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IS THERE STILL A HEFFALUMP IN THE ROOM?
EXAMINING PARADIGMS IN HISTORICAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP RESEARCH

Luke Pittaway & Richard Tunstall

Abstract

This chapter considers the common traps that researchers in entrepreneurship fall into when applying philosophical assumptions. It begins by explaining the importance of considering how meta-theories impact on the construction of knowledge and presents four paradigms and associated philosophical assumptions based on Burrell and Morgan's (1979) paradigms of social science. The chapter develops a review method and uses these paradigms to consider the assumptions made in historic approaches to entrepreneurship that draw from psychology from the 1960s to the 1990s. The review unpicks the assumptions from within a number of key approaches including; personality theory, interactionism and social constructionