. And if you give them the cash, they just leave.”*

[Interviewer: *And this is when you’re delivering sugarcane?*]

CI₃: *“Yeah, when we’re delivering sugarcane. If they find you, you must give them something little.”*

“The police know [that we’re running casinos], we just give them something. They’re corrupt and don’t cause us problems.”—E17.

“With the chang’aa it’s a bit tricky because you find that the administration, the local administration, and even the police, they benefit from this kind of business, because weekly there is a certain percentage these people who brew takes to the chief, and also another percentage to the police.”—O6.

“Another challenge, you know, another challenge is this Music Corporate Society, you know we sometimes put music in memory cards and all that. So sometimes [the police] ambush us ... because they want, I don’t know what they want, give them 1,000 bob [\$10] and they go.”—C2₁.

Obtaining the approval of the authorities entailed dialogue as well as outright bribery. Central to this dialogue was the question of whether the venture was seen as legitimate within the informal institutional setting of the slum. For serial conmen and career criminals, securing prolonged impunity through bribery was made difficult by the fact that such individuals typically occupied marginal positions in the community. The extent to which they could be considered party to the community’s collective identity was diminished by their marginality; while it would be quite easy to imagine a cobbler feeling an affinity with a person selling vegetables because they manage their economic hardships in similar ways, it is less easy to imagine that cobbler feeling affinity with a petty thief. Along these lines, collective identity entails some measure of depersonalisation, wherein members of a social group can be said to share a collective identity when they view themselves as being interchangeable with other members of the group (Brewer and Gardner, 1996; Haslam and Ellemers, 2005; Sluss and Ashforth, 2007). By convincing the authorities that their ventures enjoyed a substantial degree of social legitimacy, I-L entrepreneurs could lay claim to the state of interchangeability. That is, they cease to be marginal and instead become just another informal business, virtually indistinguishable from the thousands of others that crowd the slum. This act of ‘blending in’ did not free them from the obligation to bribe the authorities, but, in every other respect, they could conduct business in exactly the same way as their L-L counterparts.

““Everyone in Kenya is ‘negatively creative’, [C2₁] says. He said that also when we were having a conversation about the electricity, which was coming and going as we were talking. People are still wiring electricity to their homes and businesses directly to avoid

paying the metered charges. 'Everyone in Kenya looks for shortcuts. Everyone here is negatively creative.'—Field-notes extract.

"[The slot machines] were banned, they are not allowed, ... but we talked to the police and the chief. That's why we are still operating ... This is a slum. A slum cannot be, the government cannot be so strict. But [in the neighbouring area of] South B, do you see these machines?"—E17.

As well as *using* social legitimacy to obtain the approval of the police, it appears that social legitimacy was also *enhanced* by the obtaining of that approval. For entrepreneurs engaged in illegal activities, demonstrating the ability to carry out business in full view of the authorities was a powerful signal, an effective 'rubber-stamping' of their good standing in the community. Here, we see the iteration manifest: affirming one's place in the collective identity of the community was key to convincing the authorities to overlook one's legal transgressions, and having one's legal transgressions overlooked by the authorities served to re-affirm, or reinforce, one's place in the collective identity of the community. Through this process of iteration, particular activities came to be more clearly recognised as illegal *but legitimate*, and the rules regarding market entry and operation in these domains became less ambiguous.

"No, people don't see [chang'aa] as criminal, because even the police they usually find us doing the work and they don't see it as a crime. We just pass, he is doing his business and I am doing my business."—C14.

E15: *"[Someone] approached me and he's the one who brought this 'casino' [slot machine]. Came to me, as we were talking told me, 'I'll make sure that I bring to you casino so it can keep you busy as well'. So I accepted, because I am a businessman I don't deny anything. So long as it can generate an income."*

[Interviewer: When I was here last year they were almost everywhere.]

E15: *"Kenya regulated it. The police regulated it."*

[Interviewer: So for a business like this you have to give something?]

E15: *"Yeah, but for me, it's the owner [of the slot machine] that gives them something, not me. I always call him and tell him that the police are here. So he tells me give them this, I'm coming to refund."*

"For you to start a business in Mukuru ... if your business is illegal, like ... liquor ... or there are those businesses like gambling ... such businesses ... pay before they start their businesses. They first, they must first to the police stations and to the chief for them to be legalised in our slums."—O6.

5.3.3 Section Summary

In summary, data shows that entrepreneurs engaged in I-L activities were able to leverage the community's collective identity to minimise interference from enforcement authorities. They did this by undertaking a process which I label *insulating*, meaning that they used identity capital

forged by a wider populace of entrepreneurs as a buffer between themselves and the enforcement authorities.

Having explored the utility of collective identity for a specific, and relatively small, cohort of entrepreneurs (I-L), I now explore its utility for the rest (L-L). Already, it has been established that collective identity helped to sustain pervasive economic informality, making the process of market venturing cheaper, quicker, and an altogether more achievable goal for people with a low capital stock. However, extant research infers that the benefits of collective identity should outlast the process of venture initiation, as it is likely to extend to things like resource-sharing, collective resistance to criminal threats, and advantageous insights regarding the material needs of other members of the identity group (Branzei, et al., 2018; Matthias, et al., 2018; Sutter, et al., 2013; Viswanathan, et al., 2012; Viswanathan, et al., 2014; Webb, et al., 2009). As I illustrate in the following section, collective identity rarely translated into such forms of value for entrepreneurs in the study community. I highlight aspects of social structure which appeared to condition the development of collective identity and, subsequently, the bearing that it had (or didn't have) on the entrepreneurship process. Although my observations are closely grounded in the study community, the conditioning factors that I identify are of widespread pertinence in BoP contexts, yet they have been largely overlooked by extant research in this area.

5.4 “Breadth” of Identity Formulation and Implications for L-L Entrepreneurship

Ashforth, et al. (2008) account for the many facets of identity by arguing that the formulation of identity can be examined on a spectrum ranging from “broad” to “narrow”. Both narrow and broad formulations of identity infer that membership of a social group figures prominently in the self-concept of individual members. However, in the case of more narrowly formulated identities, this encompasses the full extent of identification. As the formulation of identity broadens, identification extends beyond shared self-definitions to include shared values, goals, and beliefs and culminates in behaviour that is oriented strongly towards the interests of that group or is heavily conditioned by the norms of that group.

Research has typically treated poor and marginalised communities as having what we might term ‘broadly formulated collective identities’, which are manifest in clearly specified – sometimes onerous – codes of individual conduct, affective interpersonal bonds, and high levels of interdependence (Peredo, 2003; Slade Schantz, et al., 2018; Vershinina, et al., 2018; Webb, et al., 2009). Data points towards a much narrower formulation of collective identity in the study community, where in-group affinity was predicated on a small and well-defined set of shared

circumstances. As a corollary, fault lines in the hierarchical ordering of identities were observed to cause *disidentification* (Pratt, 2000; Sluss and Ashforth, 2007). In certain matters, like the preservation of economic informality as the institutional *status quo* in the slum, individuals had little or no difficulty in conceiving of an “extended self” (Brewer and Gardner, 1996) which subsumed their status as members of this community; differences between them and others in the community were downplayed or dismissed, and *interchangeability* (Brewer, 1991; Haslam and Ellemers, 2005) – the view that community members were all alike – was emphasised. In most matters, however, extensions of the self were much more restrictive. Individuals regularly spoke of themselves as atomistic or as belonging to lower order identity groups, and often they regarded other members of the slum with indifference or even antipathy. In light of this propensity to *disidentify* with the community at large, I observe that collective identity – at the level of the community – had a relatively narrow bearing on entrepreneurship in the study community, which is in marked contrast to observations emanating from prior empirical research conducted in comparable contexts (e.g., Peredo, 2003; Slade Schantz, et al., 2018; Vershinina, et al., 2018). I proceed now to examine why collective identity had such a narrow formulation in the study community, before moving on to explore the implications of this for the process of entrepreneurship.

5.4.1 Identity ‘In’ and ‘Of’ the Slum

Much of the slum’s adult population lived an urban-rural ‘double life’, apportioning themselves between dual existences in highly contrasting socio-spatial settings. All of the entrepreneurs sampled in this study had forged for themselves a permanent or semi-permanent life in the slum (although many hoped to leave in the distant future, none were ‘seasonal migrants’ whose intention it was to stay only for a matter of weeks or months). Yet, almost all remained embedded, to a greater or lesser degree, in parallel lives that played out far from the slum. The spectrum of embeddedness was broad: some simply retained the language and customs of their rural homelands, while others left spouses and children “upcountry” to tend to small farms or businesses while they re-located to the city in search of more sizable economic opportunities. In more extreme, but by no means extraordinary, cases, this dualistic existence extended to cohabiting with a wife and family in the slum while another wife and family remained at home.³⁰ Occasionally, social or familial relationships would bridge the parallel strands of this double life – siblings or cousins may relocate to the city together or sequentially – but, more often, such ties were dislocated, reflecting the “social uprootedness” (Portes, 1972: 268) that is often

³⁰ This needn’t necessarily entail duplicity – having multiple wives is permissible for certain ethnic groups in Kenya. It is also permissible under Kenyan law.

characteristic of the slum dweller's experience.

[Interviewer: Lots of people come from the rural parts of Kenya to come here.]

E1: "Yes, they come to work."

[Interviewer: "Do you think their life is better here than their rural homes?"]

E1: "Yes, better here. You know, people from rural [areas], they depend on [city] money. If somebody gets a month's salary, he brings to his wife [upcountry]. The wife buys for children."

5.4.2 The Slum as an Ethnic Confluence

Unlike the isolated rural areas and smaller regional cities from which many of the slum's residents hailed, the slum did not have a dominant ethnic order. Instead, peoples from most or all of Kenya's 44 ethnic communities, as well as a sprinkling of immigrants from neighbouring countries like Somalia and Uganda, converged there. For the younger cohort, these ethnic identities scarcely mattered – in their place was a transcendent, urban identity that rejected 'tribalism' in favour of a more pan-ethnic youth culture that was firmly 'of' the slum (I focus more closely on this phenomenon and its implications for entrepreneurship in Chapter 7; see also Mazrui, 1995; Weiss, 2009). Many within this younger cohort regarded ethnic disunity as a clear manifestation of the small mindedness or – in the terms of one informant, "village mentality" – of the older generation, even though, as I have alluded to in earlier sections, ethnic disunity was demonstrably less severe in the study community than in other areas. Open, inter-ethnic hostilities in Mukuru did not reach the pitch of other slums during the tense election period that overlapped with the second phase of fieldwork; nonetheless, the refocusing of local and national discourse on matters of ethnicity challenged the notion that community insiders were necessarily 'alike'. Reflecting the dualism of their rural/urban double lives, the older cohort of the slum's residents frequently vacillated between self-descriptions that emphasised their membership of the slum community and those that emphasised their membership of their respective ethnic communities. As a consequence, neighbours with whom they shared conditions of desperate hardship could quickly take on a status of *de facto* otherness, severely undermining trust and limiting the formulative 'breadth' of the community's collective identity.

"Here, you know that Kikuyu community that I told you [about], they're just disturbing people. They just go somewhere, they grab [land], they call it their own, and then they sell. They come here [and] they grab it because they were not known people. They grab it, they just sell it. That's the way they operate."—E12.

E1 [after commending the members of the Maasai ethnic community for their honesty]: "If you keep our tribe here, you can find nothing at morning [it would be all stolen]. Even Kikuyu, they are the most dangerous."

[Interviewer: Some of the tribes are more likely to steal than others?]

E1: *“They prefer stealing. They prefer stealing than working.”*

Kikuyu Intruder [in a more light-hearted exchange with two non-Kikuyus]: “In Kenya, there is Indians and Kikuyus who know business. A Kikuyu knows business. And Kikuyus are everywhere. In every place there is a Kikuyu.”

Intruder 2: “The rich and the poor in Kenya, the poor are Kikuyu, the rich is Kikuyu.”

E17: “Beggars in town, Kikuyu ... Prostitute in town, Kikuyu.”

Because of such social fractiousness, many entrepreneurs felt that the precarity of their already-challenging livelihoods was exacerbated.

E8₂: “The elections? Ah, so much problems. One is the tribalism. Politics. Politics is affecting us. You can't buy here when a Jaluos is there, when a Luhya is there, you know we have so many tribes here.”

[Interviewer: Okay, so if a Luhya comes here they will buy at a Luhya-owned shop, if a Kikuyu comes they will buy from you? But a Luo won't come and buy from you?]

E8₂: “Yea, Luhya won't come, a Jaluos won't come here. A Kikuyu will.”

“Kikuyus are left alone. Kikuyus and Kalenjins. So you can find if another person from another tribe comes and finds that I'm a Kikuyu they go and find the same good I'm selling [somewhere else]. It's very hard to find another tribe coming to [buy stock from me]. Very few are coming. That is why I'm telling you nowadays business is very hard.”—E18.

Although the slum existed on the socioeconomic margins of wider society, the depressive, trickle-down effects that the election strife had on the local economy of the slum were severe. With little certainty over the legitimacy of the government's victory, many formal-sector companies scaled back their operations significantly (Aglionby, 2017), and large sections of the slum's population, employed on a casual basis within such companies, found themselves out of work. Because of the deleterious effects that this had on disposable incomes – which were already meagre – most entrepreneurs saw a marked drop-off in sales.³¹ As a result, the period in which economic solidarity was most needed was also the period in which it was most absent, as disparate social identities that had their roots far from the slum came to undermine the collective identity of the slum itself.

E2: “[Local people] have chances [to obtain employment], but not much. Because the companies, if somebody gets the chance [to employ] two people or three people, he will take people from his side, whether from home ... And if I have a job here, I will call my cousin, my brother, whatever, I will explain to them, then you know ...”

[Interviewer: Even in these companies in Mukuru, tribalism is still there?]

E2: “Very much. In Kenya tribalism is, very much, it's a problem.”

³¹ Apart from accounts given by the entrepreneurs themselves, this could be observed simply by contrasting the state of their ventures across the two phases of fieldwork, which were spaced one year apart, with the election (and the election re-run) taking place in between. Development workers working in the community corroborated the view that the general downturn of the slum's economy during this period was both real and attributable to the elections and to the related travails of the national economy.

“We don't know what is happening ... We will not open our [business] ... The day they [political demonstrators passing through the slum] were running here, they took our things, then they ran away. It's so bad.”—E3.

Most entrepreneurs continued to transact freely across ethnic lines, and many expressed the view that they were just as likely to be expropriated by other members of their own ethnic group as they were by members of other ethnic groups. Yet, the simple *feeling* of an affinity with one's ethnic group – or the sense that others in the slum felt an affinity with theirs – inhibited the proliferation of a more broadly formulated collective identity. The recognition of shared hardships was widespread, yet it was frequently overshadowed by the perception of ethnic differences.

“Because right now, even here in Nairobi, we meet with many people, we meet with many communities. They are claiming they're your friends, but ... you know, ... we are looking for life. We are coming from our rural homes, we are coming to Nairobi looking for life ... So you squeeze yourself looking [for] money.”—E12.

5.4.3 Claims of Uniqueness and Sameness

Ethnicity can be regarded as a “structural” basis for identification, in that ethnic groups represent social categories that exist and have meanings affixed to them *a priori* (Snow and McAdam, 2000). However, ethnicity was not the only basis for (dis)identification, and my data indicates that taking a structuralist lens alone – which involves focusing only on ascriptive characteristics like age, gender, and ethnicity – would fail to capture important variations in how entrepreneurs perceive themselves and their place in the community. These variations, although subtle, had an important bearing on how entrepreneurs related to one another and the norms of solidarity that prevailed amongst them. To address these differences, I turn from a structuralist to a constructionist view; specifically, I examine how entrepreneurship *produced* individuality as entrepreneurs constructed identities that emphasised speciality and distinctiveness. I find that, in a similar vein to ethnicity, this further negated the sense among community insiders – specifically entrepreneurs – that they were *interchangeable*, leading them to engage in more individualistic and less collectivistic entrepreneurial practices.

Our data illustrates a marked disconnect between insider-outsider perspectives on entrepreneurship in contexts of extreme deprivation. Whereas outsider perspectives have generally emphasised the ‘sameness’ of such ventures (often through the use of inclusive labels such as “micro”, “subsistence”, and “replication”; see, for example, Alvarez and Barney, 2014³²),

³² This is not to say that outsider perspectives which classify these businesses as “micro”, “subsistence”, or “replication” are empirically inaccurate or politically inappropriate. However, to understand how entrepreneurs in the slum relate to one-another and to their wider community, it is important that my analyses are sensitive to more ‘emic’ nuances.

insiders were much more given to emphasising the ‘uniqueness’ of their ventures.

[Interviewer: When there are so many businesses like this selling the same thing, and they're close by...]

E13: “No, my business, it doesn't have much competition.”

[Interviewer: So the other businesses, they are slightly different?]

E13: “They are very different ... The difference of my business is this, Philip. Many people they don't like small things. You see, like this Kiwi [polish], this is for shoes, do you know it? So, they don't want small things, they want big, big things. [But a]ll these big things, they don't have [the money to buy, so] the big things, they don't attract people like the small ones. ... You see, Philip, people like these small things, like watch, biro, ten shillings, and many people see their businesses are big, they have bags, they have this, [but] they don't attract people.”

[Interviewer: People here, they like to be fashionable, they like to have nice clothes.]

E19: Yeah, like this December [when people will be shopping for Christmas], they need the new [clothes], not the mutumbas [second-hand clothes], they like the new ones ... My plan, when I get money, I'm going to change these [second-hand clothes for] the new ones.

[Interviewer: Do customers ever come to you and tell you that you should take a different style of t-shirt, or...?]

E16: “Yes, yes, yes. Like, for example, there is t-shirts like the sleeveless, long sleeves, Adidas, Puma ... I listen to [customers]. I just don't do my style, but their styles ... [I tell customers that] 'when you walk to another place you will not find another like that'.”

“If, at all, you accommodate each and every person who comes to your shop, just you understand them, you accommodate them, you show them love, you move with them. They are not bad people ... What I normally do, I talk with them softly, and with love. So they come because of that. They come, they come to my place because they know they will get love, they will be attended well. You see those things, that is the secret of how I am making my business.”—E7.

Such feelings of uniqueness were not absolute, but were embedded within layered abstractions of the self. This distinction is predicated on the idea that, through identity-related discourse, individuals continuously reposition the boundaries of the self to find an optimal (and dynamic) equilibrium between uniqueness and sameness (Brewer, 1991; Shepherd and Haynie, 2009a). Entrepreneurs, as I have illustrated above, made claims to uniqueness based on business-specific knowledge that they had acquired during the venturing process. However, these claims to uniqueness were routinely balanced by claims of sameness, which involved entrepreneurs describing themselves in terms of their belonging to identifiable social categories (like the slum community) and their interchangeability with other occupants of such categories. Entrepreneurs had a particularly rich pool of discursive resources from which to concoct narratives of sameness. For a start, entrepreneurship was ubiquitous in the study community, and most households derived some, if not all, of their income from entrepreneurial ventures. Additionally, entrepreneurship was widely conducted under conditions of extreme deprivation and hardship, and very few

entrepreneurs – especially those in the early stages of venturing – had the luxury of rare or slack resources. And although ethnicity cut across almost every occupational category (including entrepreneurship), entrepreneurship was discussed in a terminology that was largely pan-ethnic; labels like “hustler” and “*jua kali*”³³, and associated terms like “struggle” and “self-reliance”, were used to discursively link entrepreneurs in various occupational sub-categories.

“We are still struggling, hoping that some customers come to buy. Outside of that we have no power. If the customers come, it will be good; if they do not come, it will still be good [there’s nothing we can do].”—E10.

“Especially this year, it has been a hard year for us because of [the] election, those things. People have no money, the economy is so down, you see, so we are struggling so much.”—E7.

“What we are just losing in our country is hope. And what we are losing to these young generation is all hope. When somebody does not have money today, he feels he is nothing.”—E12.

Therefore, entrepreneurs’ claims to uniqueness did not transcend contexts. Instead, they tended to be triggered by situational or conversational cues; other such cues could have the opposite effect, where entrepreneurs, rather than emphasising their uniqueness, downplayed distinctions between them and others. Also, claims of uniqueness and claims of sameness served fundamentally different purposes, although both helped entrepreneurs to cope (commercially and psychologically) with the extreme precarity of their livelihoods. In densely crowded markets, claims of uniqueness enabled entrepreneurs to affirm positive social distinction based on real or imagined sector-specific proficiencies. Conversely, when routine hardships became periodically exacerbated (entrepreneurs would occasionally go for days at a time without making any sales, which sometimes had ramifications for the number of meals they could eat in a day), entrepreneurs took solace in the fact that this did not connote incompetence, it simply reflected the reality of doing business in this community.

“Even now eating is too [challenging] ... I’m just not giving up, so not eating is just [a necessary sacrifice] ... But when I have money I eat.”—E16.

“Here when I said, I say, ‘Okay, even if I’m down right now, it’s not me alone’. There are some people that have gone in the situation [that] I am [in] right now. If this guy made it and he was in the same situation I am today, I believe in God I will make it.”—E12.

“You know this place, it depends. [At] end-month, people have money. Sometimes people don’t have money, [you] just get two customers per day, or three.”—E5₂.

³³ *Jua Kali* is a Swahili term which translates literally to “hot sun”. It is used in the vernacular to refer to people that work outdoors, and more specifically to those that earn a living in the informal microenterprise sector (King, 1996; Macharia, 1992).

Yet claims of uniqueness and claims of sameness required different sets of discursive resources. As I have already noted, virtually every entrepreneur could legitimately claim sameness, as most began with little or nothing by the way of specialist expertise or resources and all were subject to similar institutional and infrastructural constraints (like intermittent power outages, the threat of crime, etc.). Claims of uniqueness, however, entailed an important temporal component that was not accessible to all entrepreneurs. Since such a large portion of the community had initiated market ventures, the status of ‘doing business’ was not sufficient to underpin claims of uniqueness; however, claims of uniqueness could be supported by demonstrating an ability to ‘do business well’. The discursive resources that entrepreneurs employed to signify high levels of professional competence, and to set themselves apart from other entrepreneurs in their ‘sector’ or in their community, usually accumulated over extended periods of time. In a setting where early stage ventures tended to be highly ephemeral – roadside ventures would often disappear shortly after being initiated, sometimes popping up elsewhere with a different set of goods/services on offer – simply managing to sustain the same business in the same place was considered a useful marker of entrepreneurial proficiency. The experience of doing so, of course, also enabled entrepreneurs to learn profoundly contextualised ‘tricks of the trade’ such as those cited in the quotes above – particular styles of clothing sell better than others; there is a greater market for new clothes at Christmastime, while second hand clothes sell better throughout the year; small, cheap items deliver low but consistent returns, which may make them more suited to the needs of an entrepreneur living in conditions of extreme economic precarity than larger, more expensive items that deliver higher but more irregular returns, etc. (Collins, et al., 2012). Amplifying such commercial micro-variations was a means for certain entrepreneurs – those whose ventures had existed for a long period of time or those who demonstrated the rare ability to achieve success quickly – to set themselves apart from other entrepreneurs in their ‘sector’ and from other entrepreneurs more generally.

“Yeah, there are many [other businesses like ours nearby] but those are, they opened last year. But this one is from 2010, this one was here, the others are just [new], they don’t have experience like we have. You know many people come from far away, they pass all those cybers to come here. You know, old is gold.”—C2₄.

“You see that guy [going door to door selling eggs], he is just hustling ... He is hustling to get something small on his upkeep. Here, we are just working, I am not a hustler.” [From a later conversation:] “Jua kali is a managed business, because in jua kali you are settled somehow, like here. Like you see, hustling, you are just meandering wherever you get money. You may get something [or] you may not get [something].”—E2.

In some cases, entrepreneurs admitted exaggerating, or even fabricating, differences between the products/services that they offered and the products/services that their competitors offered. Ironically, entrepreneurs used such examples to explain why they were set apart from those

competitors, rather than to signify interchangeability. Specifically, if an entrepreneur could convince a customer that his/her products were somehow superior to those provided by competitors when in fact there was no material difference, this too was considered to be a marker of proficiency.

E19: "Me, I know a lot of business ... What you do is you welcome the customer, entertain them ... And you confuse them. You can tell him or her these clothes you are selling, they cost 1,200 and now you are selling 400. When you are selling the clothes, you confuse."
[Interviewer: There are so many other businesses here selling clothes also, so it's difficult.]

E19: "Yeah, you confuse them [by telling them that] you are the [only] one that [is] selling these things, and there are a lot of people selling."

E1: "You know here in Kenya, businesses, they grow because they cheat people ... I have made so much money since you have come here."

[Interviewer: Because I have been here?]

E1: "Yes, so much money."

[Interviewer: Because of me?]

E1: "You know, people come up to me and they ask, 'Who is this mzungu [white person]?' I say, 'He comes from a hotel,' or 'He manages a big company and he came here and liked the [tailoring that I do], so he gave me a big order'. And then people come here to buy. Somebody came yesterday after you left and asked about the mzungu. I said that you had an order for twelve suits. He said, 'Which one was it?'; I said it's this one [reaching for a pair of trousers]. He said, 'Make me two as well', and he bought them."

Outsider perspectives tend to regard such entrepreneurs as generalists, owing to the fact that their ventures are usually initiated with little by the way of sector-specific knowledge, training, or resources. Generalists, by definition, have much common ground with one-another. Data shows that the highly contextualised, sector-specific knowledge that these entrepreneurs acquired by actually practicing entrepreneurship provided them with the discursive resources necessary to alternate between self-depictions of sameness and uniqueness, or generalists and specialists. As much as entrepreneurs found psychological comfort in relating their own economic hardships to the economic hardships of others in their community, the extent of sameness, or interchangeability, was diminished by entrepreneurs' tendency to regard themselves as specialists. As such, collective identity was not only undermined by structural factors like ethnicity. Entrepreneurs also found reason to extricate themselves, to purposefully *disidentify*, from this collective identity. By doing so, they were able to set themselves apart in extremely crowded and ostensibly homogeneous markets.

E2: "The best thing you have to know, you have to bring a good quality of the charcoal. Quality. Quality is the only thing. Quality is the matter of the business. Not quantity, quality. Because if you have good quality, you have the customers [coming to you], they leave the others, they come to you because they know your charcoal is very fine."
[Interviewer: What makes good quality charcoal?]

E2: “It depends on the tree. The tree of the charcoal. You know, in the bush there are different trees, because we know the trees. This is the charcoal of this quality, this of... If I'm not going to the market, I'll call the guys upcountry. I'll tell them, ‘If you bring bad quality, I will not take [from] you’. So you bring the good thing, you get your money, my customer will judge the quality, then ...”

[Interviewer: And do you think the other people that sell charcoal around here, do they care as much about quality as you do?]

E2: “No, that is their weakness now, upon my advantage [laughs]. That cannot be leaked to them, because if I leak they will challenge me.”

5.4.4 Stratification, Isolation, and Precarity

Earlier, it was explained that I-L entrepreneurs sought to (re-)affirm their place within the collective identity of the community as a means to insulate their ventures from interference by formal institutional agents such as the police. In this section, I have shown that L-L entrepreneurs did more or less the opposite. Rather than pursuing the status of ‘one of the crowd’, as I-L entrepreneurs did, the identity work of L-L entrepreneurs was oriented towards distinction. Narratives of distinction were underpinned by time and proficiency, such that the longer an entrepreneur spent engaged in a particular line of business, the more she regarded herself as a specialist, and, in turn, the clearer the distinction that she could make between her and other entrepreneurs within and outside her sector. Such distinctions were also multi-perspectival, which often served to sharpen them further. For example, many of those whose ventures had been established for more than a decade owned operating premises³⁴ in highly desirable locations, which they cited as evidence of entrepreneurial acumen on their part. Novice entrepreneurs, however, tended to regard this as opportunistic land-grabbing, as people arriving to the slum in its earlier years, when land was plentiful, could acquire premises at little or no cost, while those arriving later often had to pay sizable rents for inferior-quality premises.

[Interviewer: Is this shop in one of the best places in Mukuru?]

E1: “It’s a very good place. It belongs to me ... Not to rent [I don’t rent it]. I bought it [approximately 16 years ago]. I bought it [for] 6,000KES [\$60] but now it’s [worth] almost 100,000KES [\$1,000]. If I say I’ll sell, I can get KES100,000 [\$1,000]. This is the best place. They come from Sinai, they pass here, [people from] Kayole pass here. This is the highway.”

“Mukuru is expanding quicker, and the ones who are making it to expand are the ones who came before. You know, somebody who has been here for more than 15 years knows

³⁴ As I explain in the Methodology, land ownership is an extremely complex issue. Technically, none of the slum’s residents owned the land upon which their properties were situated, and therefore their tenancy was not fully secure. However, some owned the structure of the property itself, which also gave them a *de facto* claim to the land underneath. It is in this sense that I talk about some entrepreneurs owning their premises. See Wouters, et al. (2015) for greater detail.

more outcuts of Mukuru, knows that this place belongs to who and who, so they just grab, because they have been here for a long time and we are not from here. Some of us are not born here, you find even us, if we could have been born here at least we could have known some ways, but now most of us we are not from here, we just came.”—C14.

“Getting the kibanda [premises] is very hard ... I think last August [was] the month that I got a kibanda ... You give the rent [around \$40 per month for this premises, which is typical], you give the decoration of the kibanda, you have so many things that need some money.”—E14.

Through their own narratives of distinction, and by being implicated in similar (but often more hostile) narratives propagated by others in the community, many L-L entrepreneurs experienced clear feelings of social and economic isolation. The sense of ‘we-ness’ that was expressed in relation to upholding informality did little to ease the difficulties that entrepreneurs constantly faced in the actual operation of their ventures, like having insufficient funds to replenish stock or being the victim of crime. Instead, entrepreneurs proceeded on the assumption that the support of others in their community would not be forthcoming should they encounter crises.

[Interviewer: And tell me, if this business started to go down, is there anyone you could go to around here for money?]

E1: “If it goes down? Nobody can help, nobody.”

[Interviewer: You are alone?]

E1: “All alone.”

[Interviewer: What about your brother, or other people around?]

E1: “Ah no, everybody struggles for him[self] because he has children, he have problems, he has his children to [care for].”

E11: “Here in Kenya we have got many different jua kalis.”

[Interviewer: And do the jua kalis co-operate, do you have associations and things like that?]

E11: “It’s a business, like me here, I have my own jua kali. ... People, they don’t co-operate.”

Other: “It’s like a stiff competition.”

E11: “You know jua kali Kenya, here in Kenya it depends on your talent. So we don’t have all that co-operation because you are in a hurry to make your things and sell. So we don’t have that time to sit down and [co-operate]. But what we lack here in Kenya is trust.”

Other: “People don’t trust each other.”

E11: “You can’t trust somebody to keep your money because tomorrow you won’t find them. So there is no trust.”

[Interviewer: And if your business was going down do you think there’s people around here that would assist you?]

E7: “No they can’t, because even them they are struggling in their families so they can’t help you.”

[Interviewer: Have you ever been broken into?]

E7: “Yes, two times. That's why I've got this [strong] door. I managed to put this door, because the first one, they came at night, they broke [in], they carried everything. So I started again from zero. Yeah, they have managed [to break in], twice.”

[Interviewer: And when something like that happens, do you have any support or it's just you?]

E7: “No, here we don't have support. [People] will come and say, 'Oh, I'm so sorry', but they don't give anything, so you have to look your own means.”

[Interviewer: And if your business here started to go down, is there anybody that you could go to here for assistance?]

E19: “Who would assist me? Nobody. Nobody. It's just me.”

“You see, starting a business needs some capital. And as you understand people, people are hailing from different backgrounds. We are hailing from a background of having nothing, even providing food is so difficult. ... That's why, you see, ... they don't have those strategies for helping one-another. In our country, Kenya, we are not crying for each other, you are crying for your own interest.”—E12.

5.4.5 Section Summary

At the beginning of this chapter, it was observed that members of the study community expressed a clear sense of ‘we-ness’, grounded in the belief that levels of social and economic disadvantage were higher in this community than in others. In this section I outlined structural and emergent factors that challenged this sense of ‘we-ness’, and finished by illustrating that entrepreneurs typically regarded their work as solitary, and most navigated the extreme precarity of their operational context with little or no social support.

5.5 Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter, I found that collective identity – the consensual understanding among members of the study community of ‘who we are’ – played an important but limited role in the entrepreneurship process. In the context of extreme hardship, neglect, and exclusion, I found that a prevailing sense of ‘we-ness’ came to the fore as entrepreneurs emphasised the moral imperative of being allowed to ‘play by their own rules’, particularly with regard to economic informality. This, in turn, ensured that barriers to market venturing were kept to a minimum and that an extremely broad cross-section of the community’s population, even the worse off, could engage in entrepreneurship. However, in terms of reducing the considerable precarity of entrepreneurial venturing, entrepreneurs engaged in I-L activities derived more substantial and lasting benefits from collective identity than entrepreneurs engaged in L-L activities. By blending into the crowd, I-L entrepreneurs were able to insulate their ventures from legal and regulatory sanctions imposed

by formal institutional agents like the police. Much of the identity work undertaken by L-L entrepreneurs, on the other hand, was oriented towards distinguishing themselves from the crowd. Structural and emergent factors – differences in ethnicity and background coupled with occupational specialisation – combined to narrow the formulation of collective identity among entrepreneurs in the community. As a result, collective identity was central to making entrepreneurship possible for a broad cross-section of the community's population, but navigating the many challenges of entrepreneurship itself was a largely solitary process.

CHAPTER 6

Individual Entrepreneurs: Discussion

6.1 Introduction

Entrepreneurship is a profoundly social process which is embedded within evolving systems of shared meaning (DeClercq and Voronov, 2009; De Castro, et al., 2014; Demetry, 2017; Fiol and Romanelli, 2012; Imas, et al., 2012; McKeever, et al., 2015; Wry, Lounsbury, and Glynn, 2011). An important facet of these systems is locality, particularly when being an entrepreneur is likely to have different social connotations in one spatial context versus another (Imas and Weston, 2012; Steyaert and Katz, 2004). In slum communities, entrepreneurship is a pillar upon which many (or most) households depend for their livelihoods (de Soto, 2000), but slum settings present extraordinary challenges for entrepreneurs, including desperately poor infrastructure, difficulty in accessing finance and other resources, and a customer base that can afford only the lowest-end goods and services. In the previous chapter, I used rich, qualitative data gathered in one of East Africa's poorest urban slums to explore what it meant to be an entrepreneur in that community. I began with a general examination of the value connotations that entrepreneurs affixed to their membership of the community and the extent of togetherness that derived from the extreme difficulties that members of that community shared. Then, I investigated in a more focused way how this sense of togetherness had a bearing on entrepreneurship itself.

In this chapter I identify and discuss the theoretical implications that emanate from my empirical findings. To provide an overarching framework for this discussion, I look to social identity theory (SIT), which links to collective identity via the construct of the "extended self" which was raised in the previous chapter. The construct of the extended self infers that an individual's identity is constantly shifting to reflect his/her membership of various social categories, like family, organisation, nation, etc. (Brewer, 1991). In some social situations, we assert our own uniqueness – 'I'm the only me and nobody else here is like me' – while in others, we claim one-ness with co-occupants of a given social category – 'I'm just like everyone else in this family/organisation/community'. The latter culminates in *depersonalisation*, whereby the characteristics and motivations that underlie our self-definition cease to become ours alone; instead, they are presumed to be held in common by all occupants of that social category (Ashforth and Mael, 1989; Turner, 1984). At the extreme, all occupants are considered similar to the point of interchangeability (Brewer and Gardner, 1996; Haslam and Ellemers, 2005; Tajfel, 1982). SIT

posits that individuals will take on a more depersonalised sense of self when they interact with members of an out-group (*intergroup* behaviour) than when they interact with members of their own in-group; in the case of the latter, individuals will be more inclined to assert their own uniqueness (*interpersonal* behaviour) (Tajfel, 1982; Tajfel and Turner, 1986). In this chapter, ‘in-group’ is used to correspond to the slum community. ‘Out-group’ refers to people or groups that are external to the slum and that are used as identity referents by those within the slum; they include the middle- and upper-classes, the government, the police, other slum communities, etc.

Using SIT and the construct of the extended self as a gateway to collective identity enabled me to sensitise my theoretical contributions to important nuances in my empirical data. Collective identity is frequently viewed as a hallmark of poor and marginalised societies, and conceptual and empirical research suggests that it permeates several aspects of the entrepreneurship process in these contexts (Peredo, 2003; Slade Schantz, et al., 2018; Vershinina, et al., 2018). However, data suggested that collective identity had a highly significant bearing on some aspects of the entrepreneurship process but very little of a bearing on others. Entrepreneurs could initiate ventures with minimal time and expense because the community had acted to uphold an institutional status quo that facilitated pervasive informal entrepreneurship. However, only a relatively small section of the community’s entrepreneurs – those in the ‘illegal but legitimate’ cohort – derived subsequent benefits from collective identity. Identity meta-categories were cut across by lower order categories like ethnicity and were further undermined by emergent narratives of distinction through which entrepreneurs set themselves apart in heavily crowded markets. Despite the eminent precarity that characterised entrepreneurship in this community, entrepreneurship was widely regarded as a solitary endeavour.

As these findings signify, slum communities embody complex processes of social upheaval. A slum constitutes a unique urban environment: aside from the visible harshness of a slum, so much of a slum’s space, and so many of its facilities, are intractably communal. Slum dwellers enjoy limited privacy and have little choice but to spend most of their waking hours in the company of their neighbours. However, unlike more isolated and stable contexts where such conditions are commonplace (e.g. Peredo, 2003; Slade Schantz, et al., 2018), slums are a confluence point where incessant waves of people with contrasting personal and ethnic backgrounds, economic profiles, and aspirations for upward mobility converge. In the context of these competing forces, there is no clear and intuitive outlook for how collective identity might have a bearing on the entrepreneurship process.

Based on my empirical findings, I argue that collective identity is likely to have the strongest bearing on those aspects of the entrepreneurial process which invoke *intergroup* relations. However, when an out-group ceases to be readily identifiable, the collective identity which

underlies in-group solidarity loses salience. As a result, those aspects of the entrepreneurial process that rely on *intragroup* solidarity, but which do not invoke a referent out-group, are least impacted by collective identity.

6.2 Collective Identity and Opportunity Space

‘Opportunity space’ is used here to refer to the full array of entrepreneurial opportunities that members of the slum community, given their resource and human capital endowments, could realistically pursue (Low, 2001; Mair, 2010).³⁵ my findings indicated that collective identity played an important part in enlarging the opportunity space for entrepreneurs in the slum – or at least in preventing that opportunity space from contracting. The institutional order that facilitated pervasive entrepreneurial informality was firmly embedded in the community’s sense of ‘who we are’, as it stemmed from the hardship and exclusion that set the slum apart within the wider socio-spatial context of the city. Attempts by outside agents to alter this institutional order, and to coerce businesses into becoming registered, obtaining licences, and paying tax, were not interpreted as targeting individual entrepreneurs, but were instead viewed as an assault on the slum as a whole – on ‘us’ – and were resisted accordingly.

The presence of a readily identifiable and ostensibly adversarial out-group, which in this case took the form of formal institutional agents like local council representatives, triggered a consolidation of collective identity within the slum. Consistent with the predictions of SIT, in-group differences stemming from ethnicity, sector, proficiency, etc. were subsumed by an overarching sense of belonging to the slum collective. Accordingly, actions directed towards preserving the institutional *status quo* of the slum were embedded in the situational context of intergroup behaviour. Because this institutional *status quo* was perceived to be broadly facilitative of entrepreneurship, the first contribution made in this section is to link collective identity to the germinal literature on “external enablers”.

The second contribution derives from the idea of ‘insulation’ that was described in the last chapter. It is suggested that identity perspectives which examine I-L venturing through the lens

³⁵ As well as factoring in the meagre stock of resources that most residents of the slum had at their disposal, I proceed on the assumption that economic activities that are not regarded as *socially acceptable* within the slum lie outside of the opportunity space. As before, this means that some economic activities that are technically illegal will be included, but it excludes those activities that are undisputedly criminal, like robbery, people trafficking, drug dealing, etc. (see Webb, et al., 2009; Welter and Smallbone, 2011). my focus is also limited to opportunities that might reasonably be expected to deliver positive *economic* returns (that is, their objective is not to create only social value, as might be the case with a school or a HIV-welfare organisation).

of inter-group relations can usefully complement the actor-network perspectives which, to-date, have been dominant in this area.

6.2.1 Collective Identity as an External Enabler

In helping to establish and preserve an institutional framework that enabled entrepreneurs to circumvent the costs and bureaucracy associated with formal venturing, the role that collective identity played in enlarging the opportunity space was facilitative towards entrepreneurs *in general*. No specialist resources or insider knowledge were necessary to take advantage of this circumstance; on the contrary, venturing was made possible for such a large section of the slum's population precisely because minimal entry barriers made specialist resources and insider knowledge unnecessary. For its role in preserving the opportunity space for market venturing by entrepreneurs *in general*, I posit that collective identity constitutes an "external enabler" which has an important role to play in the entrepreneurship process in poor and marginalised contexts. As set out by Davidsson (2015:683), an external enabler is defined as a "single, distinct, external circumstance, which has the potential of playing an essential role in eliciting and/or enabling a variety of entrepreneurial endeavors by several (potential) actors" (see also Davidsson, et al., forthcoming).

Entrepreneurs in BoP settings typically lack the material resources and/or human capital necessary for disruptive innovation (Alvarez and Barney, 2014; Bradley, et al., 2012). Instead of pursuing "creation opportunities" that have the potential to produce excess value and support the accumulation of wealth, these entrepreneurs fall back on "self-employment opportunities" that rely on low entry barriers and arbitrage, and that most often reinforce rather than break patterns of subsistence (Alvarez and Barney, 2014; Banerjee and Duflo, 2012; Bradley, et al., 2012; Brooks, Donovan, and Johnson, 2018; Bruton, Ahlstrom, and Si, 2015). Although opportunities of this type tend to be looked at as inferior (Imas, et al., 2012), the lack of genuine alternatives means that they are often the only means by which the poor can avoid sinking deeper into poverty. It therefore matters a great deal that opportunities of this kind exist in significant abundance in communities like the one studied here. Anything that might erode the profit margins that these opportunities yield – costs associated with registration, licences, and taxation, for example – represents a significant threat to the viability of those opportunities, since the profit margins within them are, in absolute terms, already miniscule. Collective identity played a vital role in preserving the economic viability of these opportunities.

Collective identity was not itself commodified, in the sense that profit opportunities were not directly linked to the community's shared sense of 'who we are' (c.f., Korsgaard, et al., 2015).

Profit opportunities – in a purely “realist” sense (Ramoglou and Tsang, 2016) – resided in the consumption capacity of the slum’s burgeoning population, coupled with the relative ease of sourcing produce and raw materials either at wholesale markets near the city centre or in the entrepreneur’s rural homeplace. Aside from those entrepreneurs that were engaged in service ventures, only a relatively small minority undertook any kind of value-adding processes. Most were pure-type arbitrageurs that bought fully processed goods (like foodstuffs, clothes, electronics, and household products) in modest-to-large quantities and sold them, plus a margin, to consumers in the slum. The enabling role that collective identity played in facilitating entrepreneurship was therefore indirect. The expansion of the opportunity space for entrepreneurship in the slum was driven primarily by the extraordinary pace of population growth; however, the economic viability of the opportunities within that space depended heavily on the ability of entrepreneurs to pursue them at little or no cost. Because members of the community acted to preserve the informal institutional order that had become embedded in the in-group’s consensual understanding of what made it distinct, these conditions were upheld.

Empirical findings suggest that the enabling role played by collective identity occurred by means of at least two of the nine “mechanisms” for enablement outlined by Davidsson, et al. (forthcoming). These mechanisms are “legitimation” – the informal institutions of the slum superseded the formal institutions of the State, allowing for widespread informality and expanding the range of permissible ventures to reflect the boundaries of normative legitimacy rather than legality – and “conservation” – because pervasive informality was upheld, ventures could be initiated and managed with minimal resources. To these could be added, on the basis of extant research, at least one more enabling mechanism: “enclosing”. Research has found that where an entrepreneur is part of a given social group, s/he is better placed (*ceteris paribus*) than an outsider to attend to the needs of his/her fellow members, because of the superior insight that s/he has into their lives (Viswanathan, et al., 2014; Webb, et al., 2009).

Linking collective identity to external enablement infers a novel take on both constructs and provides interesting possibilities for future theoretical development. It shifts the conception of collective identity away from one that centres on relational solidarity (‘I’ll assist you because we both belong to this community’) and towards one of embedded agency (‘belonging to this community might enable me to do X/Y/Z’). My findings suggest that such a perspective may be more appropriate where norms of solidarity are diluted by the size and heterogeneity of the group (Turner, 1984). It also adds a social dimension to early formulations of the external enabler construct (Davidsson, 2015; Davidsson, et al., forthcoming; von Briel, Davidsson, and Recker, 2018). So far, the focus on “external circumstances” (Davidsson, 2015) has directed attention towards things like technological breakthroughs, environmental or cultural change, (de)regulation, or political turmoil. Collective identity, by virtue of the definitional principal that

it is “consensual” – that is, it is shared amongst more than one person – is also an external circumstance. Empirical observations made here suggest that, as well as being an enabler in and of itself, collective identity may also play an important conditioning role in respect of other enablers.

6.2.2 Insulating – Looking Inward and Outward

In the previous chapter, I described how entrepreneurs that were engaged in illegal activities (I-L) used identity capital which had been forged by the wider populace of entrepreneurs (L-L) as a buffer between themselves and the enforcement authorities, a phenomenon I labelled *insulating*. Insulation effectively enabled I-L entrepreneurs to hide in plain sight. It did not exonerate them from the obligation of bribing those enforcement authorities, but, once this condition was satisfied, it enabled them to enjoy more or less the same freedoms as all other (L-L) ventures. Because of this, I argued that, in general, entrepreneurs that were engaged in economic activities that were outside of the law but which were permissible within the informal institutional framework of the slum derived most benefit from collective identity.

I also examined some of the key process aspects of insulating. I explained that entrepreneurs first had to establish social legitimacy – either for themselves or for their ventures – within the community in order to persuade authorities that their activities were ‘covered by’ the community’s sense of ‘who we are’, and that they were morally indistinguishable to those being undertaken by the tens of thousands of L-L entrepreneurs in the slum. Entrepreneurs in this position could not afford to become alienated from the community nor from the police and were forced to play a unique bridging role between the in-group and the out-group.

Surprisingly, given the importance afforded to the topic in other studies (Boso, et al., 2013; Qureshi, Kistruck, and Bhatt, 2016; Rehn and Taalas, 2004b; Ritter, 1998; Zahra and Wright, 2016), personal networks were not a prominent feature of this bridging role. Aside from the fact that most entrepreneurs did not have pre-existing ties to representatives of the local officialdom, data indicates that such ties were simply not necessary to escape sanction. Rather than extracting favours from personal networks, entrepreneurs simply drew on already-established discursive scripts that legitimised low-level illegal activity. In this regard, I-L entrepreneurship tended to link more closely to identity-related discourse than to political or quasi-political network ties (Sveningsson and Alvensson, 2003; Watson, 2009; Wry, et al., 2011). As is the case in many areas where economic informality is prevalent (Fadahunsi and Rosa, 2002; Godfrey, 2011; Nguyen, et al., 2014), bribery was rampant in the slum – much more commonplace than paying tax – and did not need to be conducted beneath a veil of secrecy. For the most part, relationships between I-L

entrepreneurs and figures of local authority like the police and the chief developed because of the extra-legal nature of the venture itself and, much like taxation, these relationships were largely transactional. Nonetheless, this habitual corruption enmeshed the police in the very web of pseudo-legal institutions that they were tasked with dismantling.

Examined through an identity lens, it is apparent that the bridging role played by I-L entrepreneurs entailed more than a routine discursive struggle against an oppositional out-group. In-group/out-group distinctions needed to be re-imagined, which led to a ‘co-opting’ of sorts. Corruption did not prevent crossover between formal and informal institutions so much as it served as a catalyst for enforcement agents like the police to internalise the rules, attitudes, and norms upon which institutional informality was predicated (Ashforth and Mael, 1989). Interactions between I-L entrepreneurs and the police were not purely dyadic; figures of local authority, like community chiefs and elders, were also heavily implicated in them. The influence of the chief, in particular, was far-reaching. The chief lived in the community and was accessible to all of its members, but, crucially, his authority was also recognised by the police. Gaining the approval of chiefs and elders for economic activities that were regarded as permissible within the informal institutional framework of the slum was rarely problematic, although it typically did entail a bribe. Using their insider status to take advantage of local systems of governance in this way was an effective way for I-L entrepreneurs to signal to police that they were ‘covered by’ the collective identity of the slum, and to enable them to evade sanctions.

Slum communities are often characterised as lawless spaces that exist beyond some imagined frontier which the purview of legal enforcement cannot penetrate. This anarchic, Wild-West-type stereotype is outdated in much of the Developing World. Many governments, inspired by contemporary World Bank doctrine which effectively affirms that slums will remain a fixture of the urban landscapes of the future (Davis, 2007; United Nations, 2015, 2016; UN-Habitat, 2016b), advocate heavy-handed policing as a means to bring these unruly societies into line (Austin, 2019; Hammer, 2013). As a result, the mark of legal enforcement is, in some respects, *most* visible in slum communities. Data from Rio de Janeiro suggesting that killings by on-duty police officers are six times more prevalent in slum areas than in non-slum areas (Huggins, 2000: 116) is echoed by statistical and anecdotal evidence from around the world (Chevigny, 1990; Jha, Rao, and Woodcock, 2010), including in the slum community under study here (Maina, 2016; Ombatti, 2016). As these contrasting institutional orders come into contact, new social arrangements are being forged by embedded actors. These arrangements cover a broad moral spectrum and are oriented towards a diverse set of ends, from partnership-type initiatives aimed at enhancing the reach and efficacy of law enforcement (Roy, Jockin, and Ahmad Javed, 2004) to the more sinister phenomenon of “privatized” policing (Huggins, 2000).

Entrepreneurs, particularly those engaged in illegal activities, are at the forefront of creating such social arrangements. Prior research has highlighted how entrepreneurs use personal networks to evade sanction for engaging I-L activities (Qureshi, et al., 2016; Rehn and Taalas, 2004b; Ritter, 1998). Analyses suggested an alternative to the orthodox ‘it’s not who you are but who you know’ perspective. Who you are is, in fact, central to the idea of insulation that was developed in the previous chapter. By claiming that they were nothing other than ‘one of the crowd’, I-E entrepreneurs were invoking *intergroup* relations. Discursive scripts which emphasised struggle, exclusion, and self-reliance engendered a depersonalised self, helping I-E entrepreneurs to claim one-ness with the broader populace of entrepreneurs in the slum. Doing this successfully meant that I-L entrepreneurs could be regarded not in terms of their difference (illegality) but in terms of their sameness (social legitimacy).

6.2.3 Section Summary

In further developing my empirical findings relating to the facilitative role played by collective identity in the venturing process, two contributions were outlined. First, for its role in preserving the opportunity space for entrepreneurship, collective identity is identified as a possible external enabler. This adds a social dimension that has so-far been absent from this nascent body of literature and opens up new lines of research linking external enablement to social structure and embeddedness.

Second, expanding on the idea of ‘insulating’, I argue that I-L entrepreneurs play an important role in shaping the emergent ‘rules of the game’ when formal and informal institutional frameworks come into conflict. Because of the bridging activities of I-L entrepreneurs, agents tasked with imposing those formal institutions became embedded actors, engaged in routine extra-legal transactions and entwined in semi-formal local governance systems. It is suggested that identity perspectives which examine I-L venturing through the lens of inter-group relations can usefully complement the actor-network perspectives which, to-date, have been dominant in this area.

6.3 Collective Identity and Entrepreneurship in the Slum Context: Why not a Greater Overlap?

Collective identity is associated with strong internal solidarity, and with a sense of feeling and acting ‘as one’ (Jaspar, 2011; Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993). As an important basis for organic, bottom-up movements aimed at redressing various forms of social and/or economic disadvantage, it has been studied in the context of various historical and contemporary ‘grand challenges’, like

black rights, discrimination towards the gay and lesbian community, and the myriad difficulties encountered by immigrant groups (Bernstein, 1997; Klandermans, van der Toorn, and van Stekelenburg, 2008; Taylor, Kimport, Van Dyke, and Andersen, 2009; Snow, 2001). As research attention within the field of entrepreneurship has turned towards more marginal sections of society, themes relating to identity, embeddedness, and belonging have proven a natural fit (Berglund, Gaddefors, and Lindgren, 2016; Jack and Anderson, 2002; Korsgaard, et al., 2015; McKeever, Anderson, and Jack, 2014; McKeever, et al., 2015; Powell and Baker, 2014, 2017; Webb, et al., 2009). At the BoP in particular, where entrepreneurship has come to be seen as a vehicle for positive social change (Bruton, 2010; McMullen, 2011; Pearce, 2005), tapping into local understandings of ‘we-ness’ has been a fruitful line of research (Fernandes, et al., 2019; Peredo and Chrisman, 2006; Slade Schantz, et al., 2018; Viswanathan, et al., 2010).

On a more cautionary note, however, returns to collective identity, both in their magnitude and nature, are highly variable. In some circumstances, collective identity can underpin a strong collective orientation, inculcating values of absolute togetherness and culminating in the sharing of resources and information (Anderson and Obeng, 2017; Pret and Carter, 2017; Vershinina, et al., 2018). Peredo’s (2003) study of remote Andean communities, for example, revealed extraordinary levels of community solidarity, manifest in things like “*faena*” (or unsalaried work for the betterment of the village), “the instinctive response to draw together in times of crisis” (Peredo, 2003:155), and, ultimately, community-based enterprises that were so inclusive and well-integrated into local life that the boundaries between the community and the enterprise were effectively indiscernible. Collective identity was manifest in much more modest expressions of unity in the present study. But why? The answer would not seem to lie in differential levels of social disadvantage, as Peredo’s (2003:165) description of living conditions in her study community could easily be borrowed and applied to mine: “The harsh reality forming the backdrop to this article is that the [informants] stand out as the poorest among the poor. Their lives are conditioned by common hardships such as hunger; a lack of roads, potable water, and health services; powerlessness; social isolation; a state riddled with corruption; and chronic insecurity.”

Thus, I conclude this chapter by explaining why collective identity had such a limited bearing on the entrepreneurship process in the study community when, elsewhere, its significance would appear to be considerably more expansive. In doing so, I contribute to a more contextualised understanding of the entrepreneurship-collective identity nexus. Three specific issues are addressed. They are: (i) situated versus deep-structured identification; (ii) social mobility versus social change; and (iii) the translation of collective identity into enacted solidarity.

6.3.1 Situated versus Deep-Structured Identification

Identification can take one of two forms (Rousseau, 1998; Riketta, et al., 2006). The first form, *situated identification*, is a temporary or ephemeral cognitive state in which “situational cues prime individuals to think of each other as part of the same group” (Rousseau, 1998: 219). The second, *deep-structured identification*, “alters the mental mode that individuals have of themselves” (Rousseau, 1998: 218) such that, irrespective of situational context, an individual will regard his/her membership of the social group in question as an “integral and chronically accessible part of [his/her] self-definition” (Riketta, et al., 2006: 91).

In the previous chapter, I pointed out that most of the slum’s population – certainly the overwhelming majority of its elder cohort – retained close relational, economic, and affective links to their (sometimes distant) home regions. For many, this entailed a significant amount of identity baggage; ethnic identities, grounded in language, customs, political loyalties, and, often, the stereotyping of other ethnic groups, remained very much in play, even amidst the conditions of poverty and exclusion that all members of the study community shared. Additionally, entrepreneurs undertook identity work directed at setting themselves apart within the densely crowded and ostensibly homogeneous markets in which they operated. Neither of these factors precluded identification with the community – this, too, was evident – but they confined identification to a situated rather than a deep-structured form.

This infers a misalignment between subordinate and superordinate identities that, as yet, has not been addressed in the entrepreneurship-collective identity literature. Exemplified by Peredo’s (2003) study in remote, centuries-old Andean communities, research has tended to equate place with identity; however, as conflict and inequality drive large numbers of people away from socially homogeneous communities and force them together in vastly more heterogeneous ones, such kind of misalignment is likely to become more prevalent (Essers and Benschop, 2009). Identities grow more complex, and deep-structured identification becomes less territorially manifest (Hess, 2004).

Situated identification implies that, in some instances, actors will be more inclined to think in terms of ‘me’, while in others, notions of ‘me’ will be subsumed by notions of ‘we’. Moreover, individuals can be primed by external cues to think in more inclusive terms. In multi-ethnic contexts, for example, research has shown that exposure to specific environmental cues can lessen the salience of ethnic identities and lead people to identify with an ethnically transcendent, superordinate identity; in essence, multiple sub-groups come to be viewed as one large group (Gaertner, et al., 1996). Within this enlarged in-group, individuals rate others more favourably and exhibit a greater propensity towards collaboration, irrespective of *ex ante* differences in

subordinate identities like ethnicity (Gaertner, et al., 1996; Haslam and Ellemers, 2005; Rousseau, 1998).

There are several ways in which more inclusive formulations of ‘we-ness’ can be triggered, including placing an emphasis on the similarity of in-group members, subjecting the in-group to discrete, challenging experiences, and instituting correlative outcomes so that the successes of some members do not coincide with the failures of others (Rosseau, 1998; Riketta, et al., 2006). While such conditions can be quite easily fabricated in an organisational context, they may not occur so readily in the more naturalistic context of a community environment. It was noted in the previous chapter, for example, that when an entrepreneur was experiencing a period of heightened struggle, s/he would be more inclined to emphasise similarity to other members of the in-group. But, in the absence of correlative outcomes, retreating to this position of ‘we-ness’ – ‘I’m struggling, just like everyone else here’ – was a purely “intrapsychic” (Johns, 2001: 34) process that did not implicate others in any overt way. Here, identification amounted only to an extension of the individual self, in which a focal actor, responding to challenging personal circumstances, asserted his/her sense of belonging to a social group. Such identity processes were not designed to solicit social support nor to provoke collective action, they merely served to “provide a system of orientation for *self-reference* [in order to] create and define the individual’s place in society” (Tajfel and Turner, 1986: 283, emphasis in original). Here lies the main challenge of bridging the gap between the social identity of a single actor and the collective identity of a group of actors (Whetten, 2006); collective identity, by definition, is consensual, whereas social identification is an individual-level process that can occur without any reciprocation from other members of the putative in-group.

Another way to trigger inclusive notions of ‘we-ness’ is to make an out-group salient (Riketta, et al., 2006), and the findings set out in the previous chapter indicate that this is a more effective way of bridging the consensus gap; that is, out-group salience was associated with ‘collective identification’ rather than merely individual identification with the collective. This was because out-group salience rarely increased without at least one – and more often two or three – of the other triggers that I identified above also becoming salient. For example, when community insiders compared themselves to the residents of nearby, middle-class estates rather than to each other, differences between community insiders – regardless of things like occupational status or ethnicity – vanished. Similar, and perhaps most powerful of all, was the community’s reaction to the intrusion of the city council’s tax inspectors. Here, the salience of the out-group was exceptionally high because, unusually, individuals representing that out-group were physically present in the slum and not simply maintaining a background presence in middle-class estates, corporate offices, parliament buildings, universities, or other institutions of privilege. Moreover, emphasis on in-group similarities (‘we’re all too poor to afford registration costs’), commonality

of experience ('other communities do not encounter the same social and economic challenges that we do'), and correlative outcomes ('we'll all be worse off if this registration initiative proceeds') all came into sharper focus when the out-group became salient.

By contrast, the election turmoil heaped additional hardship on entrepreneurs in the slum community – it represented a discrete challenging experience with strongly correlative outcomes – but the identification processes that it provoked were not altogether consensual. While some were swift to blame a reckless political class, others perceived the out-group differently, attributing blame instead to the ethnic group with which the ruling party was most closely associated. Members of this ethnic group were a minority in the study community and entrepreneurs belonging to it noted a more acute drop-off in customers than did entrepreneurs of other ethnicities. Hence, in the absence of a clear and consensual out-group, external cues were liable to trigger other identities (such as ethnicity), resulting in disunity rather than togetherness. Contexts in which deep-structured identification is more prevalent, and where misalignments between subordinate and superordinate identities are less in both number and significance, do not encounter these problems to the same degree (Riketta, et al., 2006).

One key reason that collective identity had a relatively narrow bearing on the entrepreneurial process in this community, therefore, is that a clear, consensual out-group was not typically salient. High levels of marginality and exclusion meant, inherently, that the slum was generally left alone. Although entrepreneurs within the slum tended to source their produce or material inputs externally – usually from city-centre markets – this typically involved interacting with vendors that were only marginally above them on the socioeconomic ladder, and virtually all of their sales were to consumers within the slum. This high degree of self-containment meant that, in general, entrepreneurship was conducted in the context of interpersonal, not intergroup, relations.

In other words, the situated nature of collective identity meant that it was often dormant (not salient). Frequently, it would be salient on an individual but not a consensual basis while, at other times, it was crowded out by other situated identities like ethnicity. Evidence from this and other studies illustrates that when collective identity is salient, it can be a potent force (although identification does not always provoke action, which is a point addressed in the final part of this section). Much less research has been directed towards the issue of what happens when it is dormant, and this is what I turn to next.

6.3.2 Social Change versus Social Mobility

Social change involves systemic change that benefits one's social group as a whole, improving the status and/or circumstances of that group relative to other reference groups. By contrast, social mobility is an individual strategy which involves moving from a low-status social group to one of higher status (Tajfel, 1982; Tajfel and Turner, 1986). Both perspectives are well-represented in the literature on entrepreneurship in areas of poverty and marginality; social change is typically associated with a strong collective ethic or a clear sense of 'us-and-them' (Fernandes, et al, 2019; Lee and Hung, 2014; Martí, et al., 2013; Peredo, 2003), while social mobility – arguably more closely aligned with the cultural orthodoxy of entrepreneurship – centres on escaping, rather than transforming, conditions of poverty and finds its zenith in neoliberalist ideals of rags-to-riches individualism (Kodithuwakku and Rosa, 2002; Imas and Wilson, 2012). Collective identity, by its nature, aligns to the idea of social change: members of a given social group assert their oneness and act to redress shared injustices, usually by means of collective action oriented towards greater equality vis-à-vis some reference out-group.

What this study has found is that when collective identity is salient only some of the time, attitudes and beliefs associated with social change do not have the opportunity to proliferate and take hold. Inclinations towards social change are motivated by similar situational factors as those which motivate collective identification. Correlative outcomes, in particular, encourage people “to identify with each other and to support each other's initiatives”, giving rise to a form of in-group solidarity which “is not the result of norm introjection during childhood, but is an emergent product of a common fate” (Portes, 1998: 7-8). In the present study, however, correlative outcomes were taken seriously only to the extent that they could be attributed with clarity to the actions of a defined out-group. Since most economic activity invoked intragroup, not intergroup, relations, no out-group was typically salient, and no significance was affixed to the correlation of economic outcomes.

In more isolated, rural communities, interdependence is high and correlative outcomes are inescapable (Foster and Rosenzweig, 2001). However, the relative transience of urban life – particularly in a slum context, where transience is enshrined in the personal histories of so many people – inevitably means that outcomes will be less “integrative” (i.e. correlated or isomorphic) and more “distributive” (Rousseau, 1998: 220). It was reported in the previous chapter, for example, that many entrepreneurs aspired to leave the slum, either to return to their area of origin or to pursue greater prosperity in more affluent parts the city. As Portes (1972: 283, emphasis in original) writes in his classic essay on rationality in slums, “There is an individualistic ethic of promotion through personal effort. The crucial concern is not collective progress for the poorer classes, but individual advancement *away* from them.” In practice, a much greater number left

the slum because their livelihoods there had unravelled irreparably, and because living even there had become more costly than they were able to afford. At both ends of the spectrum of economic success, therefore, lay an escape route.

Such individualism is at odds with the popular view of poor communities as unified, interdependent social systems, but is consistent with central tenets of SIT – where a person’s membership of a given social group is not irrevocable, but where s/he can move with relative freedom into other groups, beliefs and strategies that align to social mobility will prevail over those that align to social change (Haslam and Ellemers, 2005; Lamont and Molnár, 2002; Tajfel and Turner, 1986). Add to this the fact that slums tend not to be stable social entities; most, including the one studied here, continue to expand at an extraordinary rate, with new developments being shoe-horned into tighter spaces and edged onto ever-more precarious tracts of land. Davis (2007: 182, explanatory note in original) captures well the kind of market conditions that ensue: “Competition in the urban informal sectors has become so intense that it recalls Darwin’s famous analogy about ecological struggle in tropical nature: ‘Ten thousand sharp wedges [i.e., urban survival strategies] packed close together and driven inwards by incessant blows, sometimes one wedge being struck, and then another with greater force’”.

Collective identity is not an all-or-nothing construct. It is possible for members of a community to express clear and consensual feelings of togetherness in respect of some referent out-group, yet to revert to a state of otherness when that out-group fades from view and relations are being enacted on a purely intragroup basis (Gaertner, 1996; Tajfel, 1982; Turner, 1984). Linking empirical findings to extant theory on social identity, I have argued that urban poverty – and particularly the transient context of an urban slum – provides a fragile basis for notions of ‘we-ness’. The ebb-and-flow nature of collective identity in such settings means that attitudes associated with social change cannot take hold and proliferate. The relative preponderance of social mobility-type attitudes, on the other hand, affords entrepreneurs a freedom to succeed that may be denied to them elsewhere (Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993; Slade Schantz, et al., 2018), but also leaves them isolated and dangerously susceptible to downward mobility, which is typically a case of returning to conditions of even more grinding poverty in their rural homeland or beginning from an even lower base in another of their city’s slums.

6.3.3 Collective Identity and Enacted Solidarity

In the present case, the bearing that collective identity had on the entrepreneurship process might be summarised as follows: collective identity helped to preserve the opportunity space for market venturing, but it did little to alleviate the operational precarity of venturing itself. So far, I have

explained that collective identity was of limited utility in the entrepreneurship process because of its 'situated' quality; when it was not salient, attitudes and beliefs that were rooted in social mobility flourished, and entrepreneurs exhibited a stronger desire to escape this social group (the slum community) than to improve its status. But this did not fully address the question of why collective identity – *even in situated form* – did not stimulate the kind of pro-social in-group behaviour that could impact entrepreneurship in a more positive and/or stabilising way.

Based on the widely accepted principal that identity guides behaviour (cit.), collective identity is generally assumed to be enacted in and through expressions of in-group solidarity, where members of a social group actively support and protect the wellbeing of their fellow members (Bullough, Renko, and Abdelzaher, 2017; Webb, et al., 2009; Zoogah, et al., 2015). However, SIT regards behaviour as a contingent, not an inevitable, consequence of identification. As Ashforth and Mael (1989: 21) write, "To identify, an individual need not expend effort toward the group's goals; rather, an individual need only perceive him- or herself as psychologically intertwined with the fate of the group. Behaviour and affect are viewed only as potential antecedents and consequences." I conclude this chapter by outlining two of the main forces that sustain this breach in the context of entrepreneurship and extreme poverty.

First, most forms of solidarity which might have a material bearing on the entrepreneurship process have an economic cost. Norms of reciprocity are typically seen as a key levelling mechanism that ensure that these costs even out over time (Granovetter, 1973; Peredo and Chrisman, 2006; Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993; Uzzi, 1997), but this holds only when solidarity exchanges are sustained in the long run (Collier and Gunning, 1999). Within social groups where boundaries are permeable and attitudes associated with social mobility are pervasive – that is, where members can, and generally desire to, leave the group to move to one of a higher status – norms of reciprocity are jeopardised. In general, gestures of economic solidarity – sharing resources, information, or interest-free loans – within impoverished communities are not "memoryless" (Fafchamps and Lund, 2003: 268). The vast majority of slum dwellers live on the brink of subsistence (Marx, et al., 2013) and it is likely that they would not be in a position to reciprocate such gestures of economic solidarity if called upon to do so (Davis, 2007). Even making good on the repayment of an informal loan is routinely beyond the means of individuals living in severe poverty (Field, et al., 2013). For those that do 'default' on such reciprocal obligations, social sanctions can be evaded by leaving the slum and relocating to another or to one's rural or regional home. Additionally, there is some covariance in the economic performance of individual businesses in a slum. The general elections, in the present study, were a case in point. Virtually every entrepreneur saw a decline in their income, and several had to close their businesses to avoid looting crowds passing through en route to city-centre riots and demonstrations. Even apparently trivial factors like rain could have a similar effect, such was the

extent to which it impaired underfoot conditions. Income covariance increases the risks associated with economic solidarity because people tend to encounter crises at the same time, making it more difficult to lend resources (or to return resources which have been borrowed) (Foster and Rosenzweig, 2001; Lam and Paul, 2013; Park, 2003). The coincidence of poverty, mobility, and covariant performance, therefore, inhibits identification from translating into enacted solidarity; in short, the costs and risks that economic solidarity demand are often too great for the extremely poor to bear.

The second factor is relational. An individual can identify with a social group – a community, an organisation, a sports team – and claim to be ‘at one’ with other members of that social group without actually knowing who those other members are (Turner, 1984). In general, this needn’t dampen one’s commitment to the cause of that social group (war is a prime example, where soldiers wilfully sacrifice their lives for the cause of nationhood despite only knowing a tiny fraction of others who belong to that nation). However, economic solidarity in poor communities like slums is rarely expressed in such a faceless way. As Fafchamps and Lund (2006: 272) write, “Gifts and informal loans are not exchanged on an anonymous basis within a large community or market but through a network of personalized relationships”. Familial networks are a principal conduit for support of this kind, but familial networks often do not remain intact as people move to slum communities (Abuya, Mutisya, Onsomu, Ngware, and Oketch, 2019; Portes, 1972). Moreover, friendship networks need to be forged almost from scratch, and against countervailing forces of ethnocentrism, extreme livelihood competition, and rapid population expansion. Network dislocation is therefore an acute characteristic of the slum dweller’s experience.

In light of these impediments to enacted solidarity, collective identity would appear to have a much more limited bearing on entrepreneurship at the venture level in slum communities than elsewhere. Since solidarity of this type is known to play a stabilising role in highly precarious market contexts (Lam and Paul, 2013; Peredo, 2003; Webb, 2009), slum entrepreneurs may therefore be especially susceptible to acute operational crises, and may have to rely on different means – more individual and less social in nature – to overcome these crises.

6.3.4 Section Summary

Collective identity was observed to have a substantial bearing on some aspects of entrepreneurship, but a minimal bearing on others; the purpose of this section was to develop a better understanding of why. I argued that three factors played a central part. First, collective identity was situationally manifest and, as a consequence, it was often not salient. Second, it pertained to a social group that was perceived as having permeable boundaries, meaning that

individuals could move freely from this group to other groups of higher (or lower) status. Third, although espousing collective identity was free, expressions of solidarity could be costly. Because of a combination of extreme resource deprivation and a widespread dislocation of network ties, such expressions of solidarity rarely materialised. Contributions to the entrepreneurship literature centre on the conditions under which collective identity is more or less likely to have a bearing on the entrepreneurship process.

6.4 Chapter Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to outline how the empirical findings set out in the previous chapter fit with, and advanced, extant research on entrepreneurship and collective identity, particularly in contexts of poverty and exclusion. Three specific contributions emerge:

First, for its role in expanding the opportunity space for entrepreneurship, my findings suggest that collective identity can fulfil the function of external enabler. This adds a social dimension that has so-far been absent from this nascent body of literature and opens up new lines of research linking external enablement to social structure and embeddedness.

Second, and expanding on the idea of 'insulating' that was set out in the previous chapter, I argue that I-L entrepreneurs play an important role in shaping the emergent 'rules of the game' when formal and informal institutional frameworks come into conflict. Because of the bridging activities of I-L entrepreneurs, agents tasked with imposing those formal institutions became embedded actors, engaged in routine extra-legal transactions and entwined in semi-formal local governance systems. It is suggested that identity perspectives which examine I-L venturing through the lens of inter-group relations can usefully complement the actor-network perspectives which, to-date, have been dominant in this area.

Third, a wide body of research has established that identification occurs on a 'situational' as well as a deep-structured basis. But despite gaining widespread acceptance in the area of social identity (concerned with individual-level identification processes), this point remains poorly addressed in the literature on collective identity. Intuitively, it would appear to be of at least equal pertinence here: if situational cues cause individuals to disidentify from a collective – which is the core premise of the situational identification construct – then collective identity is a hollow quantity. I address this shortcoming by illustrating that the salience of collective identity can ebb and flow, and I explore the conditions under which collective identity might or might not have a bearing on the entrepreneurial process.

By way of a distillation or synthesis of these individual contributions, I argue that collective identity is likely to have the strongest bearing on those aspects of the entrepreneurial process which invoke *intergroup* relations. However, when an out-group ceases to be readily identifiable, the collective identity which underlies in-group solidarity loses salience. As a result, those aspects of the entrepreneurial process that rely on *intragroup* solidarity, but which do not invoke a referent out-group, are least impacted by collective identity.

CHAPTER 7

Entrepreneurial Collectives: Analysis and Findings

7.1 Introduction

Our empirical focus up to this point has been directed towards entrepreneurs that moved to the slum for reasons of economic opportunity. Virtually all of this cohort had spent most of their lives elsewhere – in rural villages, regional towns or cities, or other slums. Analyses revealed that this got in the way of a more deep-structured sense of ‘we-ness’ within the slum, which, as it grew, came to accommodate increasing levels of ethnolinguistic pluralism. Coupled with the widespread rupturing of social networks that accompanied in-migration to the slum, this contributed to a pervasive sense of individualism in patterns of entrepreneurial organising.

Most of the slum’s population remains within this cohort, but this is rapidly changing. The demographic profile of slum communities typically represents an extreme incarnation of the “youth bulge” (Urdal, 2006; Yifu Lin, 2012) that characterises many Developing-World countries.

During fieldwork, it was observed that patterns of entrepreneurial organising differed systematically within the younger cohort as compared to their elder counterparts that were the subject of the two preceding chapters. This analysis chapter, and the discussion chapter that follows, focuses specifically on this younger cohort. (For ease of reference, I will henceforth refer to the elder cohort as ‘first generation’ and to the younger cohort as ‘second generation’.) Most evident was that the individualism that characterised first-generation entrepreneurs had given way to a propensity to initiate and operate market ventures in very close-knit groups. Two such groups, which I term ‘entrepreneurial collectives’ (or ‘collectives’ for short), are studied here. For the purpose of this chapter, I understand collective entrepreneurship as the pursuit, by a group of like-minded friends, of economic profits by means of self-initiated, market-based ventures.

Our interest in these entrepreneurial collectives is motivated by the view that they embody patterns of organising which are firmly rooted in the social structure of the slum (Thieme, 2013, 2015); therefore, they can yield broader insights into how the landscape for entrepreneurship is changing within this context (Ruef, 2000). Most slums are still young societies: many, like the one under study here, have seen their populations rise from virtually zero to hundreds of thousands over the course of the last three decades, and new slums continue to materialise in Developing-

World urban centres with remarkable speed and regularity (Davis, 2007). Research concerned with slums as an operational context for entrepreneurship must therefore be sensitive to their changing social realities, as new network structures, institutional arrangements, cultural practices, patterns of wealth distribution, and so on, emerge. The collectives, examined within the context of the two preceding chapters, provide one small window of insight into how these changes are taking shape.

The aim of this chapter is therefore to unpackage the patterns of organising that gave rise to the collectives and to gain an understanding of what it means to be a part of these collectives in much the same way that, in the preceding chapters, I sought to gain an understanding of what it means to be an entrepreneur within this community. Again, I employ an identity lens, but our interest shifts from the collective identity of the community to that of the entrepreneurial collectives. I begin by asking the question, ‘Why did the entrepreneurial collective emerge as an organisational form, particularly when entrepreneurship was regarded by the first generation as a distinctly solitary endeavour?’. Addressing this question yields a clearer understanding of how the landscape for entrepreneurship that confronted the second generation differed from that which confronted the first. Departing from this inter-generational contrast, I proceed to examine these collectives *in their own terms*, rather than in relation to their first-generation counterparts. I explore the transformations that the collectives underwent as they became market as well as social entities, and investigate the implications of being both at the same time. I ask, ‘How did collective identity and entrepreneurship co-evolve within the collectives, particularly in respect of the pre-existing and multi-faceted ties that underpinned them?’ The collectives, as well as being market and social entities in and of themselves, were also contexts for individual agency. Understanding this link is the aim of my third and final question, ‘How was individual agency enacted within the identity confines of the collectives?’ These three questions are split out by section below.

7.2 Emergence of the Collective as an Organisational Form

“Environments beset by considerable unrest and turbulence provide ample opportunity for new forms of organization to arise” (Hsu and Hannon, 2005: 487).

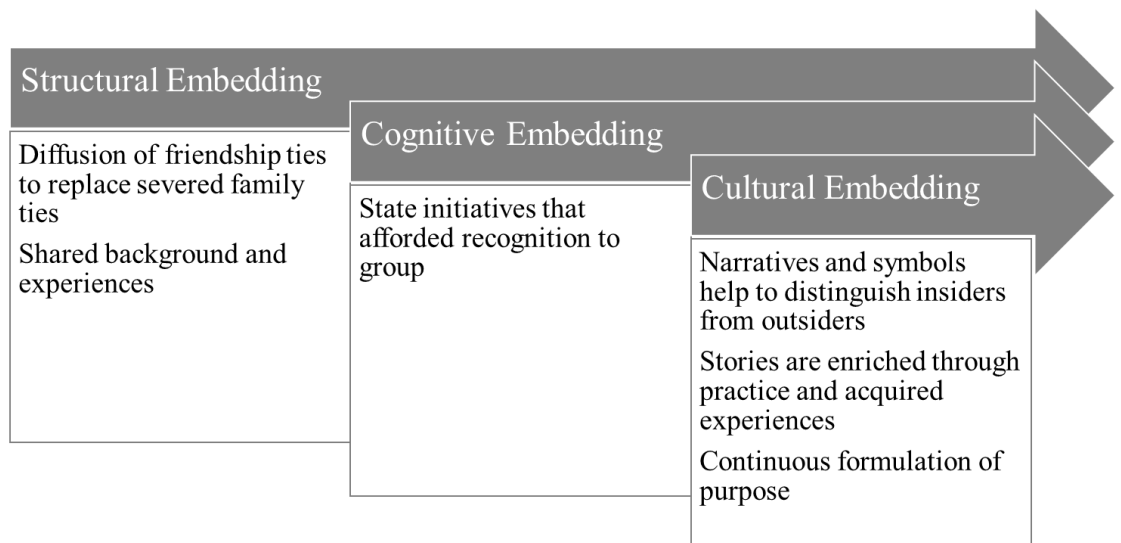
Some long-time residents of the study community reported that, as late as 1992, the task of enumerating the slum’s population was as simple as walking around and counting the houses. Within three decades, the slum’s population was comparable to that of cities like Edinburgh or Atlanta, yet it remained confined to a land area less than half the size of Central Park. Scholars have long argued that environmental changes which are as dramatic as this engender conditions germinal for the emergence of organisational forms which depart from the standard type (Hsu and

Hannon, 2005). Yet close-up, empirical research which is capable of illuminating the “microsocial processes” that give rise to such divergence has been lacking (Fiol and Romanelli, 2012: 597), all the more so in contexts of deprivation and struggle. This section pays close attention to these microsocial processes, as I investigate how the group- or team-based form of the entrepreneurial collective came to proliferate in a market context where individualism was both normatively and structurally entrenched.

Our analysis indicates that the actors and activities that comprised the collectives were much more firmly embedded in local society than were first-generation entrepreneurs and their ventures. Embeddedness came about as the culmination of three overlapping processes, or “mechanisms” (Dacin, et al., 1999; Zukin and DiMaggio, 1990), of embeddedness, namely *structural embedding*, *cognitive embedding*, and *cultural embedding* (see Figure 4). As we will see, these mechanisms encompassed things like network structures, institutional templates, and narratives, stories, and symbols.

Following from extant research, I recognise that organisational forms diverge from the social or market standard when new patterns of discourse accrete into collective identities (Hsu and Hannon, 2005; Fiol and Romanelli, 2012). That is, stories and symbols simultaneously cultivate intertwinement and separation, as groups create more elaborate formulations of ‘who we are’ (and ‘who we are not’) (Hardy, et al., 2005; Lounsbury, et al., forthcoming; Ybema, et al., 2012). As these stories promulgate, distinctions become objectified and audiences come to see these groups as belonging to a new category of organisational form. I attend to this phenomenon in my description of cultural embedding (and, to a lesser extent, cognitive embedding). I begin, however, with a mechanism of embedding that tends to be taken for granted: structural embedding. In the preceding chapters, I drew attention to the relative dearth of strong ties within the study community, as people were caught between the duality of their urban and rural lives. The second generation, for whom this duality was either diminished in its importance or absent altogether, were able to forge these ties in ways that the first generation were not. Relationships and experiences were an essential platform for the kind of formative discourse that helped collective identity to coalesce and to give rise to this divergent organisational form.

Figure 4: Embeddedness as a basis for Organisational Form



7.2.1 Structural Embedding

Structural embedding is used here to mean the proliferation of strong interpersonal ties that are characterised by trust, solidarity, reciprocity, and frequent contact (Dacin, et al., 1999; Granovetter, 1973, 1983; Ruef, 2002; Simsek, Lubatkin, and Floyd, 2003; Uzzi, 1997). Structural embeddedness is regarded as a characteristic feature of stable communities, as networks diffuse both within and across durable social entities like families, ethnic groups, and organisations (Bika, 2012; Jack and Anderson, 2002; McKeever, et al., 2014). As I have explained, the absence of such stability in the study community – its recent genesis and its ruptured kinship ties – compromised the foundations of structural embeddedness by undermining these social structures.

Importantly, the group referred to here as the ‘second generation’ were not, for the most part, the sons and daughters of the ‘first generation’. Although this was true for some, the vast majority of second-generation settlers came to the slum at a young age, but independent of their parents. Many came to attend informal boarding schools in the slum and opted to stay because they felt that the income opportunities available in Mukuru – although meagre – compared favourably to their rural homes. This extract from fieldnotes taken after a casual conversation with informant C1₉ (a member of Collective 1) is largely typical.

“He grew up several hours from Nairobi, but he came to Nairobi and lived in Mathare [another slum] for a while ... He came to [attend boarding school in Mukuru] in Form 1 [around 13 years old], but when he was in Form 3 or 4 his father died and he dropped out so he could earn some money and support himself. He doesn’t have any family around now.”—Field-notes extract.

By virtue of their relative youth, such dislocation to family ties left the second generation in a much more vulnerable state than it did the first. Without the patronage of a family member, it was

virtually impossible for them to obtain stable employment, leaving them reliant on improvisational livelihoods that did not enable them to gain much more than a momentary economic foothold. For them, the imperative to fill the void left by families that were distant, deceased, or too poor to provide meaningful material support was pressing.

“I cannot go to a clinic because I have nobody to take me. ... I have no father, no mother, I am on my own. I was attending [secondary school] but after my mother died I had to drop out because I could not afford the school fees. Now I am just a hustler.”—C1₁₀.

“I’m 17 ... But our house is small so I can’t live with my mother, so I’m trying to hustle so I can pay for my own house.”—C1₆.

“In this community, the level of three generations is nearly non-existent ... Here, a third generation is nearly non-existent and most importantly there are very few people over the age of fifty.”—O1.

The origins of interpersonal ties within each of the successive generations differed markedly. For the first generation, interpersonal ties spanned disparate geographical contexts and were predominantly grounded in ethnic kinship. Those of the second generation – largely unencumbered by ethnic loyalties – forged a much more local portfolio of ties through school and recreation.

“I knew them because of the football. Sometimes I can be there, and bored, and I’m like, ‘Hey, they are playing football, why can’t I join them and play?’ So it was like that, we started as a football [group] and stuff and stuff.”—C1₁.

“Almost all of the people who we are with outside, they were studying here, they finished school, so they are trying just to hustle.”—C1₆.

C1₁₁: “I started learning here from Standard 3 [around 7 years old].”

[Interviewer: And when the others came here, was it difficult to integrate with them when they had come from a different place?]

C1₁₁: “No. It was quite easy ... because the time they came here, they came boarding ... Even us that time, we were boarding ... So we came together.”

Moreover, bonds which were grounded in age and shared geography were strengthened by commonality of experience and hardship. Many of those that populated the collectives came to the slum as children or adolescents, and several were schoolmates there. Therefore, in contrast to those that came to the slum as adults, interpersonal ties within the second generation were rooted in shared historical experience – which was played out in the socio-spatial context of the slum – as well as in shared contemporary circumstance.

“He has been in Mukuru since he was 7 ... He spoke about the necklacings that he has seen, where men who are accused of things like theft get beaten up, wrapped in tyres, and burnt alive. He said he saw that for the first time, on the street in broad daylight, when he was 13, and couldn’t sleep afterwards. Someone from his class in school was caught

*stealing a TV from a nightclub and was beaten to death. I think he said he was 15.”—
Extract from fieldnotes.*

“They spoke of the 8 young men that were shot dead by a policeman in Mukuru last year. They said that they were friends of theirs, and that the policeman shot them for being thieves. They said that these people were not thieves, their lives were just worthless to the man that took them.”—Extract from fieldnotes.

“You know people die. People do die. Even our friend maybe, can pass on. [You] can find, maybe, [hypothetically, I] passed on last year. Everybody in the group will go to my burial.”—C1₃.

“[C1₅’s] eyes were bloodshot and at first I thought he must have been drinking last night. ‘How are things?’ ‘Things are good... but not really. You know Peter, the 23-year old boy that we were playing football with, he’s gone. He passed away this morning.’ ... [C1₂] told me what had happened to him. Late last night/early this morning Peter, as part of a group, tried to steal two of those Chinese slot machines from a local business. He was caught in the act, and mob justice took its course. He was beaten to death at the football pitch behind Ruben Ctr, probably around 6am.”—Field-notes extract.³⁶

The increasing prominence of structural embeddedness among the younger cohort was foundational to the emergence of the entrepreneurial collective as an organisational form. The relational and experiential underpinnings of structural embeddedness foregrounded collective action by nurturing alliances: market venturing did not cause the fate of these individuals to become intertwined, it was merely a continuation of a historical pattern of intertwinement that spanned almost every aspect of their lives. A disproportionately large number of one of the collectives, for example, had no secondary qualifications because they were left unable to sit their final exams when a teacher at the school they attended absconded with their examination fee. Similarly, recreation was typically feasible for everyone or for no-one, depending on whether they were able to commandeer the necessary raw materials, like a football or musical equipment. And although it was conventional for individuals or couples to live alone in the slum (dwellings were typically single-roomed, measuring 10x10ft with only one bed), youths that did not have a family home to return to often resorted to sharing with their peers.

*C1₁₀: “And by the time that I left the school, we took one house, we were staying like 5 guys. Those days that we were here, we were staying like 5, hustling and paying rent.”
[Interviewer: Were all of you in the same room?]*

C1₁₀: “Yeah we were all staying in the same room. But the time goes, you know everyone opens their mind. Even others, all of them have, like now every person has their own house.”

³⁶ Several different versions of this story would subsequently be relayed to me, both by members of the group and by others in the community. Some implied varying degrees of wrongdoing on the part of the deceased (theft, drug dealing), others asserted that he simply found himself in the wrong place at the wrong time.

“So, by that time we were living in one place, so we didn't have that threat of, ‘That guy’s going away, I’m going away’. No. Just as a team we were together day and night.”—C2₁.

“[C1₃] spoke of how his generation had been failed by their fathers.” —Field-notes extract.

The second generation, in contrast to the first, forged peer networks upon which they could rely to navigate the manifold precarities of slum life. Entrepreneurial venturing was not a special case, in the sense that these groups were not purpose-built for entrepreneurship, but entrepreneurship became woven into the patterns of internal social exchange that sustained them.

7.2.2 Cognitive Embedding

Cognitive embedding can be loosely paraphrased by the maxim ‘you cannot be what you cannot see’. More formally, in deciding upon a particular course of action, the range of possibilities that is available to a given actor is limited to those possibilities of which s/he is aware (Dacin, et al., 1999; Zukin and DiMaggio, 1990). Cognitive embedding is closely linked to the concepts of bounded rationality (Zukin and DiMaggio, 1990) and mimetic isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983), and provides significant analytical power in market contexts such as this. A central reason for the extensive proliferation of replication businesses in poor and marginalised communities, for example (Alvarez, and Barney, 2014; Slade Schantz, et al., 2018), is that entrepreneurs do not gain exposure to the rich array of process and technology improvements that are constantly coming on-stream in less peripheral markets (Bradley, et al., 2012; Smith and Besharov, 2019). Entrepreneurs therefore miss out on opportunities to create and capture additional value through new-to-the-market innovations (bounded rationality); instead, more than likely, the goods/services they provide, and the value-adding processes they undertake, will bear a strong resemblance to other nearby businesses (mimetic isomorphism).

“I have seen so many people come here and try to do this. People they see you, that you are doing well, they can just say, ‘I can’t sit at home, I will get a machine [a computer],’ and then they will start ... but people don’t know my processes [so many fail].”—C2₂.

“There were no role models around here ... Another thing, here people copy people ... You start a new business that no-one has, and in two weeks everyone will be doing that business. For example, when this thing came [the Chinese slot machines, before they were confiscated by the police], everyone went to request, because they transformed things directly, they see people have money, so they think this thing [makes] money, so everyone wants it. ... So after a period of time you find that these things are everywhere.”—C2₁.

“He is currently ‘consulting’ with business that failed to understand why they did. I asked him what he was finding out through these consultations: ‘People are doing what their friends are doing; they fail because they are just copying their friends. If you don’t have

vision... vision is the most important thing, you can't just work for the stomach [you have to see beyond the present]."—O6.

Cognitive embedding can have similar effects on patterns of organising. Rather than being patently rational, organising processes reflect the prevailing norms of particular eras and market contexts (note, for example, the diminishing popularity of the classic M-Form structure in recent decades; Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1993). Actors borrow institutional templates to provide systems of meaning (Dacin, et al., 1999; Simsek, et al., 2003) and to project, both inwardly and outwardly, an “entitative” state (Steyaert, 2007). Entities have ‘objective’ properties that both capture and exceed the content of the interpersonal relationships that bind their members; they allow for representations to be made through comparisons with similar entities, which in turn allows for the development of more elaborate formulations of ‘who we are’ (‘we are like them’ or ‘we are not like them’). Cognitive embedding, in an organising context, might therefore be thought of as a process of *template modelling*, in which actors use available (prevailing) organisational templates as frameworks of meaning that create ‘fit’ for their market-based activities. Those activities, rather than being seen as an ephemeral or ad-hoc collaboration, then become routinised within normative organisational structures that are legitimate to, and well-understood by, both insiders and outsiders.

An organisational template which accommodated quite comprehensively the skills and demographic profile, the loose designation of roles, and the spatially-rooted ties that (among other things) characterised the collectives had effectively been created by an ongoing government initiative which sought to help groups of disadvantaged youths by providing them with small, interest-free loans and other forms of business support (Government of Kenya, 2015). To qualify, groups must number at least ten members, 70 per cent of whom must be aged between 18-35 (Government of Kenya, n.d.). The scheme’s take-up in slum communities was lower than in other areas – largely because slum youths lacked the mentoring and support that could assist them in the application process (Sikenyi, 2017) – and neither of the collectives studied here availed of this scheme. Yet, to varying degrees, the collectives modelled the organisational template that it created. Collective 1 illustrates this particularly well. Even during the periods when its economic performance was at its poorest, members expressed faith in this organisational template largely because of the promise that this scheme, and others like it, would open up new opportunities. Indeed, the scheme was viewed almost as a panacea by some members, perhaps all the more so because it remained elusive for them.

“You know, there is another group down here, it is called Bakeat ... they have a certificate³⁷. When our councillor comes, you know he calls the group [and contracts them

³⁷ Obtaining a ‘group certificate’ qualifies a group to apply for loans or other forms of support under these schemes. To obtain the certificate, the group must complete a form naming each of its members and stating

to do local jobs], because [they] have a certificate already that has been signed ... But we, we don't have [a certificate], so we can't go anywhere ... If we get the certificate, you know our governor, Mike Sonko, he has the team that's called Sonko Rescue Team, so if we can have the certificate we can go there and tell him, 'Sonko, this is our certificate, our group, we want jobs [with] Sonko Rescue Team'. It's good."—C17.

"You know last time, Philip, we told you if you want to get a cheque, maybe from government, you need to have a group certificate. If you get a group certificate, maybe you have cash from government, for youth funds maybe."—C13.

The second generation, unlike the first, typically had no first-hand experience of business or commerce outside of the slum. Cognitive embeddedness was therefore extremely high: the insularity of the slum created a kind of 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1990) – a well-formed fluency in the norms and practices of this particular context, but one that did not transfer well to other contexts and situations. A development professional engaged in various forms of vocational training observed:

"In the weaving course, the girls have actually got to go to town themselves, buy the wool, and come back. It's a big thing for somebody that has never walked out of this slum before to get a matatu [bus] and do that ... I first started seeing it when I got here and the weaving course had just begun, and the first lot of graduates they absolutely had no idea where or what to buy. So what did they do? They went back to what they knew, and they were doing embroidery again."—O1.

Similarly, the range of *observable* organisational templates was narrow, and individuals and groups did not gain exposure to diverse patterns of organising. The notion of building a hierarchical organisation with clearly designated roles through a process of purposive recruitment, for example, was virtually unheard of. Venturing in large, egalitarian, peer-based groups, on the other hand, was a common sight. High levels of cognitive embeddedness contributed to a general and largely uncritical acceptance that this was simply 'the way things are done here'.

"And here when it comes to hustling, a lot of people come together, to work together."—C16.

"I believe the mentoring is there with each other, and that's peer-group as I was talking about before, however I think that because it's not supported enough, not informed enough, then you can get all of these negative bases that people move from rather than a positive or a right base to move from."—O1.

Indeed, cognitive and structural embeddedness intersect here to produce strong normative pressures that favour venturing of this kind. To overlook one's immediate friendship circle in

the group's objectives, as well as providing identification documents and paying a registration fee equivalent to around \$10.

putting together a new venture team would have been viewed as socially deviant, such was the extent of tacit integration between relational ties and economic prosperity within these groups.

C17: "It's difficult, very difficult [to be on your own in this community], because you know, in our group, maybe I have 200 shillings and someone like [C11] doesn't have, so I decide to give him 50 shillings."

[Interviewer: And do you always feel that you'll get that back?]

C17: "No, no, no, he's my friend so I don't need it back ... Yeah, trust, you can trust [your close friends], because you know, we've been born in this place, so..."

"I had, like, four friends with me, and ... they were telling me, 'You've been given something, you need to share it'. So I bought meat and ugali for us all."—C22.

Levels of cognitive embeddedness were considerable because the second generation, by and large, did not gain exposure to patterns of organising that deviated from the slum's comparatively narrow orthodoxy. Also, cognitive embeddedness was reified by social pressures: even if individuals were familiar with alternative organisational templates, the economic payoffs that might be gained by adopting them were likely to cause close friends to feel jilted, giving rise to the risk of social penalties.

7.2.3 Cultural Embedding

In discussing structural embedding, I alluded to the substitutive role that the collectives played in the lives of their members; in the absence of family ties, friendship ties were routinely relied upon for economic, emotional, and physical support. The regular occurrence of terms like 'family' and 'brothers' in the collectives' oral discourse yields insight into the extent to which the entrepreneurial activities of the collectives were embedded in relationships of trust and mutual obligation.

"What I can tell you is we've grown together like brothers, so the group is good. We love each other like brothers. If you don't have [something], your brother can help you."—C17.

"It would be hard just to hustle, to find money, but since we are together like this, I can do work easily because I know I have some friends who I live with like brothers."—C16.

Evident here is the depth of meaning that individuals derived from membership in these groups, a theme which is extended by the idea of cultural embeddedness. Cultural embeddedness refers to "the role of shared collective understandings in shaping economic strategies and goals" (Zukin and DiMaggio, 1990: 17). Seeing each other as 'brothers', for example, invokes an emotional togetherness – a sense of duty towards 'the other' – that far exceeds the usual scope of business relationships.

“When you see one of your own struggling you have to help.”—C1₂.

“[C1₁] is actually letting [C1₃] stay at his place at the moment because [C1₃] cannot afford to pay rent on a place of his own.”—Field-notes extract.

“You know, these tight-knit groups of young people will do anything virtually for each other, and it seems to me all because they have a bond.”—O1.

Upended kinship ties and the inaccessibility of the local labour market contributed to strong feelings of disenfranchisement (as well as, in a very direct way, to economic poverty) among those that lived in the slum from a young age. However, disenfranchisement also stemmed from being denied the opportunity to seek more intrinsic forms of fulfilment – by cultivating personal interests, satisfying one’s need for self-expression, and, in a more general sense, being able “to do the things that [one] has reason to value” (Sen, 2010: 230).

“We have artists here, rappers, dancers like my friend here, we have footballers; people who are really good in music, good in dancing. But due to the society that we come from, the background ... If you are from the poor background you can't make it. Up there you have to give some corruption ... So you find that getting at the top is a big problem. People like us, we can't get to the top” – C1₂.

“We have different talents in the group, but getting the exposure, that's where the problem lies. Getting [on to] a team is very difficult. You get one maybe you want to join [and] they'll be like, ‘You can't just come from nowhere and be a member of this group.’ ... they tell you [that] you have to maybe register, give them something [a bribe] for registration and stuff. It's very difficult”—C1₁.

Being able to afford the elemental constituents of subsistence living, like food and shelter, were obvious motivations for the collectives’ venturing activities; however, the impetus created by the shared desire to overcome constraints of this kind was also of considerable importance.

“We are musicians, we joined together like four years ago. But we used to get some disadvantages as a group - maybe we're going somewhere and we don't have [the] fare, we don't have [the] transportation fee and all that. So we just decided to start up something that will maybe get that money for us, so that if we go somewhere we have something in our pocket”—C2₁.

Venturing as a collective was therefore expedited by the fact that, in terms of their human composition, these ‘enterprises’ had begun to take shape long before they became active in a market setting. Given the difficulties of obtaining decent employment, entrepreneurial venturing in some shape or form was an inevitability for a sizable majority of this second generation. Increased levels of cultural embeddedness meant that, among the bundle of aspirations that ultimately led them to instigate venturing, ‘me-level motives’ were complemented – if not supplanted – by powerful ‘we-level motives’. Moreover, cultural embeddedness entails a richness

of imagery and symbolism which, for the collectives, gave rise to identity-based discourse that transferred seamlessly between recreational and market contexts.

“So we started as a team of three, and our aim to start that business was to get that petty cash to cater for our transport when we go to events, because we sing; we are a music group, a gospel music group” – C2₁.

A more comprehensive overview of this identity-based discourse is provided in Table 8. The table is arranged in accordance with an elaborated version of Albert and Whetten’s (1985) seminal framework for organisational identity (Whetten, 2006)³⁸, and its objective is to illustrate two key points. First, the collectives exhibit a strong sense of ‘we-ness’, and, second, that this ‘we-ness’ spans economic and non-economic realms of their lives, with no apparent boundaries separating the two.

³⁸ Even though it pertains to organisational identity rather than to collective identity (which is the central interest of this study), Albert and Whetten’s (1985) framework is employed here because it addresses problems of conceptual vagueness that pertain to the identity construct *in general*. Whetten’s (2006) elaboration of the framework was primarily aimed at distinguishing identity from neighbouring concepts like image and culture; in other words, to promote consistent and robust usage of the identity construct in an organisational context. It is towards this end that I borrow their template.

Table 8: Identity Discourse in the Collectives (Summary)

Principal Components of Organisational Identity (Albert and Whetten, 1985; Whetten, 2006)	Key themes	Illustrative Quotes (additional to those in-text)
<p>Ideational</p> <p><i>Members' shared beliefs regarding 'who we are' as an organisation.</i></p>	<p>Entrepreneurial activities are largely inseparable from recreational and social aspects of the groups.</p>	<p>"Yeah, when I started I didn't have a target, I just... yeah, ok, we have our targets in a way that we wanted something for our pocket, something to sustain our music band." (C2₁)</p> <p>"He has just moved from Mukuru to [nearby] Kayole. 'But this is where I come to do my hustling. I come here to see my boys, they are my family.'" (C1₅)</p>
<p>Definitional</p> <p><i>What is 'central, enduring, and distinctive' about our organisation?</i></p>	<p>The relationships underpinning the collectives are rooted in friendship, not economic exchange (central); aspirations are framed around shared, rather than individual, interests (enduring); non-economic narratives are constructed to enact distinction.</p>	<p>"Yeah, the group is cool. I can say that we've grown together like brothers, we like eachother so much, so the group is good, and we love eachother." (C1₇)</p> <p>"Yeah, we are friends, we are friends. We can't throw that away." (C1₁)</p> <p>"As a group ... you know, we need eachother tomorrow, we still need eachother." (C2₁)</p>
<p>Phenomenological</p> <p><i>How does identity-related discourse relate to profound, rather than mundane, organisational experiences?</i></p>	<p>Frequent reference to the extreme difficulties shared as members of the slum.</p>	<p>"Both [C1₅] and [C1₁] had previously been "hawkers" of clothes in town, where they could generate more income than in Mukuru, but the transport to and from was prohibitive to continuing this arrangement. Hawkers in town also need licenses, [C1₁] said, which they obviously didn't have. Therefore, they would frequently be alerted to the presence of an inspector from the City Council, and would rapidly have to bag up their stock and run." <i>Extract from fieldnotes.</i></p> <p>"He also told the story of being arrested just because 'the police didn't have enough people in custody' at the time. He said that he was in town and on his way to a class with a laptop and some papers when the police arrested him for now reason. He and everyone else in the cell had to pay 3,000/= to be released." (C1₂)</p> <p>"So we went one week and we were saving everything that we could get, we would take only for food. So, by that time we were living in one place, so we didn't have that threat of, 'that guy's going away, I'm going away'. No. Just as a team we were together day and night. As a team we were very very dedicated." (C2₁)</p>

7.2.4 Section Summary

The purpose of this section was to understand why, when entrepreneurship was regarded by the first generation as such a solitary endeavour, the entrepreneurial collective became such a prevalent entrepreneurial form within the second generation. My findings indicate that second-generation actors were embedded in the local community in ways that first-generation actors were not, and that this drove the proliferation of this divergent organisational form. Structural embedding afforded the second generation a social grounding that would otherwise have been deprived of them by the dislocation caused to their kinship ties. From an early age, members of this cohort had become accustomed to relying on peer networks for the kind of emotional, material, and physical support that would, in other circumstances, have been provided by their families. Cognitive embedding narrowed the range of potential organisational templates that they *could* adopt to the few that were visible and normatively appropriate within the relatively insular social context of the slum. And lastly, cultural embedding located the groups' entrepreneurial activities within extant formulations of 'who we are', as various forms of social affiliation, and the shared aspirations that they gave rise to, motivated collective action.

7.3 Co-evolution of Collective Identity and Entrepreneurship

As we have seen, the collectives were many things in one. The sense of 'we-ness' underpinning the collectives was spread across multiple task domains, as each collective fulfilled a broad suite of 'roles'; at a minimum, they were economic entities, vehicles for recreation and self-expression, and they afforded an important measure of emotional and physical security to those involved. Roles exist at the intersection of 'who we are' and 'what we do', and because they are inherently social (involving more than one person), they are laden with norms that specify (in)appropriate behaviour within the domain of that role (Sveningsson and Alvensson, 2003). Different roles, therefore, give rise to different 'role identities'.

Role identities, or 'micro-identities', agglomerate into the gestalt of macro or 'super-ordinate' identity (Shepherd and Haynie, 2009b), be that the personal identity of an individual or the collective identity of a group (Sveningsson and Alvensson, 2003). Recent studies have found that entrepreneurship alters the way in which these micro-identities fit together (Newbery, et al., 2018; Yitshaki and Kropp, 2018). The central premise of this literature is that micro-identities exist within salience hierarchies (Snow and McAdam, 2000); at any given time, one micro-identity is more salient than others, and this micro-identity takes on greater centrality in the context of an individual or group's macro identity (Hoang and Gimeno, 2010). An important determinant of whether a given micro-identity will gain or lose salience is the efficacy exhibited by an

individual/group within that task domain; demonstrating proficiency in a particular role is likely to make the micro-identity associated with that role more salient, while demonstrating incompetence is like to make it less salient. As a given micro-identity becomes increasingly salient, the psychological rewards of living up to – or exceeding – performance expectations within that task domain also increase.

Entrepreneurship is a social process in which natural feedback loops (like the rate of sales growth) signal to entrepreneurs whether they are performing well or performing poorly (Bhave, 1994), and recent research has proven entrepreneurship to be a fitting context in which to explore identity change (Hoang and Gimeno, 2010; Newbery, et al., 2018). Yet, empirical studies examining the relationship between entrepreneurial venturing and identity change have been few in number, and have yielded no clear insight into whether identity change processes unfold in the same way for individuals as for teams, or whether differences exist between teams that are bound by pre-existing ties and teams that are not (Powell and Baker, 2017). These gaps motivated the question: ‘How did collective identity and entrepreneurship co-evolve within the collectives, particularly in respect of the pre-existing and multi-faceted ties that underpinned them?’

This question supposes a dynamic and bi-directional interplay between entrepreneurship and collective identity, in which each affects the other in an iterative way. I find that entrepreneurship can either undermine or reify extant conceptualisations of ‘who we are’, depending on whether feedback obtained during the venturing process is positive or negative. My empirical observations suggest that current understandings of how these processes unfold at the level of individual entrepreneurs do not extrapolate well to entrepreneurial teams (particularly when those teams are bound by pre-existing ties). Rather than simply falling down a pecking order of salience, extant micro-identities were enriched with new meanings and became more (or less) potent sources of positive distinctiveness.

This, in turn, had important behavioural implications. Because the boundaries of each collective were grounded in identity, changes to perceived distinctiveness brought about changes in boundary permeability. That is, greater distinctiveness ‘firmed up’ venture boundaries, making it more difficult for outsiders to come in; conversely, diminished distinctiveness made the in-group and out-group appear increasingly similar, and venture boundaries became more inwardly permeable. Knock-on effects for performance – and how performance was *conceived* – are also identified.

7.3.1 The Collectives and Positive Distinctiveness

Even before their market ventures were initiated, being enmeshed in these peer networks was foundational to the self-concept of individual members. *A priori*, therefore, the collectives were a source of positive distinctiveness, in that certain things were held to make make ‘us’ different from –indeed, better than – ‘them’ (Haslam and Ellemers, 2005). Positive distinctiveness stemmed from many sources, like being in a music group, attending the same school, or exhibiting a spirit of absolute togetherness in the face of tribulation.

“We are together, we don't take other people like, we say because he comes from another area [that he can't be with us], it is not like that. We live like brothers.”—C1₄.

“We will continue until the last minute ... The one who brings a joke, take them out ... because we want those who are serious to do [things] the way we want.”—C1₁₃.

“In this our group, we don't use drugs because ... we are trying to hustle. Even that idea of coming with footballs, we can't be idle, because when we feel like we have something to do, we can come here, we do some training.”—C1₆.

Interestingly, initiating market venturing was not, in and of itself, a major source of positive distinctiveness. For both collectives, the activities surrounding venture initiation were low-key in the sense that neither group engaged in elaborate planning or resource orchestration, invested significant amounts of financial capital (either in absolute terms or in proportion to their limited personal wealth), or harboured especially high hopes for the commercial prospects of their enterprise. Instead, instigating ventures at this scale was perceived as a natural extension of the relational ties within the groups, married with the economic imperative of reaching adulthood and becoming financially independent at approximately the same time as their peers. Whereas the decision to launch is often heralded as momentous (Watson, 2013a), here it was routinely trivialised, as informants emphasised the relative ease of market entry and exit.

[Interviewer: You told me before that you started basically at the side of the road.]

C2₁: “Yeah, at the roadside.”

[Interviewer: Were you involved at that time too, C2₂?]

C2₂: “Yeah, I was.”

C2₁: “He was there since I was there. It was funny, I wish you could see it now ...”

C2₂: “It was just a computer, just a computer like that. No printer, no nothing.”

[Interviewer: Just in the open air, no shelter?]

[Laughs]

C2₂: “Just outside somewhere.”

C2₁: “When there was rain, we closed it. Then after the rains we [opened it again]. It was very funny.”

Access to tradable commodities or productive assets of any kind was generally regarded as sufficient to launch a commercial enterprise. As such, the *decision* to launch an entrepreneurial

venture had little effect on the collectives' sense of who they were. A brief audit of the narrative framing or the "vocabulary of motives" (Demetry, 2017) that the collectives employed to refer to the launch decision highlights that they did not set out with a view to outperforming the vast number of subsistence-level microenterprises that populated the slum; on the contrary, they viewed the prevalence of this kind of low value-added economic activity – which they commonly referred to as *hustling* – as indicative of what their own ventures were likely to achieve.

"Our aim was not to do business, it was to do something that may give us some transportation fees to go [to musical performances]. So when we ventured into this thing we didn't know that it would grow big. We didn't know that it would be big."—C21.

C11: "We have, maybe, us who are doing the car wash, that's hustling. As in, hustling is anything you are doing just to get that cash."

C11: "That is hustling. If you are not taken [employed] by any company, you are just on your own. That is hustling."

The extent to which these groups derived (or, rather, did not derive) positive distinctiveness from their early market activities can be encapsulated by their inclination to self-define as 'hustlers'. Often, the term 'hustler' was explicitly distinguished from the term 'entrepreneur', with the latter connoting superior skill, prestige, vision, and so on. Hustling, meanwhile, was associated with profound exclusion from the labour market and from official support channels like credit providers (see Table 9). It implied perpetual economic precarity and near-sighted opportunism and, depending on its context of use, it could also infer borderline (il)legality (Thieme, 2015). As noted above, the *decision* to launch had little bearing on the collective identity of either group. Rather than being perceived as a way to stand out, to excel, and to transform their economic circumstances, venturing was perceived, at least initially, as routine, as a social outlet in and of itself (something friends could do together), and as facilitative of other social outlets (i.e. providing some money to support the collectives' recreational interests).

Table 9: Hustling as a weak source of positive distinctiveness

Key characteristics of 'hustling' as an economic activity	Illustrative Quotes
Hustling is characteristic of economic activity in the slum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "He said ... that 75 per cent of the people doing business in Mukuru are 'hustlers'." • "You see that guy [going door to door selling eggs], he is just hustling ... He is hustling to get something small on his upkeep." • "We are all just hustlers." • "Young men, old ... [hustlers] are both. That's only the problem of unemployment ... you have to hustle that [income]."
Hustling is associated with struggle and exclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "It's very difficult, you have to hustle, you wake up early in the morning, you go to bed late, so that you can have something to feed your family." • "That's only the problem of unemployment. Because, you may be working in a certain company, let's say as a driver, the job is gone, you know you have to stay around, you cannot go home, you have to hustle." • "We just pray god to bless us because we are struggling a lot here, Philip. They are still hustlers like me."
Hustling is associated with opportunism and extremely short time horizons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Hustlers are the people that are just struggling, they cannot see beyond today." • "Like you see, hustling, you are just meandering wherever you get money. You may get something, you may not."
Hustling is (sometimes) associated with illegality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "They will do this, they will get maybe 300/=, then they will just go back to the house, and chew on the [coca] leaf. They will take a couple of bottles and then the day will be okaaaaay... And this [hand-to-mouth] living is the reason they take things that don't belong to them. And when you do that even God is against you." • "If you hustle and you don't get money, you may become a thief, because you want money, you have no money, you have to feed yourself, your family or whatever ... That will make you a bad person in the community."

Only non-members of the collectives are quoted in this table. The purpose here is to illustrate that consensus regarding the lack of positive distinctiveness that is associated with hustling spans the in-group and out-group; in other words, that everyone concurs that hustling is a low-status activity that is ubiquitous and is afforded little or no prestige. Informants from different age and gender categories are also quoted here, as a means to reinforce this point.

7.3.2 Entrepreneurship and Positive Distinctiveness

The extraordinary prevalence of subsistence-level micro-businesses meant that doing business was not usually seen as a source of positive distinctiveness; however, doing business *well* garnered some prestige. For Collective 2, the cyber services business, the experience of positive

market feedback in the early stages led to a re-framing of the venture's importance in the collective identity of the group.

“People started coming and asking, ‘What is this?’. And we're telling them, ‘This is a computer services centre, we can help you do this and this and this’. And then someone would just say, ‘Can you do this for me?’. And then we do it, and the person gets interested and starts paying ... In two weeks ... we managed to [earn] like 10,000 [KES, or US\$100], something that we were not even expecting. There was a time when we made like 5,000 [\$50] a day. It was on a Sunday. We made like 5,000.”—C2₁.

Spurred by this positive feedback, the group began to think differently about its market activities, and a venture that had originated as a short-term side-hustle came to figure with increasing prominence in the group's consensual understanding of 'who we are'. Within the space of six months, the venture had gained the unusual distinction of formal company status, complete with company name.

“So, ... we worked for let's say three months, and then everything started to change. The business minds started coming. I was like, ‘Yeah, this thing is good, it's happening,’ and I was like, ‘Ah, we can do something about this’. For me, I don't know much about business but now I usually learn online and all that. So I started researching, and doing this and that we managed to open a company, to register a company, it's called Visaka Enterprises ... [meaning] ‘At Your Service’.”—C2₁.

With time and further success, entrepreneurship became an integral signifier of positive distinctiveness. One year on, the same informant had relinquished any tentativeness regarding the group's entrepreneurial pedigree.

“When you are a businessman, you don't think of being in the same place for like two years or three years. You expand. You come up with new targets. You come up with new plans that you execute to go to another level. So you know when you are in this level, let's say I want to own a supermarket, then one day you own that supermarket, you give yourself another target. I want to own a mall.”—C2₁.

Collective 1 did not experience the same wave of positive market feedback that greeted the launch of Collective 2's venture.

“Sometimes you can make about 600, 500 shillings [\$5-6], another day you don't get anything.”—C1₈.

“You suffer but we try, we try. Life is hard but we have to survive.”C1₁₀.

“I also asked [C1₃] if the car wash was still closed. ‘Yeah, it's closed, there is no water. But we will open it.’ ‘When?’ ‘When the ground dries,’ which may not be for six weeks.”—Field-notes extract.

Missing the stimulus to re-frame social distinction in terms of entrepreneurial achievement, Collective 1 came to embody more and more the hustler persona that was emblematic of their

demographic. To augment the marginal and highly volatile income stream generated through the car wash business, the group began to deliver sacks of boiled sugarcane to local distillers of *chang'aa*.

“For hustling, you see that [sugarcane] that we normally carry. That one. That is the only hustling we are [currently] doing because we don't have any money to start a business like that, so we take care [of ourselves] like that.”—CI₁₁.

Expanding the scope of its activities did not make Collective 1 much better off financially, nor did it elevate the group's social standing. On the contrary, it brought the group into regular contact with the police, leading it to concoct 'insulating' narratives (of the kind described in the last chapter) which favoured a 'blending in' over distinctiveness.

CI₃: “You know, this business is a very illegal business, but the government [is] taking bribes. They cannot say [stop] ... We need to bribe [the police] every day.”

CI₁: “Every day ... And if you give them the cash, they just leave.” ...

CI₃: “And the cops don't understand boys. They think all boys are thieves.

CI₁: “As in, being in the slum, Philip, once you are a boy, a youth, you are always a suspect. Whether you are doing your own stuff.”

CI₃: “Even if you are small.”

CI₁: “You are always a suspect. Any time they can just gun you down.”

Occasionally, a bumper delivery or a phase of strong demand for its car wash service would provide for the members of Collective 1 a modest economic surplus which they could spend on discretionary items or set aside for future use. For the most part, however, the group coped by becoming accustomed to the everyday hardships of poverty, and by seeking vital, if short-lived, gains wherever they could.

“If you get money, hand to mouth. Hand to Mouth.”—CI₃.

*“No deliveries today, and [CI₂] told me there hasn't been any since Wednesday (today is Saturday), ‘So we're all just broke’. [CI₂] later told me that the police were planning to come today to raid the place where the *chang'aa* is made – they will take the drums and the product and there will be no more delivery work for the next two or three months. I subtly suggested that this would economically cripple them. He said, ‘Yeah, we will just be broke. We're used to it’.”—Field-notes extract.*

“Like on Monday ... those lorries come [with the sugarcane], like four lorries on Monday, and if you carry one bag, [for] that one bag, 90kg, they give you 100 shillings [\$1]. If you carry like 10, you have 1,000 shillings. That can help you [to get through] like two days because those two days end ... another lorry comes, you get like four bags, you get 400. Let's say like, on a week you manage to get 3,000, 2,500, like that. But not sure, there is another week that you cannot get even 1,000. You only wake up you get 100, 200, another day you don't get anything.”—CI₁₀.

Highly contrastive performance feedback accrued to the two ventures studied here, and identity effects have so far been consistent with those described in extant research (Hoang and Gimeno, 2010; Newbery, et al., 2018). Positive feedback produced a shift towards what prior studies have termed a “founder” or “entrepreneurial” identity (Demetry, 2017; Hoang and Gimeno, 2010; Newbery, et al., 2018; Shepherd and Haynie, 2009a; Yitshaki and Kropp, 2016), meaning that actors increasingly came to identify with the cultural ideals of entrepreneurship – progress, innovation, vision, etc. (DeClercq and Voronov, 2009). On the other hand, negative feedback reinforced self-definitions that were grounded in struggle, precarity, and short-term opportunism – well-encapsulated by one informant’s introduction: “*I’m just a normal hustler*”. In short, the co-evolution of entrepreneurship and collective identity diverged according to the favourability of performance feedback. Good feedback made entrepreneurship a valid source of positive distinctiveness, causing it to become a more ‘salient’ or ‘central’ micro-identity for Collective 2. Bad feedback, while it did not rule out the possibility of obtaining positive distinctiveness through market venturing *per se*, discouraged identification with the normative profile of entrepreneurship. Collective 1 reverted to the lower-status identity category of hustling, in which the orthodox benchmarks of entrepreneurial performance held little relevance.

7.3.3 Reinforcing and Challenging Positive Distinctiveness – Implications for Venture Boundaries

Up to this point, the patterns of co-evolution between identity and entrepreneurship that have been described in this section are analogous to those detailed in the literature (Dentoni, et al., 2017; Newbery, et al., 2018). However, no empirical study has endeavoured to explore how identity changes of the kind that I have identified fit together with *extant* notions of ‘who we are’, and I take this as an important point of departure. Although entrepreneurial venturing most commonly occurs in teams (Ruef, et al., 2003), and most of those teams have pre-existing ties of some sort (Forbes, et al., 2006), the influence of pre-existing ties within entrepreneurship teams remains a neglected topic (Francis and Sandberg, 2000; Klotz, et al., 2014). Thus, the objective now – reflecting the research question that this section aims to address – is to illustrate how patterns of identity change were moulded not only by the collectives’ venturing activities, but also by ‘what else’ the collectives conceived themselves to be.

The seeds of positive distinctiveness were sewn within these groups some years before their market ventures were instigated. Performance feedback obtained during the venturing process, therefore, did not serve to *create* positive distinctiveness so much as it served to enhance or challenge it.

“If you have a protective group you are going to grow positive. But if you have a negative one then you will end up somewhere bad. ... As for me, my group, we don't use any kind of drugs, we don't smoke, we don't drink. So when we are somewhere we think something productive. When we are somewhere sitting, talking, or doing something, we do something productive, something that will build me and my group. ... We are three, we are the main guys. Like, the people we mentor, maybe some other guys, they are just there. Okay ... we are like – how can I put it? – we are like role models to them. Because they believe in what we do.”—C2₁.

Good feedback was read as an affirmation that one's group was indeed positively distinct, but bad feedback did not necessarily infer 'negative distinctiveness'. As we saw in the previous chapter, poor economic performance brought on feelings of sameness that stemmed from the observable reality that almost everyone was struggling to some considerable extent. In these circumstances, positive distinctiveness could be restored by enacting expanded notions of 'we-ness' and changing the referent out-group; instead of 'us' being the collective and 'them' being the community at large, the comparison shifted to one involving this community ('us') and other communities ('them').

“Mukuru is a good place. Before, I was living in Huruma [another nearby slum], but there all you can do is be a conductor for the mat[atu]. Here you have more opportunities to hustle some money, like the car wash.”—C1₁₀.

“He said that the positive thing about Mukuru is that he can always hustle 50/= or 100/= [50c or \$1] each day, which wouldn't be the case in other, less populated areas.”—Field-notes extract, from conversation C1₁₂.

From the outset, the boundaries of both of these ventures – that is, who was 'in' and who was 'out' – owed little to considerations of efficiency, skills, or resource access; rather, they were determined in their entirety by relational factors. Boundaries were therefore 'identity-based' (Santos and Eisenhardt, 2005³⁹), reflecting the pre-existing and multi-faceted ties that underpinned the ventures.

“As you know we are Dawasidi [anonymised name of their music group], so that's a very long friendship, from 2010, 2009, up to now we are still friends.”—C2₂.

C1₁: “We know each other very well, we do hustle together, yeah. When it's time to enjoy ourselves...”

C1₃: “... [we] just go and enjoy ourselves...”

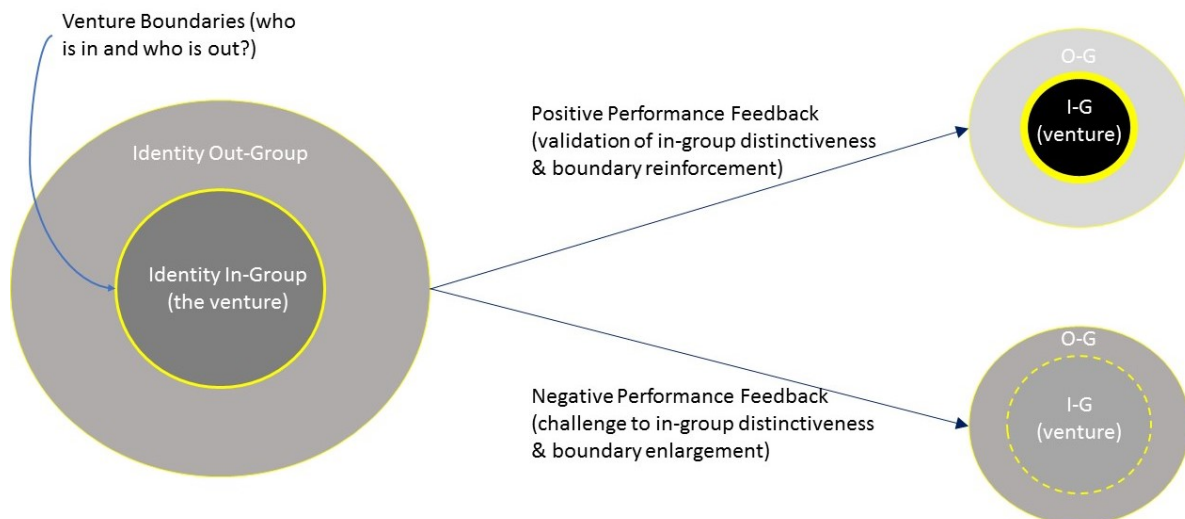
C1₁: “... come back, no violence. It's a social group.”

Because the venture's boundaries were identity-based, their evolution paralleled changes unfolding in the collective identity of the groups themselves. As entrepreneurship yielded

³⁹ In this thesis, I am more concerned with boundaries as determinants of *who* is included within the focal organisations (the collectives) rather than boundaries as determinants of the *activities* that are executed within them (Baron, 2004).

favourable performance feedback that enhanced the sense of positive distinctiveness within the group, venture boundaries became ‘firmed up’. The inward permeability of those boundaries was diminished because insiders came to regard themselves as increasingly different from outsiders. By contrast, negative feedback undermined positive distinctiveness and brought about a weakening of venture boundaries, as insiders enacted expanded notions of we-ness in order to restore feelings of positive distinctiveness (see Figure 5 for a visual illustration).

Figure 5: Performance feedback and its effects on positive distinctiveness (represented as shades of grey) and venture boundaries (in yellow). This figure is intended to illustrate the effect of performance feedback on feelings of in-group distinctiveness and, in turn, on venture boundaries. I argue that positive feedback leads the in-group to believe more firmly that they are positively distinct from the outsiders, bringing about a reinforcing of venture boundaries in cases where those boundaries are identity-based. Conversely, I argue that negative performance feedback has the effect of challenging in-group distinctiveness, leading to boundaries that are more porous and causing the group (NVT) to enlarge more easily.



When venture boundaries are identity-based, the importance of changes to collective identity is self-evident. A firming of venture boundaries coupled with the increasing salience of the ‘founder identity’ led Collective 2 to pursue maximum returns given a stable and manageable peer network. It is important, however, not think of this founder identity in an overly objectified way. Although it took on added salience, it did not dislodge other micro-identities, nor were these micro-identities confined to clearly compartmentalised task domains.

“This is the thing that brings us together. This is the, you know, music works funny. Music brings us together no matter what. It normally brings us together, because sometimes we have challenges and maybe sometimes misunderstandings, but when we just come together after practicing music we go back to business. That’s how we work as a team. So it’s very easy when music is involved.”—C2₁.

C2₂: “We have a project [in mind], I think it's a big one.”

[Interviewer: A music project or a business project?]

C2₂: “It's a music project and a business project too.”

[Interviewer: What are you thinking?]

C2₂: “We are thinking of something.”

The synthesis of these micro-identities is further evidenced by the group's tendency to refer to itself by the name of its music group, even in a business context. In this way, the founder identity – although it bore its traditional connotations of being innovative, creative, progress-oriented, etc. – was very much adapted to fit the group's extant formulation of ‘who we are’. This shift in emphasis is subtle but important: in striving to live up to, or exceed, the normative expectations of entrepreneurship, what mattered most was not that ‘we do it’ (priority given to the achievement) but that ‘we do it’ (priority given to the network).

“Personally, I normally believe that as an individual I can, yes, I can go far, but as a group we can go farther. We have a dream for this group of ours, and we have targets and we have ambitions so that in the future everything might be cool. So we have to make sure that we are responsible for the group and we are loyal to the group, so everything we do we just direct it there.”—C2₁.

A weakening of venture boundaries had more drastic implications. Despite the meagre income that it generated, Collective 1 – within around three years of market entry – had ballooned in size to around fifteen members.

“The more we were working, the more the group was getting bigger and bigger and bigger, so we were like, this day, it will be like this. On Monday, it will be this guy and this guy [working on the car wash]. On Tuesday it's this guy and this guy.”—C1₁.

All members were cognisant that the venture could have operated at a similar capacity with one-third, perhaps even one-quarter, that number, and that each member would command a substantially higher income share had that been the case. However, the absolute precedence of identity over efficiency as a basis for venture boundaries rendered this secondary. A diminishing sense of positive distinctiveness meant that collective identity no longer discriminated effectively between insiders and outsiders, and the group's boundaries became decreasingly robust.

“We talked about the car wash, and he said that there are around 14 in the group. They work only in twos, so every person gets one day's work out of it per week (or sometimes two). ... Each of them would prefer to be working more than one day per week (and obviously it would be more lucrative for them individually if they were); the only real advantage is that the cost of renting the car wash is divided among more people, making it cheaper per person. However, this doesn't come close to making up for the dilution of income that comes from having that many ‘equity holders’. Regarding this, [C1₂]'s explanation was that, ‘You cannot deny someone a job’.”—Field-notes extract.

Conceptualisations of performance were adapted to reflect these expanded notions of ‘we-ness’ expanded notions of ‘we-ness’, which, intriguingly, made them quite an effective means to restore positive distinctiveness. Because of the permeability of the venture’s boundaries, a baseline measure of economic security could be extended to a relatively extensive network of friends and acquaintances.

CI₁₀: “We don’t have more things that we are planning. Other boys, like [CI₃], they have finished their education last year ... Those are the people that are always working on car wash, because they don’t know how to hustle in this area. Now we leave for them car wash so that they get, every day, something. Us, we know how to get money.”

[Interviewer: So it’s like a way to help people begin, to give them a start?]

CI₁₀: “Car wash is like a beginning, a start, yeah. Because all of us, we have been passing [through] that car wash.”

As the venture became increasingly oriented towards the goal of providing a basic level of economic security towards a widening circle of members, new patterns arose in the division of labour. Priority access to the car wash apparatus was afforded to the most vulnerable members of the group – typically those that had just left school and were suddenly faced with economic independence – while the older members of the group relied almost exclusively on income earned through the delivery of sugarcane, which was marginally more lucrative, but also more irregular, physically demanding, and culpable to police sanctions than the car wash. Rather than downplaying the additional economic precarity that this arrangement imposed on them, the elder cohort of the group embraced it a mark of authenticity. Competence was framed less in terms of escaping precarity and struggle – as in Collective 2 – and more in terms of demonstrating an ability to navigate it, whilst providing a sheltered space for those at the margins of the identity group.

CI₁: “So we can’t cheat [a friend], so you have to at least maybe give them a chance so that they can hustle at that point, and [then] they can start a ... something else.”

[Interviewer: So the car wash is a way for younger people to learn how to hustle, in a sort of a protected way?]

CI₁: “The car wash, I can say, you are protected. When you’re just waking up [it’s good to] be like, ‘I’ll be working’, as in ... you have somewhere to work, you have somewhere to depend on. but people like us, you know we depend on sugarcane, and it can come maybe once in a week. So it is very difficult to handle that situation. But mostly, we handle it, we go with it, and that little we get, we appreciate.”

CI₄: “We are six to ten boys, we always change shift. You know there is some challenges, man, it is not every day that you find that it’s a good day. You find a day that you go to the house [after a shift] with 100 shillings [\$1]. That’s what you need for food. You don’t have [enough money to say] this is for this, and this is for this. It’s a challenge.”

[Interviewer: So ten of you work together?]

CI₄: “There is some days, like I can decide to work today, tomorrow, then I leave for you the next day. We share.”

7.3.4 Section Summary

The purpose of this section was to explore the co-evolution of entrepreneurship and collective identity in the context of pre-existing and multi-faceted relational ties. I found that entrepreneurship can either undermine or reinforce extant conceptualisations of ‘who we are’, depending on whether feedback obtained during the venturing process is positive or negative. Up to a point, my data echoes earlier studies which find that the salience of ‘founder identity’ is affected by the favourability of performance feedback (Newbery, et al., 2018). However, this process does not appear to take the form of a zero-sum re-ordering of discrete micro-identities, at least in a group context where pre-existing, multi-faceted ties prevail. Rather than simply falling down a pecking order of salience, extant micro-identities were enriched with new meanings and became more (or less) potent sources of positive distinctiveness. The practical implications of this observation were illustrated in respect of venture boundaries and knock-on effects for how performance was conceptualised.

7.4 Individual Agency Within the Collectives

Even within clearly defined and internally homogeneous social groups, it is common – perhaps inevitable – that within-group differences will exist or emerge (Turner, et al., 1994). However, strong norms of collectivism are usually not amenable to individuality, which can have a suffocating effect on individual agency. In this section, I examine how individual agency was enacted within the identify confines of the collectives. Two contrasting approaches are identified and illustrated. More important, however, is the finding that individual agency was enacted with a view to preserving the psychological and existential security that members derived from their affiliation to the collectives. Legitimacy was sought for lone ventures by framing them as beneficial to the group as well as to the individuals that established them.

7.4.1 Decoupling Personal and Collective Identity

Our analyses have so far centred on factors that served to uphold or increase identity harmony within the collectives. First, the collectives were relatively small in size, and individuals self-selected into them on the basis that they were friends with other members. Second, the collectives were highly egalitarian – neither one exhibited any kind of authoritative hierarchy, even allowing for the division of labour that arose in Collective 1 – meaning that the elaboration of collective identity was a joint endeavour, not one that was led or championed by one member or another. Third, the strength of intra-group ties coupled with the paucity of extra-group ties meant that

circumstantial factors rarely affected one group member without affecting them all. As well as having a covariant effect, group members' interpretation of external stimuli was usually conditioned heavily by socialised forms of sensemaking (Dentoni, et al., 2018; Pratt, 2000). For example, when a power outage and a police crackdown on the production of illicit alcohol left Collective 1 unable to operate the car wash or carry out sugarcane deliveries, they passed a number of days idling in each others' company, pooling small amounts of money and food, and lamenting the interference of the police. Such experiences, in particular the connection between intensely negative states of affect such as hunger and extreme boredom and an adversarial out-group (in this case the police), were influential in promoting alignment between personal and group identity.

However, field observations suggest that such experiences promoted alignment between personal and collective identity only up to a point. Beyond this point, the extent to which some individuals identified with the group began to wane. Collective 1's ongoing failure to obtain a group certificate, which would have qualified it to seek commercial supports like microfinance and training (see Section 7.2.2: "Cognitive Embeddedness"), was generally cited as evidence of systematic exclusion and became a symbol of solidarity within the group.

[Interviewer: Is it possible for you to get any microfinance or money from a bank?]

CI₂: "No, we have tried before. You need a group certificate."

[Interviewer: In order to have a group certificate do you need to have a formal business?]

CI₂: "No, [for] a group certificate you need to have cash."

"Yeah, ... we don't have that support. Now, if you don't have that certificate, you cannot [seek finance through government support initiatives] ... And many of us here do not have the national ID, just a few."—CI₄.

More privately, however, this problem gave rise to a rare example of an informant expressing frustration at being unable to achieve what he wanted to achieve within the confines of the group. Along with his brother, he had begun to plan a new venture organising and providing equipment for local events.

"[Mobilising a group this size can be] very difficult. Like there was a time I said to the group, 'Let's go to the police and get the group recognised [obtain the cert], that way there will be no disturbance from the police'. They all said, 'Yeah, let's do it'. Then a couple of times I went to them and said, 'Let's go, let's do it now'. Some of them weren't available or they didn't want to. So I just said to them, 'leave it'."—CI₁.

Similar patterns were manifest in Collective 2, in which one group member became a highly proficient graphic designer by watching online tutorials, to which he had on-demand access because of his involvement in a computer services business. He nurtured a growing clientele, beginning with friends and local musicians in the slum and progressing to large corporations and

local government agencies, for whom he designed newsletters and other promotional materials. In both cases, boundary spanning activities provided an important outlet for individuals to exercise personal agency in ways that would have been considerably more difficult within the confines of the group.

“When you want to be creative, just be creative everywhere you are. Like creativity is solo ... I normally come out with creative ideas, just wherever I am, when I’m in my house, or in a matatu or something, I just be creative ... I can remember like two months ago I went to [a rural part of] Machakos County and then [one of my corporate clients] called me and they wanted me to do something. So I designed it when I was in the car. I designed it and sent it to them. There was this lady who asked me, ‘Where are you?’ I told them I’m in Machakos and [she said], ‘How did you do that?!’”—C2₁.

“To do something like this [events business with the group] could be hard. You could have one member of the group say, ‘Hey, I have a friend that wants to have a party.’ And then that person wants to use the equipment, but I’m the one responsible for that equipment.”—C1₁.

Some, but not all, of the other members of the collectives contemplated or pursued similar ventures, but I focus primarily on these two because they illustrate well how the “identity tensions” that arose from such boundary spanning activities were managed, and the implications of these activities vis-à-vis the structure and longevity of the collectives. Identity tensions, meaning “the stresses and strains experienced by an individual in relation to the interaction between her or his personal identity and a given social identity” (Kreiner, et al., 2006: 1034), emerged here from discord between individual agency, specifically when it was exercised outside the boundaries of the collectives, and the strong norms of unity that prevailed within the collectives.

7.4.2 Optimal Distinctiveness and Personal Agency

Boundary spanning activities like these were not framed in terms of extrication, as might be expected. Even as the scope of their work outside of the collectives expanded relative to the scale of the collectives’ activities, individuals emphasised that maintaining their involvement with the collectives was both economically and socially advantageous.

[Interviewer: And are you moving away from [the collective], are you doing less with them?]

C2₁: “No, no ... I’m very tight because all my, a lot of my sales are going to [the collective]. A lot of my sales are going to [the collective]. We have projects that ... we want to start come next year. We want to boost our business, at least make it more, like expand it a little. Because you know, working as a team gives you a morale.”

“You know, if you are on your own you will be disturbed [vulnerable to attack or mugging], but if people know that you are [part of that group] then nobody will disturb you.”—C1₁.

Optimal Distinctiveness Theory, which is concerned with the judgements that individuals make regarding their desire to feel distinctive from, or belonging to, a particular social group (Brewer, 1991), can help us to understand how individuals positioned their personal identity in relation to their group’s collective identity in a way that both facilitated agency and upheld compatibility. It has been proposed that entrepreneurs may have a greater inclination towards a desire to feel distinguished than others in society (Shepherd and Haynie, 2009a). Even to the extent that the individuals that I study here are ‘entrepreneurs within entrepreneurial collectives’, this view is largely supported by my data. However, pursuing unfettered distinction was likely to have undermined their standing in the group. The tactics employed by individuals to navigate this problem differed: of the two studied here, one took the approach of “integrating” his personal identity with the collective identity of the group, while the other took a “segmentation” approach.

Identity “integration” involves internalising what an individual perceives to be the most important facets of collective identity into his/her personal identity (Kreiner, et al., 2006). This was the approach taken by the informant from Collective 2 that had begun to work as a freelance graphic designer alongside his involvement in the group’s computer services business. Relative to the identity constraints of Collective 1, Collective 2 was much more accommodating to individual agency. As well as valuing progress and diligence, the business’s expansion resulted in new patterns of interaction among its three members: rather than all three working in the same place, each member managed his own ‘cyber café’, with income pooled and profits distributed at month-end. This arrangement afforded members greater autonomy and encouraged them to formulate and experiment with their own novel ideas.

“The business? You know, we were three guys, and we started it down there ... Yeah. So it reached a time when I wanted to be myself, I wanted to do my own things, so that’s when I decided to search for another place and that is here. That’s where we are now. So, it is just step by step.”—C2₂.

C2₄: “[What we make] depends on how the environment is. It varies daily. Today we make a lot of money, tomorrow it’s less, the others constant.”

[Interviewer: And that money, do you put it together with Visaka?]

C2₄: “We put it together with Visaka ... Yeah, we get paid monthly ... the rate [of members’ pay] is the same.”

In one way, this provided fertile ground for individual agency to be exercised, as members were not precluded from pursuing interests both inside and outside the boundaries of the collective. However, members’ engagement with extra-group activities was mostly limited to short-lived and local projects. The graphic design venture, by contrast, threatened to alienate other members of

the collective, particularly since its clientele straddled various tiers of the social hierarchy while the collective's venture, the computer services business, remained confined largely to the slum (another member of the collective, when asked if he did similar work for corporate clients remarked, *"I don't have those contacts"*). The integration strategy that was employed to manage these tensions involved internalising an extreme interpretation of the group's collective identity, and in particular the value it affixed to social mobility. Doing so meant that this individual could exercise his individual agency by becoming an ideal-type embodiment of the collective identity of the group, which did not set him apart from his peers so much as create for them a template, or an identity "prototype" (Powell and Baker, 2017), to gravitate towards.

"You see the people that I bring to work with me, I don't just choose anybody, I choose people that want to go somewhere. There are many people in Mukuru that are not satisfied with what they have [and those are the people that I work with]. Many people in Mukuru, they are only interested in having fun. Me I don't drink, I don't do drugs, and ... I choose to be around people that are like that, that are focused."—C2₁.

"Segmentation" differs from integration in that, rather than seeing personal identity as a singular self-concept that can become more closely aligned to the collective identity of a group, it views personal identity as an umbrella term that encompasses multiple micro-identities which are variously enacted depending on the context or social situation (Kreiner, et al., 2006). In essence, every individual is seen to hold different 'roles' (e.g., mother, colleague, sports-team member) and is likely to present a different version of herself depending on the role she finds herself filling at a given moment in time. Discrete micro- or role identities, therefore, become segmented or "compartmentalised" (Shepherd and Haynie, 2009a; see also Leavitt, et al., 2012).

Segmentation became an effective way for the informant from Collective 1 to plan his events business whilst preserving his sense of belonging to the group. A characteristic feature of both collectives, as I explained earlier, was their multi-functionality; as well as fulfilling an economic purpose, they were a source of emotional support, a recreational outlet, and a deterrent to criminal gangs that may be inclined to target its members. The segmentation approach relied on a rejection of the prevailing view that these functions existed as a bundle, and instead framed the economic and relational aspects of the collectives as separate. This perspective did not preclude an individual from directing his individual agency towards the initiation of a lone venture outside the collectives' boundaries, even while preserving his relational association with the group. Personal identity therefore became segmented and compartmentalised, such that this individual saw his economic self, or his "founder identity" (Baker and Nelson, 2017; Fauchart and Gruber, 2011; Hoang and Gimeno, 2010), as separate to his social self, or his "social identity" (Ashforth, et al., 2008; Tajfel, 1982; Tajfel and Turner, 1986). Individual agency was exercised by enacting founder identity outside the boundaries of the collectives, while the state of belonging was upheld

by enacting social identity within the group.

“Let me say, at this time, it’s important for both [myself and the rest of the group], because I haven’t started my business, so we depend on the sugarcane [for income] at this time. So maybe when God will open ways, that’s when I will be like, ‘Hey, let me try this and see what I can do’ ... We’ve been together for like, five years, and I think even, when I start my business, I’ll not ... just ignore them and start ... I’ll just be coming, bonding with them, see what’s up. Cos they are my friends too, friendship is better than anything, it’s better to keep that bond between us.”—C1₁.

Identity integration and segmentation tactics were employed as a means to optimise the level of distinction between personal and individual identity, allowing members the space to exercise their individual agency without compromising their position as members of the collectives. However, through their continued involvement with the collectives, individuals continued to feel subject to the norms and obligations that were by then embedded in established patterns of group relations. Central to this was the normative assumption that economic opportunities, or the benefits arising from them, should not accrue exclusively to one individual, but should instead be democratised among all members of the group. Another member of Collective 1 – not one of the individuals that I focus attention on in this section – described how he perceived his obligations to the group as follows:

“I can’t break. I will be in that group. I can’t walk away because I have money, or I have my own business. They say east or west, home is the best. So my life, let’s say I started [my life] inside that group, so I can’t walk away.”—C1₁₁.

Irrespective of whether they used an integration or segmentation approach to effect distinction, both of my focal informants recognised that pursuing a lone venture would not extricate them from relational obligations towards other members of the group. Informants emphasised their willingness to make good on these relational obligations, reiterating that their individual pursuits would ultimately deliver benefits to the group at large, as a means to legitimise their ventures within the identity confines of the collective.

C2₁: “Okay, for me, for now I have like 5 big business clients, but we normally meet somewhere else. They call me, maybe we’ll meet a hotel, maybe we’ll talk, they’ll give their business, I’ll do [it], and that’s done.”

[Interviewer: And is that something that you do separate from what you’re doing with the collective?]

C2₁: “No, no, no. Everything I direct back [to the group].”

“I am not selfish. If I have money and he [hypothetical friend] has none, I will not give him money, but I will show him how to get it for himself. There is this saying, ‘don’t give me a fish, teach me how to fish.’ So if I can get this [events planning] business established then maybe I can give an opportunity to someone else. Maybe I stop being the DJ and let someone else do that.”—C1₁.

7.4.3 Individual Agency and Group-Level Outcomes

Beyond identity work aimed at gaining intra-group legitimacy for these ventures, data suggests that short-term returns to the collective as a whole are indeed positive. Since only one of these ventures – the graphic design venture – was commercially underway by the time the final round of data collection was completed, this finding is proffered tentatively. In that case, the capital, skills, and networks that became available to the group via the boundary spanning activities of this member yielded opportunities for expansion. In response to a proliferation of cyber services businesses like theirs, for example, the group had begun to explore the possibility of becoming a WiFi distributor in the slum, which would constitute a significant upstream integration in their supply chain.

However, data also points to alternative, longer-term outcomes. The first of those is a ‘brain drain’ effect, in which more entrepreneurially capable members become frustrated with the constraints and obligations that stem from continued involvement in the collectives, and simply opt out. This would appear to be an economically rational step for the member of Collective 2 that is engaged in his own graphic design venture, who contributed substantially more to the income pot of his collective than do either of his fellow group members. Yet, the collective venture remains firmly embedded in the friendship ties from which it originated.

“You know that the only thing that keeps us moving is the fact that we were together before having anything.”—C2₁.

Given the strength of relational ties binding members together, the collectives may sustain, but may be vulnerable to the emergence of intra-group hierarchies. Even if the benefits of individuals’ boundary activities are disseminated throughout the group, it is evident that this dissemination is asymmetrical. The capital, skills, and networking benefits of the graphics design business, for example, accrued to a much greater extent to the individual that initiated the venture than to the other members of the collective. It is feasible that logics of fairness may tie the collectives’ longevity to some sort of hierarchical structuring, whereby the allocation of authority and benefits may be more formally linked to the scale of resources committed.

7.4.4 Section Summary

In this section, I set out to understand how individual agency was enacted within the confined identity space of the two collectives. Two approaches to doing so – namely integration and segmentation – were identified and illustrated. More important, however, was the finding that, irrespective of the chosen approach, perceived constraints on individual agency remained strong.

The section finished with a brief overview of the tensions that this engendered and, based on the limited data available, the consequences that might ensue.

7.5 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter posed three questions, which, taken together, were aimed at unpackaging the patterns of organising that gave rise to the collectives, and at gaining a sense of what it means to be a member of these collectives. Those questions, and a brief outline of findings, are summarised as follows.

First, I asked, ‘Why did the entrepreneurial collective emerge as an organisational form, particularly when entrepreneurship was regarded by the first generation as a distinctly solitary endeavour?’ Analyses revealed that second-generation actors were more firmly embedded in local society than were first-generation actors, and that this drove the emergence of the entrepreneurial collective as an organisational form.

Following on from the embeddedness theme, I then asked, ‘How did collective identity and entrepreneurship co-evolve within the collectives, particularly in respect of the pre-existing and multi-faceted ties that underpinned them?’ I found that performance feedback obtained during the venturing process served either to reify or to undermine extant formulations of collective identity. Rather than simply falling down a pecking order of salience, extant micro-identities were enriched with new meanings and became more (or less) potent sources of positive distinctiveness. The practical implications of this observation were illustrated in respect of venture boundaries and knock-on effects for how performance was conceptualised.

Lastly, having explored how collective identity directed collective action, I finished by examine how it constrained individual action, asking ‘How was individual agency enacted within the identity confines of the collectives?’ Two contrasting approaches, namely ‘identity integration’ and ‘identity segmentation’, were identified and outlined. Irrespective of the approach taken, however, I found that individual agency was enacted with a view to preserving the psychological and existential security that members derived from their affiliation to the collectives, meaning that lone ventures were oriented to benefit the group as well as the individuals that established them.

CHAPTER 8

Entrepreneurial Collectives: Discussion

8.1 Introduction

Accelerating urbanisation in the Developing World, manifest in the rapid proliferation of informal communities, is having a visible and systematic bearing on patterns of entrepreneurial organising. The previous chapter contributed to a clearer picture of the changing social realities confronted by successive generations of entrepreneurs in one such community. Disruption to long-standing ties of kinship catalysed the emergence of new social arrangements and patterns of economic co-operation. Among young people, the widespread absence of familial ties and the diminishing relevance of ethnic ties cultivated and reified economic solidarity within age-based peer groups, giving rise to the ‘entrepreneurial collectives’ that were the subject of the last chapter.

The last chapter provided explanations for (i) how the entrepreneurial collective emerged as an organisational form in a community where entrepreneurship had traditionally been seen as a lone pursuit; (ii) how the pre-existing and multi-faceted relational ties that underpinned the collectives shaped the co-evolution of collective identity and entrepreneurship; and (iii) how individual agency was enacted within the identity confines of the collectives. In this chapter, I outline how these findings contribute to ongoing theoretical development. Towards this end, theoretical contributions are summarised as follows.

First, I provide new insights on the nature of entrepreneurial embeddedness, particularly in contexts of extreme poverty. Using the idea of identity-based organisational boundaries, I illustrate that ventures served a broad suite of purposes besides income generation. They also filled the void created by severed family ties and provided a much-needed recreational outlet for young people experiencing acute existential stresses like persistent hunger, stigmatisation, social isolation, and widespread criminality. This ‘what else?’ aspect of entrepreneurial ventures was central in determining who participated in them and what their goals were.

Second, recent studies have shown that entrepreneurship – and specifically the performance feedback that it engenders – has a transformative effect on a person's identity. My findings suggest that this transformation unfolds in a different way in the context of team-based entrepreneurship, particularly where entrepreneurial teams emerge from strong, pre-existing ties. Rather than extant micro-identities becoming jettisoned or losing salience, I observed that these identities were

infused with new meanings and were used a basis for positive distinctiveness. The retention of these extant micro-identities was observed to have important and lasting implications for venture boundaries.

Third, an additional contribution to the entrepreneurship teams literature is made in the form of 'negotiated' personal agency. Teams literature has not fully addressed the issue of members 'having one foot in and one foot out'; that is, where they undertake lone venturing whilst continuing to engage in the entrepreneurial activities of the group. Observations indicate that this engenders identity tensions which must be addressed in such a way that personal agency is neither crowded out by group belonging, nor that it undermines group belonging. A key tactic in resolving these tensions was to allow the group to capture some of the value that was created by the lone venture.

Lastly, the cross-level nature of this study, incorporating micro, meso, and macro levels of analysis, contributes to a more contextualised understanding of entrepreneurship in settings of extreme poverty. The aim of this section is to highlight that the constraints to entrepreneurial organising differ markedly across impoverished contexts, and to illustrate how some critical aspects of these three levels helped to shape the patterns of organising that I observed here. It is hoped that this will contribute to both a broader and deeper appreciation of the sociodemographic upheaval that is being brought about by Developing-World urbanisation, and how this upheaval is manifest in patterns of entrepreneurial organising. Here, I address calls for scholars conducting research into entrepreneurship in BOP settings to consider not the only entrepreneur him/herself, but also the social groupings of which s/he is a part and the content of his/her ties to them (Afutu-Kotey, Gough, and Yankson, 2017; Barrios and Blocker, 2015; Branzei, et al., 2018; Martí, et al., 2013). This has taken on additional importance in light of the increasing popularity of entrepreneurial supports as an instrument for development (Chliova, Brinckmann, and Rosenbusch, 2015; Dessing, 1990; George, et al., 2016; Gough and Langevang, 2016). Analysis of the tension between group members' desire to feel distinctive and their desire to feel a sense of belonging reveals that escaping economic poverty may be desirable only to the extent that it does not alienate them from their peer groups.

8.2 A 'What Else?' Take on Entrepreneurial Embeddedness

New Venture Teams (NVTs) teams create new ventures (Kamm and Nurick, 1993). However, not all NVTs form with purpose of creating a new venture; most, in fact, do not. Instead, the majority of NVTs have their origins in family or friendship ties (Ruef, 2010). And while a vast amount of research attention has been paid to family ties as a context for entrepreneurship,

friendship ties have attracted far less attention (Francis and Sandberg, 2000). This imbalance is especially problematic in those parts of the Developing World where large population shifts caused by conflict and rural/urban inequality are challenging the tenability of multi-generational proximity (George, Kotha, Parikh, Alnuaimi, and Bahaj, 2016). In the absence of family ties, the scope of friendship ties expands; as Francis and Sandberg (2000: 8) point out, “the weakening of kinship ties causes people to look elsewhere to satisfy their primary needs” (see also Lam and Paul, 2013).

In this section, I apply learnings from family-business research in an effort to make sense of my empirical observations and to advance ongoing discussions relating to entrepreneurial embeddedness, particularly in poor contexts.

8.2.1 Existing Ties as a Precursor to Team-based Venturing

The first, and arguably most pivotal, theoretical question facing scholars interested in entrepreneurial collaboration is ‘who is collaborating with whom?’. Ruef and colleagues (Ruef, 2010; Ruef, et al., 2003) analysed PSED data to determine the prevailing patterns of entrepreneurial team composition in the US, and found that “team composition is most commonly driven by similarity, not difference” (Ruef, et al., 2003: 217). For the most part, entrepreneurial teams are characterised by homophily rather than functional diversity, indicating that an individual’s technical or market knowledge are secondary concerns, behind familiarity and perceived trustworthiness, in determining their suitability for team membership (Kamm and Nurick, 1993; Schjoedt, et al., 2013).

However, even when assumptions of “stringent economic rationality” are relaxed to make space for relational factors like “competency discounting” (Ruef, et al., 2003: 217), the literature in this area remains heavily influenced by the orthodoxy of the “Timmons model”, in which “the entrepreneurial process ... starts with opportunity, not money, strategy, networks, team, or business plan” (Timmons and Spinelli, 2003: 56). Aligned to this view, empirical research which has taken a processual view on entrepreneurship team formation has inferred a clear temporal sequence in which the assembly of a team is taken as consequential to the discovery or creation of an opportunity (Forbes, et al., 2006; Iacobucci and Rosa, 2010; Powell and Baker, 2017).⁴⁰ Discussing selection choices in these terms may cause us to overlook or misinterpret one of the

⁴⁰ This would not appear to be entirely as Timmons intended. Although Timmons places greater emphasis on the ‘lead entrepreneur’ model of team formation, in which an individual discovers an opportunity and then forms a team to help him/her capitalise on it, he also specifies that it is common for teams to exist before opportunities are found, as individuals bound by family or friendship ties, or simply by geography or common interest, together go in search of opportunities (Kamm and Nurick, 1993; Timmons and Spinelli, 2003).

most central aspects of the collectives, which is that the involvement of friends was not only a means to a greater end but was, also, an end in itself. Involvement in these ventures was an affirmation of one's status as a member of an identity group, which afforded individuals a much-valued sense of belonging.

Research concerned with new venture teams has acknowledged the relevance of existing friendships for member selection (Francis and Sandberg, 2000; Klotz, et al., 2014) but has been slow to consider its implications, particularly in instances where the preservation of relationships is afforded priority over economic performance (Kamm and Nurick, 1993). To understand better, we might extend an analogy used frequently by members of the collectives to describe the relationships therein, that of family.

Unlike research on new venture teams, family business research has given extensive consideration to the embeddedness of entrepreneurial ventures in affective relationships that precede the formation of the venture, that are multi-faceted, and that are commonly given primacy by the parties involved over the economic performance of the venture (Fiegener, Brown, Dreux, and Dennis Jr, 2000; Justo, Cruz, and De Castro, 2018; Miller, LeBreton Miller, and Lester, 2010; Van de Ven, et al., 2007). Although reliance on relationships of kin to determine 'who is in and who is out' is generally considered to be commercially detrimental for a business (de Vries, 1993; Jaskiewicz, Uhlenbruck, Balkin, Reay, 2013; c.f., Cruz, Justo, and De Castro, 2012), it is relatively easy to understand the psychosocial factors that motivate such practices. In this respect, the family business analogy is apt. In the absence of family and with the diminishing relevance of ethnic affiliation, youths of the slum had become accustomed to relying on close friendship networks for emotional, recreational, and physical sustenance.

8.2.2 Multi-faceted Friendship Ties in an Entrepreneurship Team Context

Far from being *de novo* entities whose formation was catalysed by a commercial opportunity or idea, the enterprises studied in this chapter were a continuation, or an augmentation, of individuals' routine dependence on friendship networks. Family businesses frequently operate according to similar principals: often, the desire to maximise financial returns will be superseded by the desire to safeguard the economic wellbeing of a sibling or the desire to work alongside a spouse (Chrisman, Chua, Pearson, and Barnett, 2012; Cruz, Howorth, and Hamilton, 2013; Lubatkin, Schulze, Ling, and Dino, 2005). In circumstances like these, it is difficult to understand the evolutionary process that the family business will undergo, encompassing things like foundation and growth, without first gaining an understanding of how that entity is itself the outcome of embedded social processes (Steyaert, 2007). For example, the decision of 'who is

involved' in a family business may be guided more by instinct than calculation, since attending to the various facets of a family member's wellbeing – including personal aspects such as emotional assurance, recreation, and physical security (the family home) – is a crucial part of the socialisation process of most families, and over time becomes largely habitual (Brannon, Wiklund, and Haynie, 2013; Shepherd and Haynie, 2009b; Mutch, 2003). Although these prosocial norms originate in the social structure of the family, they are likely to transfer, or spill over, into the economic domain of the family business (Morrison, 2006; Shepherd and Haynie, 2009b; Watson, 2009). Similarly, perspectives on team-based entrepreneurship which give precedence to the commercial opportunity or idea whilst failing to take into account the content of pre-existing relationships have weak explanatory power in contexts where embeddedness is high.

Although this needn't apply exclusively to entrepreneurship among the ultra-poor, the evidence of this study, and from research to-date, suggests that it may be particularly relevant within this population. Three reasons, which entail a substantial degree of overlap, why friendship ties may be more inclined to morph into entrepreneurial collaborations in poor and marginalised contexts are as follows. First, the deleterious effect that extreme poverty can have on a person's physical and psychological state makes it difficult to disentangle that person's economic security from other aspects of his/her wellbeing (Kroeger and Weber, 2014; Sen, 2001). Young people find themselves financially self-reliant from a young age, and basic pillars of their personal wellbeing – access to food, adequate shelter, and so on – rest on their ability to forge a stable livelihood. Given the difficulty of doing so, they face a pressing imperative to establish their own 'social safety nets' – networks of friends upon which they can depend to ensure that their fundamental physical, psychological, and economic needs are met (Collins, et al., 2012; Lam and Paul, 2013; Langevang, Gough, and Namatovu, 2017).

Second, because of the paucity of labour opportunities and the absence or inadequacy of social welfare systems in many developing countries, young people, particularly in urban centres, often look to entrepreneurship as the only meaningful alternative to a life of destitution or crime (Chigunta, et al., 2017; Kodithuwakku, et al., 2008; Langevang, et al., 2012). Therefore, livelihood choices tend to centre less on entrepreneurship versus employment, and more on what form of entrepreneurship – individual or team-based – to pursue. My findings, supported by evidence from prior research, indicate that, in contexts of extreme deprivation, team-based ventures (and the relationships therein) serve a suite of different purposes. As such, orthodox normative frameworks which position efficiency and resource access at the centre of team composition may not transfer well to such contexts.

Third, ‘network and ecological constraints’ (Ruef, 2010), particularly among young people, at the BOP are often acute (Ansari, et al., 2012). Although, as this and other studies have shown (e.g. Slade Schantz, et al., 2018; Thieme, 2013, 2015), young people are often enmeshed in dense peer networks, they typically lack ties outside of these small groups. In cases where such ties do exist, the utility of the ties is usually low or redundant, as they link only to others in equally dire economic circumstances. As a result, young people frequently rely on the same peers for livelihood support as they do for things like recreation. This was strongly in evidence in my data; of the two collectives studied, one began as a music group, the other began as a group of friends that played football together.

To understand the economic behaviour of team-based ventures in contexts characterised by deprivation and hardship, it is therefore worth considering *what else* these groups might be, much in the same way that the economic behaviour of a family business is rarely considered in a vacuum but is situated within the context of close and multi-faceted relationships (Brannon, et al., 2013; Cruz, et al., 2013; Schjoedt, et al., 2013; Sciascia, Mazzola, and Chirico, 2013; Valcour, 2002).

8.2.3 Section Summary

This section outlined new insights relating to entrepreneurial embeddedness, particularly in contexts of extreme poverty, that derived from my empirical findings. I illustrated that ventures served a broad suite of purposes besides income generation, including filling the void created by severed family ties and providing a much-needed recreational outlet for young people experiencing acute existential stresses like hunger, stigmatisation, social isolation, and widespread criminality. This ‘what else?’ aspect of entrepreneurial venturing was central in determining who participated in them and what their goals were.

8.3 Entrepreneurship and Collective Identity – A Dynamic Interplay

Collective identity offers a theoretical lens which is capable of accommodating the many facets of an entrepreneurial team. Where prior research has shown that being a member of multiple social groups makes it possible for individuals to enact discrete *role identities* (e.g., mother, best friend, founder, point guard), adhering to different norms of conduct in each role (Mathias and Williams, 2017; Turner, et al., 1994), scant attention has been afforded to the circumstance in which individuals enact all of these roles within the same social group (Shepherd and Haynie, 2009b; Valcour, 2002). Yet, as we have seen, the assumption that entrepreneurship takes place in

a separate social domain from recreation and friendship may be less valid in some contexts than in others. Throughout my data, terms like “brothers”, “friends”, “hustling group”, and “football/music group” were variously invoked to refer to the collectives, and there is little evidence to support the idea that tacit boundaries divided the many facets of the collectives into different normative domains. Instead, each collective’s consensual understanding of ‘who we are’ was predicated on singularity, meaning that ‘who we are’ as a social group was indistinct from ‘who we are’ as an economic entity.

Here, I explore what these findings mean for theory in this area. I split the co-evolution of entrepreneurship and collective identity into two interacting parts; in the first, I explain how my findings relating to the evolution of collective identity contribute something new to extant literature, in the second, I put these contributions to the ‘so what?’ test.

8.3.1 Entrepreneurship as a Dynamic Context for Collective Identity

To investigate how collective identity is affected by the act of entrepreneurship, a useful starting point is the conceptual distinction between ‘organising’ and ‘identifying’ (Whetten, 2006). Whetten (2006: 224) writes that “[a]n organization’s identity denotes the kind of organization that has to this point been formed; organizing is the process by which organizations make themselves known as a particular type of social actor.” In the context of mature organisations, it is possible simply to imply the latter – since the organisation has already been formed to an advanced point, it can be taken for granted that an extensive phase of ‘organizing’ has already occurred and has crystallized in a relatively concrete collective identity. Having reached this point, perceptible changes to collective identity are likely to arise only in response to infrequent and seismic shifts in the organisation’s strategy or operating environment (Albert and Whetten, 1985; Rao, et al., 2003). New and nascent ventures must work towards this state of having a stable identity, which is an inherently uncertain and contingent journey that cannot be understood independent of its spatiotemporal context (Hjorth, et al., 2015; Weick, 1999).

Research has only recently begun to theorise how identity – both collective and individual – is changed or moulded by the venturing process itself. A dominant theme within this nascent literature is that of role transitions, in which an actor or group, responding to positive or negative feedback, self-defines as something different to what they were before – coming to define oneself as an ‘entrepreneur’ rather than as a ‘student’ or a ‘chef’ (Demetry, 2017; Newbery, et al., 2018), for example, or as prosocial rather than utilitarian (Dentoni, et al., 2018). Similar observations were made in the present study; however, more fine-grained analysis challenged the working

assumption that role transitions render old identities either redundant or dormant (to be activated in task domains outside of entrepreneurship, like a recreational or domestic context).

My findings instead suggest that the experience of entrepreneurship infuses new meanings into extant aspects of a group's collective identity. Importantly, this does not imply that a post-entrepreneurship identity ('who we are becoming') supplants a pre-entrepreneurship identity ('who we have been'/'who we are'), although this may occur with respect to specific aspects of the group's identity. Rather, I posit that emergent aspects of collective identity – which are a product of the group's entrepreneurial experience – and extant aspects of collective identity – which are antecedent to the groups' entrepreneurial activities – are woven together to create a collective identity which is richer, more complex, and more distinctive. Where a new venture team is characterised by close, pre-existing ties (in the form of familial, friendship, or matrimonial ties, for example), collective identity is not ahistorical and does not begin to germinate only when the venture is born; instead, it flows from the form and content of those ties. The act of entrepreneurship – in terms of configuring and framing the aspirations that are set, the approach taken (bearing in mind that both of these may be dynamic), and the outcomes realised – can be used as a tool to elaborate collective identity, giving added meaning and richness to 'who we are'.

8.3.2 'So What?': Collective Identity as a Dynamic Context for Entrepreneurship

The 'so what?' question that these arguments spark is twofold. First, so what if entrepreneurship shapes the evolution of collective identity? And second, so what if entrepreneurship shapes the evolution of collective identity *in the way that I have described* (as opposed to the way that was described in earlier works)?

Collective identity is of practical interest because it serves a broad set of purposes in an organisational context, such as promoting strategic coherence (Cornelissen, et al., 2007), differentiating the organisation from competitors (Conger, et al., 2018; Porac, et al., 2012), and fostering loyalty and perseverance among stakeholders (Cardon, et al., 2009; Yitshaki and Kropp, 2016; York, et al., 2016). Identity can therefore have a significant bearing on organisational performance, and even more fundamentally, on what an organisation conceives good performance to be (Dentoni, et al., 2018; Fauchart and Gruber, 2011; Justo, et al., 2018; Powell and Baker, 2017). For this reason, identity has been central to the growing literature on hybrid organisations, each of which must determine its own equilibrium between economic and social performance (Brickson, 2007; Moss, et al., 2010; Smith, et al., 2013). Changes in the self-perceptions of the

founding entrepreneur or team therefore become manifest in changes to the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of their ventures.

Members of Collective 2 (the computer services business), for example, revised their ambitions upwards and their temporal horizons outward when they came to regard themselves as ‘entrepreneurs’ rather than just musicians engaged in a side-hustle. Continuous learning, long-term planning, and a proactive orientation, all of which fit with normative schemas of ‘what it is to be an entrepreneur’, became integral. For Collective 1 (the car wash business), the lack of positive feedback accruing to their venture, the experience of frequent interference from police, and the overall precarity of members’ livelihoods led them to feel ‘at one’ with the struggles of the community, and to veer towards a “communitarian-style” (Fauchart and Gruber, 2011) collective identity in which the ‘wellbeing of many’ was given primacy over the ‘progress of few’. In summary, from similar beginnings, the two groups diverged radically in their understanding of what made them distinct, which led them to approach venturing with contrasting sets of underlying motives.

I now turn to the question of why it matters that the process of identity change unfolds in one way but not another: specifically, so what if entrepreneurship infuses extant aspects of a group’s collective identity with new meanings, as opposed to making them dormant or simply redundant?

The answer lies in the objectification of emergent role identities, the most important of which, in the context of the present study, is ‘founder identity’ (Powell and Baker, 2017). Highly objectified role identities prescribe clearly the heuristics that should be employed by occupants of that role in their social activities (e.g., a person cannot be said to be living out the objectified role identity of a ‘parent’ if s/he does not behave caringly towards his/her children). Collective 2 internalised several of the objective prescriptions associated with founder identity – being proactive, innovative, prudent, and nurturing a general aptitude to ‘think big’ – thereby enhancing the salience of that role identity. However, role prescriptions of founder identity were allowed to have no bearing on venture boundaries, which mirrored the boundaries of the music group that gave rise to the venture. The indiscrete nature of founder identity, weakly bounded as it was from other micro-identities, meant that objective role prescriptions were ignored or compromised because they clashed with the prescriptions of other roles. This runs contrary to existing perspectives which allow for little overlap between entrepreneurship and other task domains. Even as the founder identity became increasingly salient, other micro-identities were not discarded or confined to another task domain. Instead, crucial aspects of the group’s venturing activities, like who was in and who was out, were conditioned by synergies between founder identity and other micro-identities.

8.3.3 Section Summary

Recent studies have shown that entrepreneurship – and specifically the performance feedback that it engenders – has a transformative effect on a person's identity. My findings suggest that this transformation unfolds in a different way in the context of team-based entrepreneurship, particularly where entrepreneurial teams emerge from strong, pre-existing ties. Rather than extant micro-identities becoming jettisoned or losing salience, I observed that these identities were infused with new meanings and were used as a basis for positive distinctiveness. I also drew attention to the practical implications of these findings, with a particular focus on how the retention of these extant micro-identities was observed to have important and lasting implications for venture boundaries.

8.4 Identity Groups and Individual Agency – Learnings for Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship teams have typically been conceptualised as social units which act with a harmonious, collective consciousness or as sites of negotiation, disagreement, or conflict, as members or coalitions of members compete to mould the team's agenda according to their own vision or interests (Ensley and Pearce, 2001; Mathieu, Maynard, Rapp, and Gilson, 2008; Vissa and Chacar, 2009). Within both of these paradigms, the team is depicted as a largely self-contained social unit; although members may periodically exit or be added (Boeker and Karichalil, 2002; Ucbasaran, Lockett, Wright, and Westhead, 2003), the possibility that some members may 'have one foot in and one foot out' has garnered little attention. Yet research on entrepreneurship teams provides clues which indicate that this may be a fairly common occurrence. For a start, entrepreneurship teams are inherently dynamic, and undergo frequent changes to their structure and composition (Fiet, Busenitz, Moesel, and Barney, 1997; Iacobucci and Rosa, 2010). Moreover, team-based entrepreneurship can be a stepping stone between paid employment and lone venturing – a middle ground in which individuals can take a tentative step into entrepreneurship whilst still feeling the security of being a part of something bigger (Burton, et al., 2016). It is therefore common for individuals to outgrow the teams of which they are a part, as they begin to desire greater autonomy or a larger stake in the economic proceeds of their work (Janssen and Huang, 2008; Kirkman and Rosen, 1999). At this point, they may leave the team, possibly causing the team to dissolve altogether, or they may continue to participate in the team's activities whilst simultaneously embarking on new ventures of their own.

Given that entrepreneurial venturing imposes significant demands on the founder's time, attention, and resources (Erikson, 2002), lone ventures initiated outside of the team's boundaries

are likely to detract from the contribution that s/he can make to the entrepreneurial activities of the team. My findings indicated that boundary spanning activities such as this require careful negotiation, as individuals balance personal aspirations with the normative constraints of team membership.

8.4.1 Getting Out while Staying In: Negotiating Personal Agency

In groups bound together by a common identity, this negotiation may not take place explicitly, as my findings show. Groups of this type are underpinned by norms that are both well-known to members and readily enforceable (Granovetter, 2005; Portes, 1998; Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993; Scott, 2001; Uzzi, 1997); the prospect of alienation from an identity-based group – particularly when the social backdrop is a particularly hostile one, as it was in this study – is likely to be a much greater deterrent than it might be if a member’s link to a group was solely economic. This coupling of a strong, tacit awareness of group norms on the part of the individual and the availability to the group of potent mechanisms to enforce those norms is likely to make transgressions rare. In my data, such an instance arose only once, when a member of Collective 1, whose economic circumstances were particularly bleak (he often earned as little as 50c per day), became largely excluded from the entrepreneurial – and, by consequence, social – activities of the group because he was a consistent “troublemaker”. Ironically, a large portion of the group’s income was derived from illegal activities (delivering boiled sugarcane for use in the production of illicit alcohol) and its relationship with police was openly adversarial, yet being a “troublemaker” – in the sense of behaving improperly towards other members of the community – was perceived to be a violation of the group’s tacit code of conduct. With his already-meagre income stream jeopardised by his alienation from the group, this individual eventually relocated to another slum.

Not all social contexts constrain individual agency to an equal degree (Dutton, et al., 1994; Hess, 2004; Janssen and Huang, 2008; Johns, 2006; Tams and Arthur, 2010). However, my findings suggest that, as a context for individual behaviour, entrepreneurial teams which are internally bound by a common identity are analogous to what Mischel (1968) referred to as “strong situations”, that is, where individuals clearly understand the norms with which they are expected to comply and the roles that they are expected to fulfil (Johns, 2006; Kreiner, et al., 2006)⁴¹. For individuals simultaneously engaged in both within-group and extra-group entrepreneurial activities, the constraints that they experience will be high, but will vary in nature according to the content of the group’s collective identity. Lone ventures may gain legitimacy if there is a

⁴¹ “Weak situations”, in contrast, provide much greater scope for the expression of individual differences (Johns, 2006).

likelihood that they will deliver financial, reputational, and/or expertise-based benefits to the team.

The two group members that I selected for closer analysis either aspired to or had begun to embark on their own ventures whilst maintaining a close affiliation with their respective group. In doing so, these individuals were faced with situational demands of the type described above ('what is expected of me in this situation?'); additional to these situational demands were individual-level tensions ('how do I pursue my own goals whilst preserving my status as a member of this group?') (Kreiner, et al., 2006). Analyses revealed that, despite taking highly contrastive approaches to resolving individual-level tensions (one took an integration approach, the other took a segmentation approach), the response of both individuals to the situational demands was almost identical. Even if the process of *value creation* – founding and operating the ventures – was an individual endeavour that unfolded outside the boundaries of the group, it was expected that a sizable portion of the *value captured* – either in the form of profits or new economic opportunities – should accrue to the group at large.

8.4.2 Boundary Spanning and Agency Implications

Empirical findings relating to agency negotiation and boundary-spanning activities underlie an important contribution to the literature on entrepreneurship teams. The growing attention paid to NVTs has helped research to catch up with the empirical reality that the “entrepreneur” in entrepreneurship is more often plural than singular (Gartner, Shaver, Gatewood, and Katz, 1994: 19). Since team-based ventures are closely embedded in interpersonal relationships, they may benefit from trust and cohesion among team members, or, equally, they may suffer from in-group conflict or a lack of skills diversity (Aldrich and Zimmer, 1986; Goncalo and Staw, 2006; Granovetter, 1973, 2005). However, pluralising the “entrepreneur” can provide only a partial insight into the nature and implications of social embeddedness in entrepreneurship teams. As research on habitual and portfolio entrepreneurship has shown, the phenomenon of entrepreneurs founding multiple ventures is common (Iacobucci and Rosa, 2010; Ucbasaran, Westhead, and Wright, 2001). In a team context, this will play out in one of two ways: in the first, the team jointly initiates its first venture, then its second, its third, and so on, possibly adding or jettisoning members along the way. In the second, the team jointly initiates its first venture, but then individual members, or subsets of members, initiate subsequent ventures whilst continuing to participate in the original venture. The nature of embeddedness is qualitatively different across these two scenarios. In the first scenario, the team is conceptualised as a largely self-contained social entity, in which the agency of insiders is directed towards the formation of new ventures within the boundaries of the team. Constraints to these organising efforts manifest in the forms

mentioned above, e.g. conflict or tension among team members and a limited flow of new information and ideas into the group. In the second scenario, individual members straddle the boundaries of the team, as they pursue lone ventures whilst attempting to preserve their place in the economic and/or social fabric of the team. My findings indicate that such boundary spanning activities entail distinctive agency constraints, as entrepreneurs seek to gain legitimacy for their lone ventures within the social domain of the team.

Pluralising the “entrepreneur” has represented an important first step in understanding the nature and implications of social embeddedness in team-based venturing. Accepting that the “venture” might also warrant plurality may be a necessary ‘next step’ in advancing this discussion. By engaging with this possibility, teams may be better understood as social structures that both enable *and constrain* entrepreneurial action (Giddens, 1984; Ruef, 2010). While extant research has not shied away from the possibility that highly collaborative forms of entrepreneurship such as team-based venturing may have a dark side (Gulati, et al., 2012; Janssen and Huang, 2008; Portes, 1998; Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993), scholars have mostly taken a resource-centric view of the constraints involved. For example, several studies have explored the adverse effects of excessive homophily, noting that individuals that share similar sociodemographic characteristics tend to hold similar views and ideas, and have access to similar sets of resources and networks (Adler and Kwon, 2002; Ansari, et al., 2010; Uzzi, 1997); as a result, ventures initiated by homophilic teams tend not to be especially innovative (Gras and Nason, 2015; Richard, McMillan, and Chadwick, 2003). My findings shed light on constraints of a different form. By conceptualising the team not only as *an entity which behaves entrepreneurially*, but also as *a social context for individual entrepreneurial behaviour*, I highlight the constraints that team membership – specifically in cases where a strong collective identity prevails within the team – can impose on individual agency.

8.4.3 Section Summary

This section specified the second contribution made by this study to the entrepreneurship teams literature, dealing with the idea of ‘negotiated’ personal agency. Teams literature has not fully addressed the issue of members ‘having one foot in and one foot out’; that is, where they undertake lone venturing whilst continuing to engage in the entrepreneurial activities of the group. Observations indicate that this engenders identity tensions which must be addressed in such a way that personal agency is neither crowded out by group belonging, nor that it undermines group belonging. A key tactic in resolving these tensions was to allow the group to capture some of the value that was created by the lone venture.

8.5 New insights for entrepreneurship and poverty

As research has begun to pay closer attention to entrepreneurship in contexts of Developing-World poverty, two themes have been dominant: the first is concerned with the conditions under which entrepreneurs can move from a state of poverty to one of relative prosperity (Daouda, Ingenbleek, and van Trijp, 2019; Sridharan, Maltz, Viswanathan, and Gupta, 2014); the second is concerned with community-level organising, and how social resources can be mobilised and deployed to address problems faced by the community as a whole (Mair, Wolf, and Seelos, 2016).

The objective of this chapter was to extrapolate learnings from the shifting patterns of organising that manifested across successive generations of immigrants to the slum. In particular, I sought to specify and convey ‘what it means’ to participate in the entrepreneurial collectives that have been the central focus of the chapter (Welter, et al., 2017). As such, the objective was not to identify determinants of entrepreneurial success or of efficacious community-level organising; however, helpful learnings for both emerged from analysis of the collectives. Those learnings are outlined below.

8.5.1 Alleviating Poverty through Entrepreneurship: An Embedded View

Concentrating exclusively on the ‘success stories’ would have yielded an under-socialised account of entrepreneurship in the slum, not only because of the extreme rarity of such cases, but also because concepts like ‘success’ and ‘poverty’ are themselves socially embedded (Baker, et al., 2005; Gnyawali and Fogel, 1994; Lyons, Alter, Audretsch, and Augustine, 2012). While entrepreneurship research tends to consider poverty in financial terms (Sutter, et al., 2019), this is neither how it is conceptualised in the contemporary development space (Sen, 1983, 2001; Townsend, 1985; UN, 2015, 2016; World Bank, 2017c), nor how it is experienced by the poor themselves (de Soto, 2000; Maathai, 2003; Narayan-Parker and Patesch, 2002). As well as seeing poverty as a lack of money, we may see it as an inability to pursue one’s hobbies and interests, as powerlessness, or as a barrier to social participation; in this view, money is more a means to a higher end than it is an end in itself, in that poverty is not addressed simply by having more money but in putting that money to use in an instrumental way to enhance a person’s capability to live lives that they value (Sen, 2001, 2010). A ‘successful’ venture may therefore be one which – as we’ve seen in the data – offers friends the opportunity to work together and to generate enough income to have their music recorded and produced. Scholars engaged in studying entrepreneurs living in conditions of extreme poverty appear to have disregarded such aspirations as irrelevant, presuming that the incentives for entrepreneurs to increase their wealth – like enabling them to raise their calorific intake, afford medical care, and move to better-quality housing – are

sufficiently strong that recreation and other personal interests will exist in a separate, subordinated domain to their economic livelihoods. Research dedicated to understanding the spending choices of the ultra-poor does not support this assumption (Banerjee and Duflo, 2012).

By placing a strong focus on the meso-level of analysis (the collectives), we are able to understand more fully how entrepreneurship and poverty connect. As well as serving as a vehicle for individuals to navigate economic poverty, the collectives attended to other domains of their members' personal wellbeing (Kroeger and Weber, 2014; Sen, 2001), including social integration, recreation, and physical security. This occurred *both* as a product of the entrepreneurial activities of the group – income generated could be used to pay for the group to attend musical performances, for example, or to pay the bribes required for them to join a local football team – and as a function of the entrepreneurial process itself, as marginalised and vulnerable young people were able to participate in a meaningful way in society by means of the economic and recreational activities of these groups. Thus, by opting not to focus centrally on traditional 'success stories' – cases in which entrepreneurs have managed to escape dire poverty and amass substantial personal wealth – I provide a more expansive account of how entrepreneurship is tailored to the multiplex challenges of extreme poverty.

8.5.2 Meso-Level 'Buffers' between the Individual and Community

The context of this account is both a social one – encompassing the interpersonal relationships which underpin the collectives – and a temporal one – encompassing both the age profile of the collectives and the age of the community itself, which at the time of fieldwork had existed as a meaningful settlement for little more than twenty-five years. Contextualising my findings in this way enables me to connect to the second dominant theme in the literature on entrepreneurship and poverty, which is concerned with the mobilisation of social resources at the community level to address problems experienced by the community as a whole. Much of the research in this area centres on community-based enterprises (CBEs), where members of a community collaboratively undertake to provide a public good (or public goods) to that community, usually by means of market-based exchange or collaborative activities (Peredo and Chrisman, 2006; Ratten and Welpel, 2011). Although some CBEs existed in the study setting – in much the same way that some 'success stories' of the type described above also existed there – most were affiliated with churches or NGOs, and had memberships which were extremely small in proportion to the number of people resident in the community. Not only were the vast majority of community members not involved in these CBEs, many were unaware that they even existed.

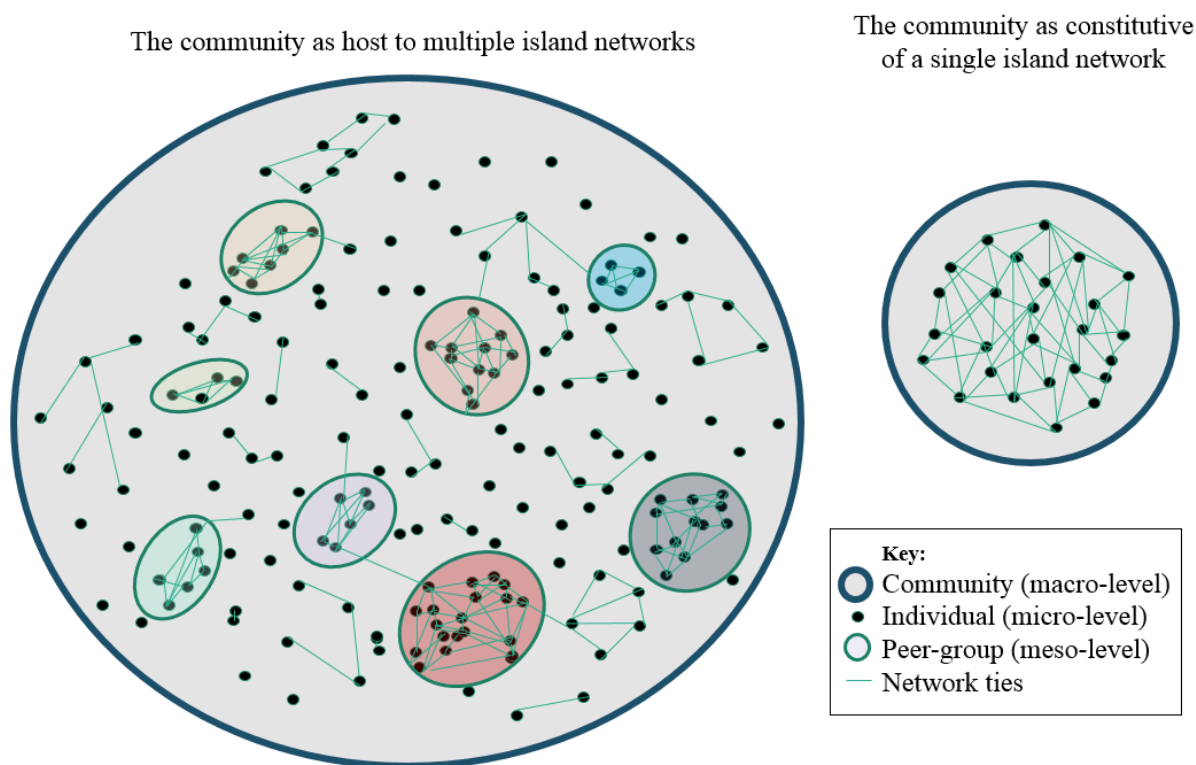
This study provides helpful insights to this research domain by paying much-needed empirical attention to the plural, ‘nested’ nature of entrepreneurial context (Dacin, et al., 1999; Schneiberg and Clemens, 2006; Steyaert and Katz, 2004; Zoogah, et al., 2015). Two important pre-conditions for community-based entrepreneurship are the existence of a problem or a set of problems which the CBE is capable of addressing (either with or without outside help) and the existence of sufficiently diffuse ‘strong ties’ within the community which can facilitate cohesion of purpose and action (Aldrich and Zimmer, 1986; Dentoni, et al., 2018; Marti, et al., 2013). In general, poor communities, especially those in rural areas, are seen as fulfilling both of these pre-conditions and are therefore viewed as well-disposed to community-based entrepreneurship (Peredo, 2003; Anderson and Obeng, 2017). However, my findings suggest that urban contexts, and slums in particular, may differ. As urbanisation in the Developing World continues apace, many slum communities are still experiencing extraordinary rates of expansion (Davis, 2007; UN-Habitat, 2015), and, with ethnic heterogeneity also a factor in many regions (Macharia, 1992; UN-Habitat, 2003), ‘strong ties’ are more likely to emerge in small spatial clusters than on a community-wide basis. This kind of fragmented social structure is analogous to that described within the Italian community of Boston’s West End in the late 1950s by Granovetter (1973) in his seminal paper “The Strength of Weak Ties”. Granovetter argued that the community’s failure to organise in opposition to the redevelopment of land upon which its residents lived was attributable to the stratification of the community into small cliques, which were internally bound by very strong ties, but which lacked ‘weak’ or ‘bridging’ ties to other cliques within the same community. This stratified social structure inhibited the diffusion of information via the medium of personal ties, and the possibility of widespread co-ordinated action was largely extinguished (Granovetter, 1973: 1373-1374).⁴²

The concept of ‘island networks’, formulated in a study of impoverished entrepreneurs in Ghana by Slade Schantz, et al. (2018), provides a highly relevant theoretical basis for these observations. Island networks “are typified by dense social clusters, tightly connected internally but with few links to outside groups” (Slade Schantz, et al., 2018: 416). The key difference between Slade Schantz et al.’s (2018) application of the concept and ours is that whereas they considered the community to be *constitutive of a singular island network*, I consider the community to be *host to multiple island networks* (see Figure 6), in a way that is akin to Granovetter’s (1973) ‘cliques’

⁴² Granovetter proposed his assessment of the Italian community’s failure to organise as an alternative to an earlier assessment by Herbert Gans (Gans, 1962). In a response, Gans (1974) suggests that Granovetter’s assessment was apposite but emphasises that the focus on network attributes should not obscure historical, cultural, and political factors which were also at play. As I have alluded to in earlier sections, these issues are also of relevance in the present study. Although I focus here on the implications of network clusters, the diversity of ethnicity and background among the community’s inhabitants, coupled with the fact that many had only recently arrived to the city (Portes, 1972), also presented barriers to community-level organising.

within the Italian immigrant community in Boston in the 1950s (see also Gulati, et al., 2012). This difference stems from the contrasting empirical contexts of the two studies. The isolated and rural context of Slade Schantz et al.'s (2018) study meant that members of the focal community had strong ties to each other but lacked ties to members of other communities (see also Peredo, 2003). In the nascent, urban context of a slum, by contrast, intra-community network ties had yet to widely suffuse. That process of suffusion was inhibited by, among other factors, the community's quickly growing population, the heterogeneity of ethnicity and personal backgrounds within that population, and the dissolution of the family as a stable and ubiquitous social structure. In this context, patterns of organising tended not to manifest at the level of the community. Instead – as I have shown with the collectives – they manifested at a lower level of analysis, as small groups of actors engaged in collaborative action to address some of the manifold challenges that poverty presented.

Figure 6: Island Networks. The study community is conceptualised as the larger circle, and the collectives (as island networks) are denoted by the coloured circles. This study observed that, in contrast to other BoP contexts, the slum was host to multiple island networks rather than being an island network unto itself. As a result, normative constraints and interpersonal solidarity was observed to be manifest at a level of analysis below the community itself. Over the past two chapters, I have delved into that meso level – between the community (macro) and individual (micro) – in my examination of the entrepreneurial collectives. Different colours are used in the circle on the left to depict meso-level social structures like the collectives; in particular, different colours are used in order to illustrate that the content and severity of normative constraints may differ from one collective to the next, which further contrasts a community of this type from one which is constitutive of a single island network.



8.5.3 Meso-Level as a Source of Normative Constraints

The observation that a community resembles an agglomeration of island networks as opposed to an island network unto itself has theoretical implications beyond community-based entrepreneurship. As noted earlier, informal institutions and local norms play a particularly important role in shaping the motivations and patterns of entrepreneurial action in poor and marginalised contexts, where formal institutions – the law of the land – are often secondary (Mair and Marti, 2009; North, 2000). However, the absence of formal institutions does not necessarily infer the presence of strong and agreed-upon informal institutions or norms (Mair, et al., 2016). Even in societies where formal institutions carry little force, the potency of informal institutions and norms will be undermined by a fragmented social structure. As Granovetter (2005: 34) writes, “[n]orms – shared ideas about the proper way to behave – are clearer, more firmly held and easier to enforce the more dense a social network ... Thus, greater density makes ideas about proper

behaviour more likely to be encountered repeatedly, discussed and fixed; it also renders deviance from resulting norms harder to hide and, thus, more likely to be punished”.

“Leveling pressure” (Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993:1342), a normative constraint that is commonly imposed by members of an oppressed community on their own peers, provides a case in point. Levelling pressure can be a powerful impediment to individual agency, and usually works by casting material success as a form of betrayal. Efforts by an individual to rise too far above the social status that is affixed to the wider group of which s/he is a part (e.g., a given immigrant community) can provoke ridicule or even sabotage from within that community, and often the threat of such reprisals is a sufficient deterrent. Normative pressures of this kind have been identified as salient constraints to entrepreneurial agency in poor communities. Slade Schantz, et al. (2018: 430), for example, write that “high levels of financial success were stigmatized or tainted, causing jealousy and competition among other entrepreneurs and the broader community ... as long as everyone is relatively equal, entrepreneurs can ‘afford’ to be a-competitive. However, as soon as someone appears to become significantly more successful, jealousy and competition ensue.”

Earlier sections of this chapter have signified the relevance of socially embedded agency constraints of this type within my data as well. What differs, however, is the level of analysis at which they manifested. In Slade Shantz et al.’s (2018) isolated and rural study community – which was itself an island network – these conditioning forces appear to manifest at the level of the community (see also Hopp and Stephan, 2012; Muñoz and Kimmitt, 2019; Viswanathan, et al., 2012); in my emerging, urban study community – which was host to multiple island networks – these forces manifest at a level below (the collectives).

While I have examined at length the agency constraints that accompanied membership of these lower-order social groupings, it is worth re-emphasising that not all entrepreneurs were part of such groupings. Almost all of the older cohort of entrepreneurs in the study community took a comparatively individualistic approach, which was a part-reflection of the non-density of interpersonal ties within the community. For varying reasons, such as having access to an above-average capital stock and/or a desire to maximise personal wealth, many of the younger cohort also engaged in solo ventures. Entrepreneurs within these groups were not subject to levelling pressures in the same way as their counterparts in the collectives. Most residents of the slum were not born there – many had arrived fairly recently – and the affinity that they shared with others in the community was relatively shallow. In fact, many regarded their neighbours with suspicion and distrust, which would frequently stem from differences in background or ethnicity. For entrepreneurs like this, ‘the community’ was a distant and disparate notion, and the desire to remain a part of it was usually grounded in the fact that rent was cheap and – owing to the slum’s

large and growing population – prospective customers were plentiful. Therefore, to suppose that normative forces like levelling pressures necessarily link to the community (as a level of analysis) is problematic.

Specifically, this may trigger an inverse of the problem of under-socialising the motivations and processes of entrepreneurial action that I discussed earlier in relation to the idea of entrepreneurial ‘success stories’; assuming that all normative elements in a community are internalised, complied with, or even noticed by all members of that community is likely to produce *over*-socialised accounts of entrepreneurship which understate agency and heterogeneity (Chalmers and Shaw, 2017; DiMaggio, 1997; Kalantaridis and Fletcher, 2012; Rao, 1994). This study dealt with this problem by conceptualising community as a macro-level construct, which is bridged to the individual (at the micro-level) by means of that individual’s primary peer group (the meso-level).

I treat the meso-level of analysis both as a forum for collective agency (the market-based activities of the entrepreneurial collectives) and as a context for individual agency (individuals engaging in lone ventures), an approach which helped me to navigate the dual hazards of under- and over-socialised representation. First, this study addresses problems of *under*-socialisation in empirical research in this area. Whereas prior research has taken an interest in entrepreneurship as a tool for alleviating economic poverty by making people financially better off, my findings highlight how entrepreneurship is oriented towards a much broader set of outcomes, including things like emotional support, physical security, and recreation. However, as either an economic or a social safety net, the adequacy of collective entrepreneurship was sporadic at best, and observations in the field would lead me to concur with Banerjee and Duflo’s (2012: 234) suggestion that “[w]e are kidding ourselves if we think that [businesses of this scale] can pave the way for a mass exit from poverty” (see also Alvarez and Barney, 2014). Second, I also address problems of *over*-socialisation in empirical research on entrepreneurship and poverty, specifically by highlighting the substantial social distance that can separate an individual from a community. In the tumultuous and fractured social context of an urban slum, for example, community-level norms and institutions are not likely to be as clearly defined as they are in a stable, isolated, and rural setting. My findings support this view, but indicate that such constraints may manifest at lower levels of analysis, and therefore still be salient – both as a matter of content and degree – for some entrepreneurs.

8.5.4 Section Summary

The cross-level nature of this study, incorporating micro, meso, and macro levels of analysis, contribute to a more contextualised understanding of entrepreneurship in settings of extreme

poverty. The aim of this section was to highlight that the constraints to entrepreneurial organising differ markedly across impoverished contexts, and to illustrate how some critical aspects of these three levels helped to shape the patterns of organising that were observed here. It is hoped that this will contribute to both a broader and deeper appreciation of the sociodemographic upheaval that is being brought about by Developing-World urbanisation, and how this upheaval is manifest in patterns of entrepreneurial organising.

8.6 Chapter Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to specify and develop the theoretical contributions that emanated from the empirical findings set out in Chapter 7. Taken together, these contributions deepen our knowledge of team-based venturing in general and shed much-needed light on team-based venturing in contexts of poverty in particular. Building on the growing embeddedness literature, I illustrated the practical importance of the ‘what else?’ question in the context of identity-based entrepreneurship teams. Then, I described how extant conceptualisations of ‘who we are’ become infused with new meanings as venturing proceeds. I went on to examine how individuals ‘negotiate’ personal agency within the identity confines of an entrepreneurship team, before, finally, engaging in a broader discussion of how my findings inform key aspects of ongoing conversations relating to entrepreneurship and poverty.

CHAPTER 9

Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a recap of the central findings and contributions of this thesis, before noting some limitations and specifying possible avenues for future research.

9.2 Study Rationale

In its design and thematic focus, the present study attends to several issues that have been identified as important to the ongoing development of entrepreneurship as a field of research. Broadly categorised under the headings 'Methodological', 'Empirical', and 'Theoretical', these issues are summarised below.

Methodological rationale: why an ethnographic study? In setting out this rationale below, it is important to note that I am not making a general case for the methodology; across the social sciences, a consensus prevails that ethnography is capable of delivering a level of richness and depth which few other methodologies – both qualitative and quantitative – can match (Jacob, 1987; Schneiberg and Clemens, 2006). Rather, the purpose of the following points is to specify, in summary form, why it is well-suited to three key parameters of this research, namely: the empirical issue of interest (entrepreneurship); the context of study (a deeply impoverished and marginalised community); and the theoretical lens (identity).

- Ethnography is an immersive and longitudinal methodology which has been underutilised in entrepreneurship research, but which is capable of capturing the richness and contextualised nature of the entrepreneurial process to an extent that more frequently used instruments like surveys, questionnaires, and once-off interviews cannot (Aldrich, 1992; Davidsson, Low, and Wright, 2001; Herron, et al., 1992; Steyaert and Katz, 2004).
- Ethnography is also sensitive to important cultural differences between 'traditional' research settings (Europe & North America) and 'non-traditional' settings (e.g., the BoP and/or the informal economy). Concerns have been expressed that these differences are poorly

accounted for by quantitative (and some qualitative) methods, inhibiting or misdirecting our understanding of unfamiliar empirical contexts such as these (Chambers, 1997; Imas, et al., 2012; Kodithuwakku and Rosa, 2002; Welter, 2011).

- As a methodology which involves protracted immersion in a research setting and which provides intimate exposure to the lives of people therein, ethnography is extremely well-suited to the study of identity. Relatedly, ethnography is capable of yielding insights into the informal institutions – including local norms, rules, and power relations – in which identities are embedded and reproduced (Barley, 1996; Golden-Biddle and Locke, 1993; Jacob, 1987; Nicolini, 2011; Schneiberg and Clemens, 2006; Zilber, 2002).

Empirical rationale: why the slum context?

- The overwhelming majority of entrepreneurship research has been conducted in Western Europe and North America. Two consistent arguments in favour of broadening the empirical focus of entrepreneurship research have been made: (i) carrying out research in alternative contexts might give us a richer and more comprehensive perspective on the 'what', 'why', and 'how' of entrepreneurship; and (ii) entrepreneurship is seen as key to the development of economies and societies in the Developing World, yet entrepreneurship research has barely scratched the surface in these regions (Bruton, et al., 2013; Gras and Nason, 2015; Welter, et al., 2017).
- In-part because of the dearth of immersive methodologies such as ethnography, empirical studies concerned with entrepreneurship in BoP settings have frequently ignored the poorest and most marginalised entrepreneurs in those settings. Typically, empirical samples have been extremely heterogeneous or have been populated by relatively high-performing ventures. In order to limit sample heterogeneity and to focus on entrepreneurship among poor and marginalised entrepreneurs, data for this study is gathered in a single slum community, which is one of the most deprived in the region (Boso, et al., 2013; Honig, 1998; Miller, 2011).
- The Developing World is neither a singular nor a static entity, yet research has often treated it as such. One of the most significant issues currently facing the Developing World (particularly the Sub-Saharan Africa region) is urbanisation, and the consequent proliferation of informal ('slum') communities. Entrepreneurship research has largely ignored this phenomenon, as well as the implications that such profound sociodemographic shifts might have on how entrepreneurship is conducted (Bradley, et al., 2012; Sutter, et al., 2013; Williams and Shahid, 2016).

Theoretical rationale: why identity as a theoretical lens?

- As an explanatory tool, identity-based theories (e.g., Collective Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory) accommodate heterogeneity in ways that behavioural theories (e.g. bricolage, effectuation) do not. This was of vital importance because, although all informant entrepreneurs experienced acute resource constraints, they did not all respond in the same way. Portraying all slum entrepreneurs as bricoleurs or effectuators would have been highly misrepresentative (Fauchart and Gruber, 2011; Leavitt, et al., 2012; Welter, Mauer, and Wuebker, 2016).
- Identity-based theories have contributed significantly to organisational research, but they have rarely been used in the context of new and nascent ventures. As a result, we know that identity has significant bearing on organisational strategy, but we know very little of how it emerges. Addressing this gap could help us to better understand why some organisations, or groups/categories of organisations, behave as they do (Hoang and Gimeno, 2010; Ruef, et al., 2003; Ruef, 2010; Santos and Eisenhardt, 2005).
- Apart from knowing little of how identity emerges or evolved during the entrepreneurial process, research has only begun to explore the effects that belonging to a particular social group might have on whether a person will decide to engage in entrepreneurship, and how they might do so. Analogies might be drawn here to family business: people generally identify very strongly with the social group that is their family, and research conducted in this area has shown that this can have wide-ranging ramifications for the livelihood choices that family members make (e.g., pressure to join or remain within the family business, pressure to recruit other family members, etc.). Exploring this link in an empirical context where entrepreneurship and kinship ties overlap to such a degree could be particularly insightful (De Castro, et al., 2014; Kim, Wennberg, and Croidieu, 2016; Webb, et al., 2009; Slade Schantz, et al., 2018).

9.3 Research Questions and Empirical Findings

The study explored two distinctive approaches to entrepreneurship, the first being of a more orthodox type where ventures were initiated and operated by individuals, partners, and families, and the second, which was observed to be prevalent among the younger generation was based around (sometimes large) age-based peer groups. The research questions underpinning these investigations, and the empirical findings that ensued, are summarised below.

I began by asking, *‘Do members of the study community feel bound by a collective identity and, if so, what is it predicated upon?’* I observed that members of the slum community believed that

they constituted a defined social group which was distinct from, and at a disadvantage to, other comparable social groups. However, structural and emergent factors – differences in ethnicity and background coupled with occupational specialisation – combined to narrow the formulation of collective identity among entrepreneurs in the community.

Subsequently, I set out to understand *what bearing, if any, collective identity had on the entrepreneurship process at the venture level*. I found that, embedded in the community's sense of 'who we are' was a tacit understanding that 'we' play by a different set of rules to 'them'. By allowing for pervasive economic informality, the slum's prevailing institutional framework facilitated market venturing on a large scale. Because it was so closely tied to the community's collective identity, challenges to this institutional status quo were regarded as an attack on the community as a whole and were resisted accordingly. Advancing prior work in this area, I find that the choices made by entrepreneurs in respect of (in)formality were not reducible to individual value judgements that weigh the costs of informality (evasion itself can result in lost income and the failure of evasion strategies can draw heavy penalties) against those of formality (registration costs, taxes, etc.) (De Castro, et al., 2014; Siquiera, et al., 2017). Instead, the pervasiveness of informality was conditioned heavily by collective-level issues – because it was integral to preserving the tiny profit margins of so many of the slum's micro-enterprises, it was actively defended and its proliferation was self-reinforcing to the point where it was simply seen as 'how we do things around here'. As a result, I argue that collective identity was central to making entrepreneurship possible for a broad cross-section of the community's population; however, navigating the many challenges of entrepreneurship itself was a largely solitary process.

I also found that entrepreneurs that were engaged in activities which were technically illegal but which were regarded as legitimate or permissible within the informal institutional framework of local society derived idiosyncratic benefits from collective identity. I illustrated how they used identity capital forged by the wider populace of entrepreneurs as a buffer to separate them from enforcement authorities, a process I term 'insulating'.

Three related questions were posed in respect of the entrepreneurial collectives, defined here are groups of like-minded friends pursuing economic profits through self-initiated, market-based ventures.

In seeking to understand *why the entrepreneurial collective emerged as an organisational form*, I found that second-generation actors were embedded in the local community in ways that first-generation actors were not, and that this drove the proliferation of this divergent organisational form.

I went on to examine *how collective identity and entrepreneurship co-evolved within the collectives, particularly in respect of the pre-existing and multi-faceted ties that underpinned them*. Here, positive performance feedback was found to reinforce beliefs of positive social distinctiveness, and vice versa. This had the effect of strengthening (or weakening) extant micro-identities. In a group context, this amplified (undermined) the extent to which group insiders perceived themselves as different from outsiders. In the context of the collectives' identity-based boundaries, this had an important bearing on 'who is in and who is out'.

Finally, I asked, *'How was individual agency enacted within the identity confines of the collectives?'* I observed that individual agency was enacted with a view to preserving the psychological and existential security that members derived from their affiliation to the collectives. Lone ventures that were established by individual members were framed as being beneficial to the group as well as to the individual, but inevitable tensions emerged that challenged the strong norms of egalitarianism within the collectives.

9.4 Theoretical Contributions

The overarching contribution of this study centres on the core empirical aim of attaining a more fine-grained, contextualised understanding of 'what it's like' to be an entrepreneur in the challenging environment of an urban slum. Specifically, the cross-level nature of the study, incorporating micro, meso, and macro levels of analysis, helps to provide insight into the magnitude of the sociodemographic upheaval that is being brought about by Developing-World urbanisation, and how this upheaval is manifest in patterns of entrepreneurial organising.

The relationship between entrepreneurship and collective identity was the primary area for theoretical development in this study. Extant work in this area has theorised that, by virtue of their membership of particular social groups, entrepreneurs have access to a suite of benefits that are unavailable to non-members. Such benefits may be culturally ingrained; entrepreneurs that belong to a social group are especially well-placed to attend to the commercial needs of that social group, for example, because they have first-hand insight into what is considered useful, desirable, and appropriate by their fellow members (Branzei, et al., 2018; Viswanathan, et al., 2014; Webb, et al., 2009). Other benefits may be more proprietary in nature and may be passed or exchanged in a more explicit way among members of the in-group, as happens when resources are shared during periods of difficulty (Matthias, et al., 2018; Portes, 1998). Still others may be materialise in improved circumstances for the entire group, perhaps through the communisation of labour or expertise (Peredo, 2003; Pret and Carter, 2017). The present study explored collective identity in a slum community and which, if any, such benefits might accrue to entrepreneurs therein.

I observed that, because of its entanglement with economic informality, collective identity helped to make entrepreneurial opportunities – in a purely “realist” sense – more abundant. However, exploiting those opportunities – initiating and operating market ventures – was seen as a predominantly individual pursuit, despite the ubiquity of entrepreneurship and the eminent precarity that it entailed. Building from these empirical observations, I argue that collective identity is likely to have the strongest bearing on those aspects of the entrepreneurial process which invoke *intergroup* relations. However, when an out-group ceases to be readily identifiable, the collective identity which underlies in-group solidarity loses salience. As a result, those aspects of the entrepreneurial process that rely on *intragroup* solidarity, but which do not invoke a referent out-group, are least impacted by collective identity.

Discrete theoretical contributions are specified as follows (Chapters 5 and 6):

1. I contribute new insights to the collective identity literature which have particularly useful applications for scholars of entrepreneurship. In drawing attention to the ‘ebb and flow’ of collective identity, I advance a more nuanced understanding of the conditions under which collective identity might or might not have a bearing on the entrepreneurship process. In contrast with prior research (e.g., Rousseau, 1998) in the area of social identity (concerned with individual-level identification processes), the literature on collective identity has not yet addressed the issue of ‘situatedness’, meaning that particular situations cause it to become salient, while in others it may remain dormant. I show that collective identity is likely to have the strongest bearing on those aspects of the entrepreneurial process which invoke *intergroup* relations. However, when an out-group ceases to be readily identifiable, the collective identity which underlies in-group solidarity loses salience. As a result, those aspects of the entrepreneurial process that rely on *intragroup* solidarity, but which do not invoke a referent out-group, are least impacted by collective identity.
2. I extend extant research on the role played by entrepreneurs that operate at the interface of different institutional systems, such as when formal and informal institutional systems come into contact or when one set of formal institutions takes the place of another (Ritter, 1998; Webb, et al., 2009; Williams and Vorley, 2014). I suggest that a new construct, *insulating*, which refers to the use by some entrepreneurs of identity capital forged by a wider populace of entrepreneurs as a buffer between themselves and the enforcement authorities, could be helpful in understanding how the actions of entrepreneurs contribute to the shaping of emergent ‘rules of the game’ in such institutional environments. The logic of intergroup relations (an identity perspective) upon which this argument is based represents a novel complement to the more orthodox lens of actor-network theory (networks perspective).
3. I advance the nascent literature on external enablers (Davidsson, 2015; Davidsson, et al., forthcoming) by arguing that collective identity could, in this and perhaps other contexts, be

regarded as an external enabler. This argument is based on the observation that economic action was spurred by an institutional status quo that allowed for non-capital intensive, informal venturing, which was rooted in turn in local notions of ‘who we are’. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first study to make this argument. By extension, important questions emerge in relation to the type of entrepreneurial activity that might be spurred by this and other enablers. Like most subsistence-level entrepreneurial activity (Alvarez and Barney, 2014), the overwhelming majority of ventures that operated in the present context were ‘unproductive’ (Baumol, 1990) in that they created minimal surplus value and gave little priority to innovation, yet being able to engage freely in economic activity of this type was seen to be critical for the viability of the community and the survival of its inhabitants.

The ‘Entrepreneurial Collective’ revealed itself to be a prevalent and complex organisational form during the time I spent in the field. The collectives were team-based enterprises populated largely by young people whose family ties had been disrupted or severed by the profound social upheaval of urbanisation. Economic action emerged as an extension of close interpersonal relationships that had already come to serve a large array of other purposes, including recreation, physical security and wellbeing, and emotional support.

The collectives provided a valuable window of insight into the shifting sands of collective identity, as the rapid evolution of the community caused its social landscape to change in fundamental ways. The isolation that characterised the experience of the preceding generation of entrepreneurs had in many cases given way to the kind of bounded co-dependence that was evident in the collectives. In their own right, the collectives also provided an opportunity to dedicate much-needed empirical attention to the nexus of collective identity and team-based entrepreneurship. Identity-based perspectives are viewed as a necessary complement to the more rationalistic, resource-centric perspectives that dominate this literature (Forbes, et al., 2006; Ruef, 2010; Santos and Eisenhardt, 2005).

Specific contributions can be summarised as follows (Chapters 7 and 8):

1. I advance a section of literature which has emerged quite recently but that, nonetheless, has garnered considerable scholarly attention in that time, namely how entrepreneurship, and the performance feedback that it engenders, can have a transformative effect on a person’s identity (Newbery, et al., 2018). My findings suggest that this transformation unfolds in a different way in the context of team-based entrepreneurship, particularly where entrepreneurial teams emerge from strong, pre-existing ties. Rather than extant micro-identities becoming jettisoned or losing salience, I observed that these identities were infused with new meanings and were used as a basis for positive distinctiveness. I also drew attention to the practical implications of these findings, with a particular focus on how the retention of

these extant micro-identities was observed to have important and lasting implications for venture boundaries.

2. I generate helpful new insights for the literature on entrepreneurial embeddedness, particularly by attending to the under-researched area of friendship ties as a precursor to entrepreneurship teams (Francis and Sandberg, 2000). Using the idea of identity-based organisational boundaries, I illustrated that these ventures served a broad suite of purposes besides income generation. They also filled the void created by severed family ties and provided a much-needed recreational outlet for young people experiencing acute existential stresses like persistent hunger, stigmatisation, social isolation, and widespread criminality. This 'what else' aspect of entrepreneurial ventures was central in determining who participated in them and what their goals were.
3. Finally, I lend new insights to the entrepreneurship teams' literature by investigating how personal agency is negotiated within the identify confines of a tightly knit entrepreneurship team. The teams' literature has not fully addressed the issue of members 'having one foot in and one foot out'; that is, where they undertake lone venturing whilst continuing to engage in the entrepreneurial activities of the group. My observations indicate that this engenders identity tensions which must be addressed in such a way that personal agency is neither crowded out by group belonging, nor that it undermines group belonging. A key tactic in resolving these tensions was to allow the group to capture some of the value that was created by the lone venture.

9.5 Implications for Practice

Several aspects of this research, some of which I explain below, may help inform the work of developmental organisations and policymakers.

Prior research has emphasised the importance of local solidarity as a means to navigate the precarity of entrepreneurship in poor and marginalised contexts. The depth of contrast between first- and second-generation inhabitants, in terms of individualistic/collectivistic orientations, that was revealed in this study indicates that such solidarity may take time to crystallise. Valuable interventions in highly fragmented social contexts like slums might therefore centre on community-building and striving to nurture a strengthened sense of 'we-ness'. Along these lines, a recent development in the study community was the launch of a local radio station, providing a novel forum for ordinary residents of the slum to speak in a unified voice about the hardships and indignities that they routinely encounter.

The study highlights a pressing need for authorities to better tailor formalisation programmes to the needs of poor and disenfranchised entrepreneurs, as well as the need to more effectively communicate to them the benefits of formalisation. Formalisation was vehemently resisted in the study community on the grounds that it was costly and afforded no clear benefits, and local council officials were seen as adversarial rather than supportive. Enforcing economic formality on a community this poor is likely to have the most damaging effects on its most vulnerable members – those for whom a 20c ‘tax’ translates to a substantial cut in their daily earnings. Until formalisation programmes are devised with due consideration given to the idiosyncratic needs of these constituents, they are likely to meet continued resistance, which ultimately serves to more deeply entrench their socioeconomic marginalisation. Incorporating entry points into these programmes which reflect the low levels of revenue that subsistence levels generate is an obvious and necessary step. Equally important is the need to recognise that subsistence incomes are not only low but especially prone to fluctuation – many of the entrepreneurs studied here could go days at a time without a single sale – which necessitates that these programmes also entail flexibility.

It is now commonplace for state-sponsored programmes aimed at helping poor youths to establish market ventures to encourage – even stipulate – peer-based collaboration. To access support under Kenya’s Youth Enterprise Development Fund, for example, groups must number at least ten members, 70 per cent of whom must be aged between 18-35. While the observations of the present study lend support to the general spirit of such programmes – peer networks constitute a resource than can and should be leveraged – it also raises questions relating to excessive homophily. As we have seen, such groups can be populated by very tight-knit groups of peers which, on the one hand, confers the usual benefits associated with trust and familiarity; on the other hand, however, mentorship is almost exclusively peer-based. Members of these groups engage in extensive knowledge sharing amongst one-another but have few opportunities to learn from or observe entrepreneurs that operate outside of their small circle. It is therefore necessary to consider whether such programme designs institutionalise homophily.

9.6 Limitations

Qualitative research is oriented towards richness and depth rather than replicability and generalisability, and the data gathered for this study is a function of those trade-offs. On a related, but somewhat more technical note, other limitations include:

(i) *Gender*. The social distance between my informants and I was substantial; however, that distance was more easily bridged in the cases where informants (or prospective informants) were

male. Common ground was typically more quickly found with men – often the topic of football would offer a lead-in that was less useful as a conversational gateway with women. Additionally, men did not have cause to fear that my ‘hanging around’ might arouse suspicion or jealousy among neighbours or romantic partners. For these reasons and others, securing the participation of female informants was considerably more difficult, even though they accounted for at least half of the study community’s population of entrepreneurs. The extended nature of data collection allowed for these pitfalls to be noticed and navigated and, by fieldwork’s end, I had managed to achieve a strong degree of gender balance in my sample: of the nineteen ventures studied in the ‘Individual Entrepreneurs’ chapters, nine were headed up by women and ten by men. Both of the collectives, however, were exclusively male, and I acknowledge here the difficulty of obtaining a comparable measure of ‘behind the scenes’ access to similar, female-centric peer networks.

(ii) A limited participant pool. Included in my sample were entrepreneurs, development professionals, and other local figureheads; in addition, I spent considerable time interacting with educational and religious leaders, students, employees of the nearby light-industry firms, and other community stakeholders. Therefore, the study has benefitted from substantial diversity of perspective. However, informants were primarily community insiders in one way or another – those that were not community members themselves (two of the development professionals, for example, were from overseas) were allied strongly with those who were. Certain aspects of the study may have benefitted from an outsider’s view. In particular, it would have been helpful to interview those representatives of the local council or police that were tasked with imposing taxes and law and order within the slum. Informants had their own views on how these people viewed the slum and its inhabitants, but it would have been preferable to pursue more nuanced insights by speaking directly to these people.

(iii) A limited observation period. In a similar vein, the observation period for this study was far in excess of what is typical in studies of this type. The first phase of fieldwork lasted three months (Sept-Dec 2016) and the second, which took place one year on, lasted six weeks (Nov-Dec 2017). For the collectives in particular, knowing how subsequent years unfolded would offer a clearer sense of the durability of this organisational form as well as a fuller picture of the consequences of individual members proceeding with ‘one foot in and one foot out’. As it stands, I could only offer speculations on the ramifications of this based on what remained early-stage observations.

9.7 Future Research

Several interesting avenues of future research emerge from this study, some of which stem directly from the limitations specified above.

As I have noted, this study was firmly predicated on the insider's view. In this regard, resistance to formalisation was seen as a means to preserve the opportunity space for entrepreneurship. Research concerned with the design and efficacy of formalisation programmes may look at how this resistance was interpreted by outside agents. How, for example, do tax inspectors or police that are mandated to impose the rule of law on the poor and destitute feel, and how do they resolve tensions between their professional mandate and personal compassion?

This study probed what has been termed elsewhere "relational accountability", broadly meaning 'to whom do I feel a moral obligation to provide assistance of one kind or another?' (Leavitt, et al., 2012). Given the focus that has been placed on themes of embeddedness, social capital, solidarity, etc. in poor and marginalised contexts, deepening our knowledge of this topic is pivotal to the study of entrepreneurship at the BoP.

In discussing the boundary decisions made by the collectives, a central theme to emerge was the notion of 'what else?'. These ventures were not only economic in nature and, accordingly, their boundary decisions were not reducible to pure economic logic. To further our understanding of how relational and rational considerations overlap in an entrepreneurship team context, the findings of this study would suggest the need for greater attention to be paid to this 'what else?' question. In particular, it may prove instructive in markets where economic informality is widespread, and where people can initiate and move between ventures more easily.

Lastly, although the methodological approach taken in this study did not yield the type of 'hard', quantitative data that allows for generalisable statistical inferences to be made regarding entrepreneurship in slums, the observations that have emerged signify a need for *more*, not less, grounded, immersive, and open-ended research of this type. In particular, there would appear to be a pressing need to depart from the widespread fixation with bottom-line profits. As prior studies have shown, such numbers are meaningful only when they are repeatedly verified and traced over long periods of time, which is an extremely labour-intensive process that does not lend itself well to multi-sited, large-sample studies (Collins, et al., 2012; Honig, 1998). The present study, moreover, has illustrated that, even where poverty is rampant, the goal of profit maximisation vies for supremacy with other, more social objectives that do not sit within the economic sphere. Qualitative research, especially those qualitative methodologies that allow for protracted immersion in the daily lives of research participants, is well-placed to explore these dynamics.

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Appendices

Appendix 1a – Field Diary

(All names have been changed.)

22nd November (in the slum 11am – 6pm)

Was late going to the slum today as had to catch up on some notes and emails. Stopped for the first time to eat at one of the makeshift hotelis on the left hand side of Enterprise Road. First of all the man that was sitting there thought it was hilarious that I would eat chapatti and beans in a place like that. I got talking to him, though, and he has a security business, which he told me he would take me to see soon. He employs fifteen people, and he had a branded motorbike (Daniel's Security is the name) parked beside the hoteli, so he doesn't seem to be too small time. He lives near Embakasi Girls, and from his description of the area it seems to me to be in the slum. He speaks good English and he is proud of his business (and I don't have any business of that scale in my sample so far) so I'll give him a shout. While I was halfway through the chapatti and beans the word came in that "the tax people from the city council are around, pass it on!" (translated and paraphrased). They were at Kobil, and the word of their presence spread in a chain from hoteli to hoteli all the way down to us. The lady that runs the hoteli, Marie, started packing things away hurriedly, and soon she picked up my half finished plate and told me to move along (but pay first, of course). Once she had the food hidden she got herself hidden, leaving the pots with beans and rice and ugali steaming away. Walking up past all of the other hotelis between there and Kobil every single one had been deserted, so I took the opportunity for a couple of pictures.

I stopped with Francis for a while, though he was flat out ironing. He seemed tense, as he has been for the past week or more. The younger lad with the wad of cocoa leaf in his mouth was there too, and that lad never seems tense. I asked him if he is able to sew, and he told me no, which made me wonder what his purpose is there. Francis told me later that the boy is a relation of his, and that he is a very good seller. He doesn't work there all the time, he just comes and goes. It seems that when Francis is busy cutting fabrics and ironing, this boy is good to have as a "seller" (whose role is to sit in a garden chair at the front of the shop and watch the crowd passing by. If someone expresses any kind of interest, the seller must pick up on it and get them over there, and close a sale.) When I sat with Francis in the evening as I was coming out of the slum, he was recording the day's sales in a ledger. It's all very precise. Today he sold 3,400/= worth of clothes, which I remarked isn't bad for a quiet day (and the evening was still ahead of them). He gave credit to the younger man for his sales efforts. Francis is going to spend the weekend with his family in the south, which is why he has been putting so much pressure on himself to work

hard these past few days. He is trying to build up his inventory to sustain the business through the days that we will be away, even though his Nairobi wife will be there and she is capable of doing the cutting and the boys will do the sewing. I remarked that he has a lot of family around (not so much making reference to his wife, moreso to his brother, the younger man, and Gilbert. “You have to. If you are sick, you need someone to look after the business.” He pointed to the roof and to an additional piece of tarpaulin that had been added for extra cover, and said that he could not do that on his own. When I asked him about it before, he didn’t give a lot of import to the proximity that he has to, for example, his brother. However much he may take the routine cooperation (like going to the market together) for granted, though, it seems that when a situation arises where he needs assistance, it is of great benefit to have such a close familial network that can muck in.

I spent a while talking with Koscielny and with [Collective 1], but I didn’t stay long with either. I dropped my tablet in with Ricky on the way to see Lucy. That part of the slum at the top of Ricky’s road, as you walk along the parallel rows of stalls adjacent to the train tracks is in dire shape – it’s like thick soup (black gazpacho or something) and it’s deep enough in parts to cover the whole of your foot to above the ankle. Worse still I walked right past where her kibanda [stall] is, all the way down past those cereal silos, up to the right to the other train tracks (which is where I thought her kibanda was), back around by where they’re building the new apartment blocks in kwa Njenga, through the Vision football pitch, and by the time I got there I had to ask someone how to get back to the train tracks, and he took me there. When I met Lucy she said that the lady with the stall along the tracks that sold us the wellies had seen me walking past about an hour earlier. This was the first time that I saw her business in operation, since the last time I was there she didn’t have it open. It’s almost all women’s clothes, plus two or three men’s t-shirts, and a pile of socks (a pair of which I bought because she told me if I didn’t my wellies would cut my feet). There are some infants’ dresses and some ladies’ shirts, skirts, underwear, and jackets. The kibanda is sitting on a steep enough slope with a stream at the bottom which a wooden footbridge passes over. Given that it’s off the railway line (it’s down an embankment from it) I was surprised by the amount of foot traffic that passes by, and she said that at around 5 or 6pm it is difficult to move with the amount of people passing. Out of those people she scored for herself a fair few customers too, and she interacted well with them (few if any left without buying anything). We sat for around 2 hours at an empty kibanda just beside and I recorded an interview [After I turned off the recorder, I asked her whether she had any lights, as I presumed she would continue selling until seven or eight. She said that she had no need for lights as when six o’clock came she rapidly packed up her stuff, brought them to the store, and got out of there before darkness fell at 6.30. She said that it is not a safe place to be after dark, as “there are boys there that can cut your neck and take your money, or even kill you”. This was in contrast to an answer she gave me during the

recorded interview about whether she felt secure – I don't think she properly understood the question]. The kibanda of the other lady that she introduced me to the previous day was empty and deserted, as were a couple of others around. I don't think that it's a sign of anything bad, it's more likely to be associated with the rain and the bad ground. Lucy herself told me that, since I went to see her last Thursday, yesterday was the first day that she opened the shop.

On the way to see Lucy I also stopped for a while with the man that sells shoes by the railway line near to the cereal silos. He makes sandals out of tyres (he uses the tyre for the sole), and he buys shoes from the market to sell on. He has been in Mukuru since 1992, which is longer than anyone I've spoken to apart from Brigit, and has been doing that business for eight years. He began to do it "because he can't do nothing", meaning that in the absence of paid employment he had to come up with something. I asked him if he liked it and he said that he does, and I did believe it. He sits under a piece of low tarpaulin which protrudes from a wall and is held up by a wooden frame on either side, meaning he has a kind of an open-fronted cabin facing the railway. He welcomed me warmly, though I didn't get to record an interview because a young man came that he wanted to speak to, so the interaction was cut short.

Stopped again at Ricky's on the way back – it seems he may have been able to fix my tablet were it not for the physical damage to it. Gave him 200/= for the effort he made. Mark was there, and we chatted a while and walked together towards Maendeleo. He told me that kwa Njenga (or parts of it) are different to kwa Reuben. He said that aside from the main streets, the community is "dull" and businesses outside of these main streets do not attract customers. Furthermore, on these main streets (he used to have a business on one), a small group of people have tight control over the business environment, and they do not take kindly to people from outside of kwa Njenga that try to locate there. He said that his costs (like rent) went up because he wasn't associated with these "Godfathers" and that they would call the police to give him hassle. They are part of a Sacco, which he could not become a part of, and was therefore always marginalised. After a few months he had to pull out. I asked him whether he is part of a Sacco and he said that he is part of two. There is one (of which Dex is also a part) into which they pay 1,500 per day. The Sacco contains 8 people and the payout is once per month (he described it as "like a merry-go-round", there are no loans). According to those statistics each person would get a lump sum of around Sh360,000 every eight months (that's \$3600, I'll have to verify that information). He's in a separate Sacco with Ricky and perhaps some of the others, into which he pays 1,500sh each week. He told me also about a music video they're planning to shoot in December (him, Ricky, Dex, Ben, Alexis, and some other dancers both male and female ("the dancers must be there")). They're going to film it in Mukuru and their intention is to show the "beautiful" aspects of Mukuru, to balance the negative images that tend to portray it. They need the ground to dry up first though. On the way towards Maendeleo he told me about two businesses that he would like to pursue.

The first is a wholesale type business in which he would take orders for electronic items (like plugs) from small businesses in Mukuru and buy them in town. The second is an M-Pesa kiosk, for which he has already identified a location (close to Victor's cyber). The M-Pesa kiosk is a lot more capital intensive than I had imagined – it requires start-up capital of around Sh70,000, and even for MArk this would prove to be a stretch.

I've just been in text conversation with Robert, the lad that plays for [the local football team that I played some games for]. He's a very talented footballer and seems to be fairly intelligent. This was his last text: "ok tomorrow morning am going for a training sofapaka [the team he's training with] I will be back around 1:00 I will get rest for an hour than by 2:00 I wil give a call so that we meet my frnd I wld like if possible when you left Kenya we left together my frnd yu go and look for me any team and I wil market myself to get a nice team like spurs,Manchester,arsenal and any other good teams and yu wil be my agent."

Appendix 1b – Structured framework for data recording

(Adapted from Miles and Huberman, 1994)

Account	Main themes, impressions, summary statements	Explanations, speculations, hypotheses	Alternative explanations, minority reports, disagreements	Next steps of data collection	Implications for revision of coding scheme
<p>18th Oct - (Intro and formal interview, 30 mins - Mark) - Opportunistic encounter led to one of the richest encounters I've had yet. Met at Ainsley's kinyozi, where he was just relaxing on the sofa. Basically told me the history of the cyber café business that he owns along with Dex and Ricky. Full interview transcription saved to drive.</p>	<p><i>The cyber idea started out as a hustle, it was just of earning money to fund their music, but it turned out that they stumbled on something that just kept growing. To be fair, from the start they brought proper dedication and discipline to the thing, and this allowed them to build up cash very quickly which they then reinvested for expansion. He is much better educated than most other youths in the slum (he went to college and studied graphic design) and he continues to self-teach in matters of business through online courses/tutorials. He recognises that this enables him to do something different to the masses, which he says have a copycat mentality. He also does contract work for Kenya Airways among other large corporate clients. They started off small and got one computer as a lend of friends, which they gave back when they could afford to buy their own.</i></p>	<p>The seed for all of this growth appears to be the group of three - him, Ricky, and Dex - plus some other more peripheral friends. Without a doubt he began as a "hustler", not an "entrepreneur". The importance of the hustling group has never left him. I think this could be generational, whereby the youth of the community come together with the people closest to them for economic (maybe physical) protection. The bonds within these groups are strong, and Mark exhibits a great deal of loyalty to the group still - even though he is now an "entrepreneur" and not a "hustler". So maybe the group affiliation is durable enough to withstand the transition from hustler to entrepreneur. Also the older generation would typically have come from rural parts, and so wouldn't have such a convenient wolfpack to come together with.</p>	<p>As with all groups, some do not thrive because members within them hold them back. Mark's group is small and tight-knit. They have a fairly homogeneous outlook on entrepreneurship (I think), which means a fixation on the same goals. Collective 1, though, have a much bigger group, so the constitution of the group has a major effect on how it progresses.</p>	<p>Next encounter will more likely be with Ricky</p>	<p>Hustling group can morph into entrepreneurial group if skills are adequate and commonality of purpose and equality of commitment exists.</p>

Appendix 2a: Precarious Development of Housing/Pollution in Mukuru



Appendix 2b – Precarious Development of Housing/Pollution in Mukuru



Appendix 2c – Pollution/Poor Infrastructure



Appendix 2d – Pollution/Poor Infrastructure in Mukuru



Appendix 3 – First-round Codebook

Name	Description
Accessing finance	Credit facilities available to entrepreneurs, including finance provided by banks, Saccos, M-pesa or similar, friends and family, development organisations or initiatives, or personal savings.
Accessing labour market	Experience or perceptions of accessing paid employment, including casual work as well as formal, contracted employment.
Breaching Institutions, Paying Police	Breaching or pushing formal or informal laws or societal norms of conduct, or payments provided to police or similar authorities to enable extralegal operations.
Negative instance	Instances when police are supportive of extralegal entrepreneuring, allowing it to be sustained without seeking bribes.
Business ambitions	Evidence of entrepreneurs' aspirations to achieve meaningful advancement with entrepreneurial activities.
Negative instance	Evidence that entrepreneurs feel that business advancement is unrealistic or undesirable.
Change since prev visit	Evidence of meaningful change in entrepreneurs' operations or circumstances (or wider circumstances of community) between first and second phases of FW.
Negative instance	No meaningful change in entrepreneurs' operations or circumstances (or wider circumstances of community) between first and second phases of FW.
Collectives	
Boundedness	Mechanisms or circumstances which establish boundaries, which influence entrepreneurial behaviour, around identified groups
Collectives as bad	Evidence that being part of a voluntary, identified, and proximal, group of people is somehow prohibitive to individual advancement.

Name	Description
Family	Evidence that membership in dense friendship networks serves a purpose which is somehow substitutive for disrupted family ties, or complimentary to in-tact family ties.
Internal norms	Evidence that norms of behaviour or conduct have been cultivated within an identified group of individuals which are distinct or more restrictive than norms which prevail in wider or other parts of society.
Protectiveness	Evidence that a meaningful measure of protection, in either a physical, economic, or social sense, is extended to individuals by identifiable groups of which they are a part.
Competition	
Competition as positive	Evidence that entrepreneurs' perceptions towards competition, usually in a highly intensive form, is desirable to them.
Competitive strategies	
Good talker	Talking to passers by is identified as a clear competitive strategy. This talking may take distinct forms and may incorporate deception.
Leveraging networks	The strategic use of friendship or other kinds of personal networks to obtain a competitive advantage or to enhance the sustainability of the business.
Differentiation	Explicit recognition that informant's business is different in some material or advantageous way from competitors, or a purposeful move to achieve this differentiation.
Replication	Acknowledgement that the prevalence of businesses of a similar type is high in Mukuru, or that prospective entrepreneurs in Mukuru have a higher than usual propensity to replicate other businesses that they see.
Corruption	
Local	Experience or perception of corruption in local society, including, among other areas, the labour market, local politics, and policing and governance.

Name	Description
National	Evidence that corruption at the level of government and other federal institutions is widespread.
Crime	
Experience of	Informants describe their personal experiences of crime, or the second-hand experience of others close to them.
Fear of	Informants note the heightened potential for or incidence of crime in Mukuru.
Resisting the criminal life	Informants describe the allure of criminal activity and/or their efforts to resist partaking in such activity.
Safe by being known	Informants describe how being known by others in the community, either those that engage in crime or other law-abiding members of the community, helps to protect them from criminal attack.
Development community	
Perspective of Dev. Comm.	General insights provided by development personnel, both native and foreign.
Perspective of Entrepreneurs	Insights provided by entrepreneurs, or other native informants that do not work in development, which relate to the development community, including NGOs and religious organisations.
Difficulties of Mukuru	
Drugs and alcohol	Insights relating to the prevalence and destructiveness, or general perceptions, towards drugs, alcohol, and other substances in Mukuru.
Infrastructure	Informants' perspectives towards the condition of roads and housing and the quality of electricity and water provision.
Improving or prospect or improvement	Informants perceived that the conditions of the slum were improving or that improvement was probable.

Name	Description
Land grabbing and ownership	Issues related to the ownership or grabbing of land parcels or houses.
Medical and sanitation problems	Information relating to the nature and causes of diseases which are prevalent in the slums, as well as treatments facilities that are available.
Ease of new entry	Evidence indicating that establishing a new business is easy in Mukuru, due, for example, to a lack of bureaucratic processes or low capital requirements.
Negative instance	Evidence of clear or perceived barriers to new entry in Mukuru, owing, for example, to prohibitive capital requirements or the threat of crime.
Education	
Barriers to education	Evidence that informants encounter barriers to advancing their education because of their economic, social, geographic or ethnic status.
Brain drain	Evidence that the progress of Mukuru and other similar communities is inhibited as those that have strong educational or professional competencies choose to leave in search of higher living standards.
Completed or ongoing education	Instances where informants have attained or are pursuing educational qualifications which they value and which they feel will provide opportunities for social mobility.
Futility of Education	Evidence that the utility of education is diminished because of anti-meritocratic institutions such as tribalism.
Elections	
Business Disruption	Evidence that informants' businesses were directly or indirectly affected by the recent presidential elections, or that informants feared they would be affected by ongoing political affairs, e.g. riots, looting, or demonstrations incited by opposition leaders.
Political Observations	General or specific observations relating to contemporary, national-level governance in Kenya.

Name	Description
Politically motivated violence	Informants' reports of violence which occurred in relation to the elections or wider political matters.
Employment vs Entrepreneurship	Informants discuss experience or perceptions of salaried employment, or discuss salaried employment in relation to entrepreneurship.
Co-existing	Evidence that informants consider it possible or preferable to partake in entrepreneurship and salaried employment simultaneously, or that they do not clearly recognise a distinction between them.
Evolution of Mukuru	Insights relating to the physical and social evolution of Mukuru.
Family ties	
Broken	Evidence of family ties being broken or significantly disrupted, for example through death, physical distance, single parentage, or animosity.
Domestic violence	Evidence that domestic violence is prevalent in Mukuru, and/or connections made between domestic violence and entrepreneurship.
Helpful	Evidence that family ties have, directly or indirectly, supported the formation or sustainability of the business.
Field-note descriptions	
Being a slum-dweller	Descriptions drawn from my fieldnotes detailing, from my perspective, various aspects of life for people living in Mukuru
Environmental and housing conditions	Descriptions drawn from my fieldnotes which relate to environmental conditions and to the state and structure of buildings in Mukuru.
The experience	Descriptions from my fieldnotes of events and general aspects which in-part constitute my experience of doing ethnography.
Formality	Issues relating to business formality, including those at the procedural level (record-keeping) and those relating to business registration and interaction with authorities.

Name	Description
Gender	Issues linking gender with business, development, and social roles and expectation.
Governance	
Local governance	Information relating to the structure and/or performance of local governance systems and power brokers such as chiefs, elders, MCAs, MPs, developmental organisations.
National governance	Informants' observations towards national level government, particularly with respect to its role, or lack thereof, in Mukuru and similar communities.
Growth strategies	
Gradual growth	Evidence of small initial and incremental investments that manifest in growth over long periods of time.
Growth by diversification	Evidence of diversification being employed, or the intention to be employed, to enhance prospects of business growth or survival.
Idleness	Informants' comments on the idleness of others and/or the experience of being idle themselves, and the causes and consequences of this idleness.
Negative instance	Evidence that informants recognise the dangers of idleness and are purposeful in finding things to do with their time so they do not have to experience the boredom or unproductivity of idleness.
Inadequate Resources	Evidence of a lack of material resources, including finance and other types of capital, which inhibits groups or individuals from achieving entrepreneurial advancement or participating in society in a similar way to their peers.
Networks	Evidence that non-family networks play an important part in the operation of informants' businesses.
Perceptions of Mukuru	
Bad place for business	Evidence that informants do not like Mukuru as a location for their business and/or would prefer to be located elsewhere.

Name	Description
Bad place to live	Evidence that informants do not like Mukuru as a place to live and/or would prefer to live elsewhere.
Good place for business	Evidence that informants perceive Mukuru to be conducive to entrepreneurial venturing.
Home	Evidence that Mukuru is not solely a transitory community or a landing point for incoming rural labour migrants, but for many people is a stable, long-term home.
Inequality within Mukuru	Evidence that residents of Mukuru are not homogenous in terms of their economic or social status.
Transitory	Evidence that Mukuru is, or is perceived to be, a stepping stone which people will vacate once they have attained the wealth that will enable them to do so.
Perceptions towards entrepreneurship	
Hopeful	Evidence that entrepreneurs hope, believe, or expect that future prospects for their business are better than present realities.
Love it	Evidence that entrepreneurs began or continue in business because it gives them a large amount of personal fulfilment.
Risky	Evidence that entrepreneurship is seen as risky, or instances in which informants talk about taking risks or their willingness to take risks.
Negative instance	Evidence that entrepreneurship is not seen as particularly risky, or is seen as more secure than paid employment.
Struggle	Instances in which entrepreneurs call attention to the difficulties of entrepreneurship, in particular that the income it provides is sometimes or frequently insufficient to meet their needs.
Police violence	Informants draw attention to the prevalence of violence carried out against innocent citizens or petty criminals by the police.
Positionality	

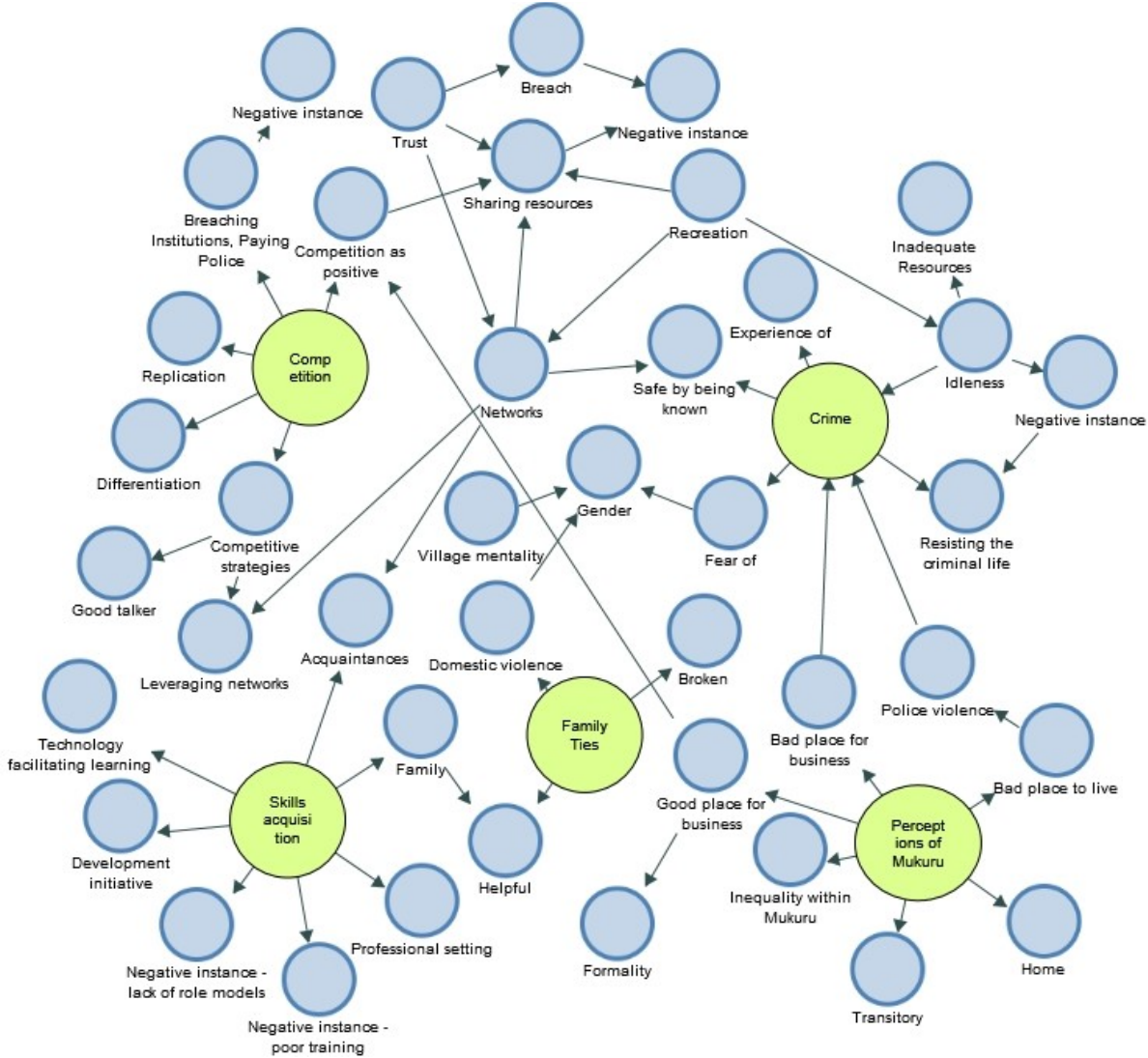
Name	Description
A route out of poverty	Instances in which I was seen, or told I would be seen, by locals as a means to help them escape poverty.
Advocacy	Instances in which I or my research was seen as a vehicle for the needs or story of the community or individuals therein to be expressed to a wider audience.
Becoming an insider	Instances in which I was able to participate equally with locals in activities which are normal or customary for them.
Expert	Instances in which I was seen as an expert in the area of business because of my education and/or race.
Generating discomfort or hostility	Instances in which my research appeared to elicit a negative reaction from locals and/or prospective informants.
Interacting with women in Mukuru	Issues relating to difficulties in recruiting women to be part of this research.
Kenya time	Evidence of cultural differences with respect to punctuality, where I was frustrated to be left waiting for informants for long periods.
Moral dilemma	Instances in which it became difficult to separate what was right from a moral perspective and from a research perspective.
My perceptions	Instances in which interactions with informants or other locals caused to me recognise and consider some of my own pre-conceptions.
Outsider	Instances that served as clear reminders that I am an outsider to this community.
Santa Claus	Instances in which informants, prospective informants or other locals appeared to express the belief that I might realistically obtain for them various material things that they want.
Translator problems	Reflections on the difficulties of conducting research of this type with a translator or intermediary present.
Precarious livelihood	Evidence that informants' economic lives are challenging such that their income is low and/or irregular, while the lack economic safety nets like

Name	Description
	savings or social welfare means their economic wellbeing is highly insecure.
Negative instance	Evidence of economic safety nets that reduce the precariousness of informants' livelihoods.
Prior experience	Reference is made to work or entrepreneurial experience attained by informants prior to fieldwork.
Recreation	
Music	Reference is made to the importance of music as a recreational pursuit for informants, or to the barriers that inhibit them from pursuing it.
Sport	Reference is made to the importance of sport as a recreational pursuit for informants, or to the barriers that inhibit them from pursuing it.
Sharing resources	Evidence that resource constraints are overcome or mitigated by the sharing of resources between individuals or businesses. This node explicitly excludes references pertaining to the Collectives.
Negative instance	Evidence of an unsupportive social environment, where unitarism is perceived or seen to be lacking either at the level of the community or at lower levels of family or friendship networks.
Skills acquisition	
Acquaintances	Evidence of skills transfer between friends or among groups of friends.
Development initiative	Evidence of skills development through interventions by development agencies, religious organisations, NGOs, etc.
Family	Evidence of skills transfer between family members.
Negative instance - lack of role models	Evidence that a lack of role models has served to inhibit the development of important entrepreneurial skills.
Negative instance - poor training	Evidence that educational programmes have failed to provide entrepreneurs the requisite skills for successful venturing.

Name	Description
Professional setting	Evidence of business skills being acquired in a professional setting such as paid employment.
Technology facilitating learning	Evidence that, through engagement with technology, people or groups are enhancing their entrepreneurial capabilities.
Tribalism	Informants make references to tribal distinctions or divisions, or describe instances where opportunities were withheld because of ethnicity.
Rejecting Tribalism	Evidence of resistance on the part of individuals towards the divisive effects of tribalism.
Trust	Evidence of the presence of interpersonal trust at the level of the community or at the level of peer networks within the community.
Breach	Evidence of a lack of trust or of previous breaches of interpersonal trust that have altered informants' perceptions or behaviour.
Viability without innovation	Evidence that informants' business models do not incorporate innovation in terms of product or process. Instead they relate more to arbitrage and are viable largely because of Mukuru's large population or its reputation as a marketplace for cheap goods.
Village mentality	Evidence that some community members hold views towards other cohorts of society, e.g. women, which may be viewed as unprogressive in a modern context.
Willingness to work hard	Evidence that informants are willing to work hard in order to preserve the viability or growth prospects of their businesses.
Negative instance	Evidence that individuals or groups are unwilling to work hard to engage in work that is perceived to be undesirable, even if such work has the potential to improve their circumstances.

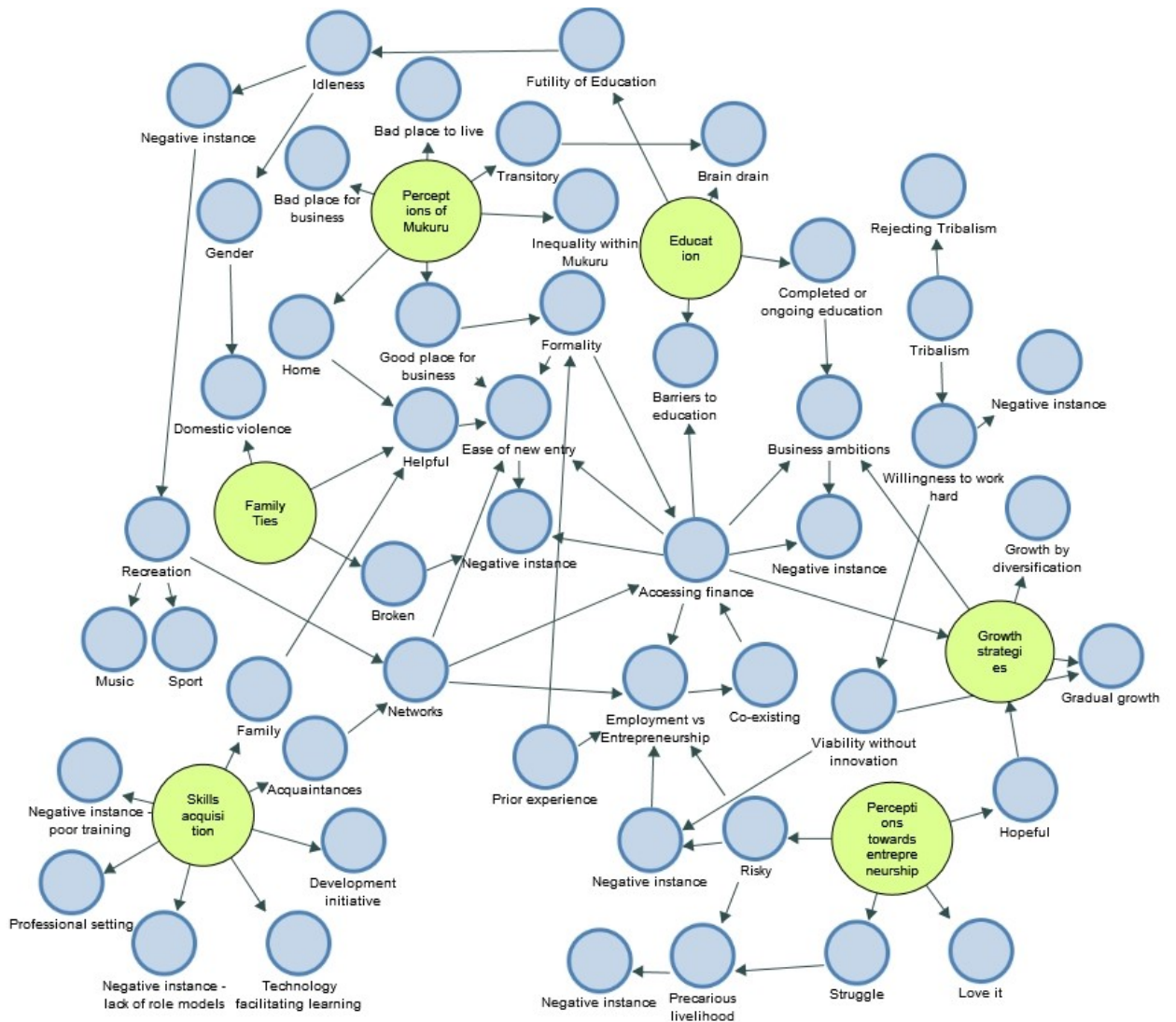
Appendix 4a – Concept Map, derived from First-Round Coding

(Pertaining loosely to the Micro-level Environment)



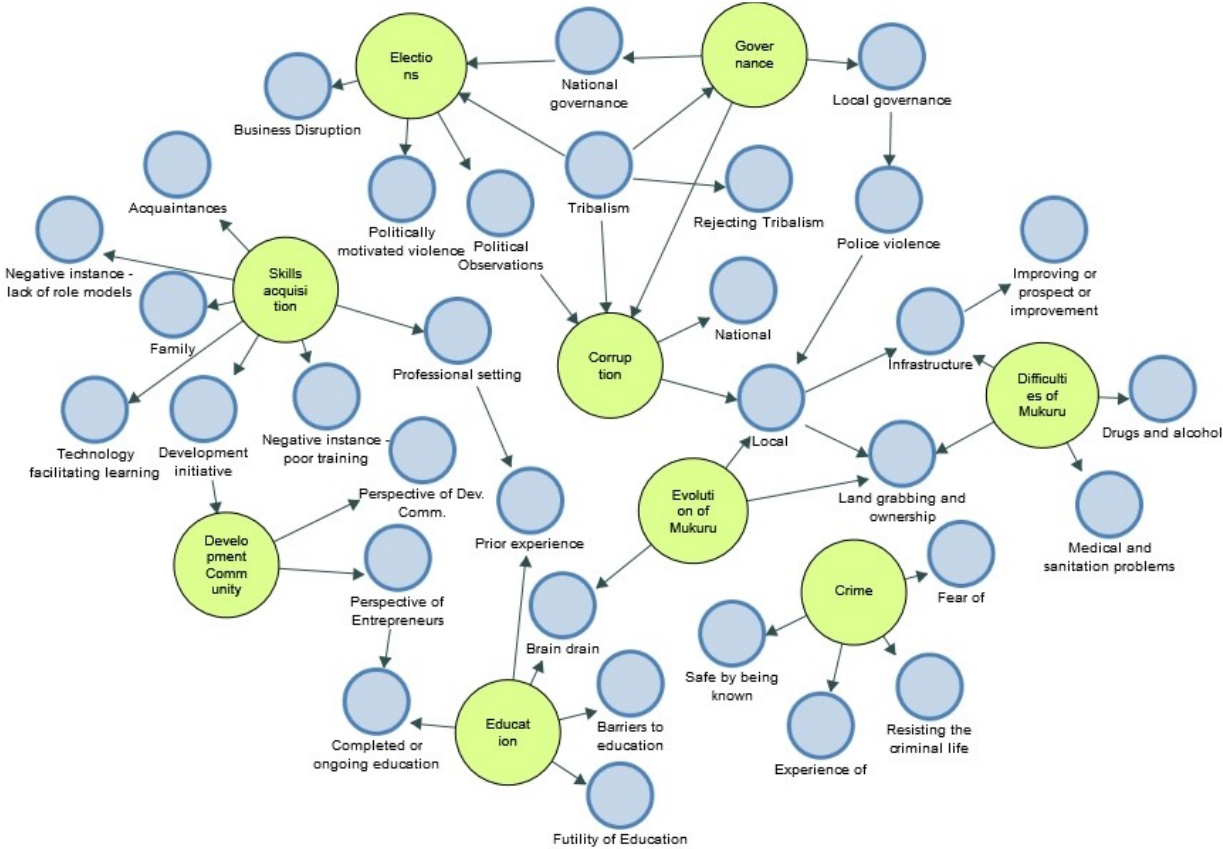
Appendix 4b – Concept Map, derived from First-Round Coding

(Pertaining loosely to the Meso-level Environment)



Appendix 4c – Concept Map, derived from First-Round Coding

(Pertaining loosely to the Macro-level Environment)



Appendix 5a – Final Codebook for Individual Entrepreneurs

Name	Description
Collective Identity	Evidence that a consensual sense of 'who we are' prevails in the study community, that 'we' are somehow different to 'them'.
Collective Identity as Contingent	Evidence that the consensual sense of 'we-ness' is not entirely pervasive or absolute, and factors undermining it.
Economic Isolation	Entrepreneurs express the view that the sense of 'we-ness' that prevails in certain respects within the study community dissipates when it comes to the problems they encounter in their venturing activities. As a result, they see economic precarity as something they must navigate alone.
Escapist aspirations	Leaving the slum is recognised as a desirable future for entrepreneurs.
Ethnicity	Individuals exhibit propensity to identify with their own ethnic or tribal group, fomenting a sense of disunity in the pan-ethnic context of the study community.
Narratives of Difference and Sameness Predicated on Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurs emphasise their difference or sameness from others in the study community, based on things like their technical abilities, superior knowledge, economic performance, or personal aspirations.
Illegal but Legitimate Economic Activity	Economic activities that are illegal because of either the output created (product or service offered) or the process of delivery (sourcing or manufacturing of materials), but which are conducted openly and which are perceived as legitimate by large sections of the study community.
Formal-Informal Feedback Loop	Evidence that I-L entrepreneurs use their social legitimacy to persuade formal institutional agents to allow them to proceed with their ventures. Also, evidence that I-L entrepreneurs use these formal permissions as a way to enhance or bolster the social legitimacy of their ventures.
Legitimising Activities	Emphasis by the entrepreneur on the harmless (or even social value creating) nature of his/her economic activities as a means to claim social legitimacy.

Legitimising People	Entrepreneur emphasises his/her moral standing as a means to assert the social legitimacy of his/her activities.
Informal Institutions	Evidence that informal institutions - ways of doing or 'rules of the game' that are grounded in local custom and social norms rather than law - take precedence over formal institutions in the study community.
Informal Institutions Grounded in Collective Identity	Informal institutions are linked to our sense of who we are. This may be based on sentiments like 'this is who we are and this is how things are done here' or "we' do not have the same means as 'them', and therefore we cannot be expected to adhere to the same rules'.
Preservation of Institutional Status Quo	Actions taken by community insiders which, purposefully or tangentially, serve to uphold the supremacy of the community's informal institutional framework.


Appendix 5b – Final Codebook for Entrepreneurial Collectives

Name	Description
Balancing Individual Agency and Continued Involvement with the Collectives	Individuals express a desire to pursue their own entrepreneurial ventures, but to do so in a way that does not compromise their standing in the entrepreneurial collectives.
Group-level outcomes	Actual or speculative outcomes for the collectives of lone venturing undertaken by individual members.
Identity integration	Individual identity is brought into closer alignment with collective identity such that the individual embodies collective ideals.
Identity segmentation	Aspects of individual identity are segmented or compartmentalised such that they can be expressed in certain task domains with minimal overlap from collective identity.
Embeddedness	Evidence that higher levels of embeddedness amongst younger people constrain (or enable) economic action in different ways or to a greater degree than is the case for their older counterparts.
Cognitive embeddedness	The range of possible avenues for individual/collective action is limited to those to which the person/group has been exposed.
Cultural embeddedness	Collective action is somehow underpinned by shared understandings that derive from the co-location of group members in a given social context.
Structural embeddedness	A proliferation of strong interpersonal ties characterised by trust, solidarity, reciprocity, and frequent contact.
Hustling	"Hustling" or "hustler" is a common element of the community's vernacular. It is supposed that the vast majority of market-based activities ongoing in the slum conform to this notion of hustling. The objective here is to specify its features in order to provide an understanding of how these groups initially perceived their ventures.
Hustling and its (occasional) association with borderline (il)legality	Hustling is does not necessarily involve illegal activities, but it can often straddle the boundaries of legality.

Name	Description
Hustling and its association with opportunism and extremely short-term time horizons	Hustling is not typically associated with long-term investments or sophisticated resource orchestration, but with capitalising on the opportunities that come one's way.
Hustling and its association with struggle and exclusion	Hustling is not typically viewed as a means to significantly improve one's economic circumstances, but more as a means of getting by.
Hustling as the predominant form of economic activity	Most economic activity undertaken by members of the study community is regarded as 'hustling'.
Positive Distinctiveness	Evidence of efforts by members of the collectives to assert the superiority of their in-group over some specified or putative out-group.
Entrepreneurship, Positive Distinctiveness, and Venture Boundaries	Evidence that entrepreneurship came to be viewed as a means to enhance positive distinctiveness and that this had a clear bearing on venture boundaries ('who was in and who was out').

Appendix 6 – NACOSTI Research Permit

Permit No : **NACOSTI/P/16/76484/14471**
Date Of Issue : **1st November 2016**
Fee Received : **USD 400**



Sammuel
Director General
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation

Appendix 7 – Plain Language Statement

PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT

Research Title: A Flame without Fuel: Sustaining entrepreneurship in areas of resource scarcity.

Philip O'Donnell,

Dublin City University,

Ireland.

Introduction

I am from a university in Ireland, and I will be spending the coming year, or perhaps a little bit less, in Mukuru. I am doing research for my studies, and would like to better understand how small businesses are managed here. If you would be willing, I would like you to take part. Before deciding, allow me to give you some more information. If you feel that you would prefer not to take part, you are entirely free to make that choice. Please feel free also to discuss this with others, and if you would like me to tell you more, you are welcome to contact me on [insert phone number here] and I will be happy to meet you in Mukuru. If you do choose to take part, but during the study would like to end your participation, this is also fine. You can leave the study at any point.

I must make clear that I cannot pay you for your participation.

Why am I interested in your business?

In universities all over the world, many people try to understand how businesses work. But usually people concentrate on big businesses in America and Europe, like Google and Apple and Sony. These businesses have a lot of money and power, but there are not many of them. There are many more businesses in the world like yours, and even though they are small the world needs them just as much as it needs Apple. That is why I would like to get to know how your business works, and other businesses like it. I understand that you are not rich like Apple or Sony, but I also understand that when you are not rich you have to be creative, to use your mind, and to work hard. I have studied businesses in Ireland, small ones too, and now I would like to see how it is for you, and what makes Mukuru or Kenya different from Ireland or America. By understanding these things, I believe that we could learn much from you.

What will happen if you choose to take part?

I would like to spend time with you while you work. I will spend three or four hours with you at a time, and I will do that perhaps twice per week. If you feel that that is too much time, I will spend less. I have no skill in the work that you do, and therefore will not be able to assist you much. However, I am fit and I will make sure that I do not slow you down. I will not interfere with the work that you are doing, but if there is a chance then I will ask you questions about how you do things and why.

How long will the research last?

Between eight months and one year, but you are free to end your participation at any time without giving a reason.

Will you receive any money for taking part?

No, unfortunately I cannot pay you.

Will I ask you anything sensitive?

It is important for you to know that if I ask you anything that you do not want to answer, you do not need to answer it. I am interested in how you manage your business, and the questions that I ask you will relate to that. This will involve questions about money, for example how much your business earns, whether you use microcredit, and whether you sometimes borrow from, or save with, the people close to you.

Who will find out about the things that you say and do during the study?

I will write down or record some of the things that you say and do while I am with you. I do this because I need to use this information in my thesis, which is the book I need to write in order to complete my studies. Once I finish my studies people will be able to find this book on the internet and in the library at my university. Some parts of it may then be combined with other studies done in other parts of the world and put in a journal, which will be available to people all over the world. However, I will not use your real name and I will change the area that you work in. That way you will not be identified in the case that anyone you know reads this book or journal.

Will anyone be able to identify you?

Only in the case that you commit a crime. Then I would have to report it to the police, as that is the law in Ireland. Otherwise, nobody will be able to identify you. I will change your name and the place where you work before I type it into my computer or show it to anyone else. I will keep the paper that I have written your real name on in a safe place in my university until I have finished my studies, then I will destroy it.

Will participating in this research be good for you and for Mukuru?

You will not benefit financially from participating in this study. However, there are many organisations, like charities, in Mukuru that could improve if they have information like this. I would like to try to help them by doing this project. When I'm finished perhaps I will share with them what I have found, and hopefully they can make some changes to be better. I can also tell

you at the end about my time in Mukuru and the things that I have seen. I can tell you about the experience that I have had with all of the people I have worked with, and how things are different and similar for you as in Ireland.

For further information, or to inform me that you would like to participate, please send an SMS to [insert Kenyan phone number here], and I will meet you at a place and time that is convenient. If you would like to contact my university directly for any reason, you may contact: The Secretary, Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee, c/o Research and Innovation Support, Dublin City University, Dublin 9. Tel 01-7008000, e-mail rec@dcu.ie

Appendix 8 – Informed Consent Form

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

This study is called ‘**A Flame without Fuel: Sustaining entrepreneurship in areas of extreme resource scarcity**’.

It is being conducted by Philip O’Donnell, from Dublin City University Business School in Ireland. I am doing the study in order to understand how small businesses are managed in Mukuru.

What is required of me?

By choosing to take part in this study, I understand that:

- Philip will spend time with me as I work, and will write down things that he sees and hears to include in his thesis. He may also record conversations using an electronic device, but first he will make me aware that he is recording electronically.
- If Philip sees me commit a crime, he will report it to the police.
- I will not be paid for taking part in this study.
- People in the community may become aware that I am taking part in this study, as I will be spending quite a lot of time in public with Philip.

What are my rights if I take part?

- I will have my identity masked in any written material that is publicly released, except if I am involved in criminal activity.
- I will be allowed to see any information that Philip has written about me, if I request it.
- I can end my participation in the study at any time.

Please complete the following:

I have read the Plain Language Statement (or have had it read to me) Yes / No

I understand all of the information that has been given to me Yes / No

I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about this study Yes / No

I am satisfied with the answers that I have been given to these questions Yes / No

I have read (or have had it read to me) and I understand the information in this form. Philip has answered any questions that I have asked him. I have been given a copy of this form to keep. I am willing to take part in the study.

Participant's signature: _____

Name in block capitals: _____

Researcher's signature: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____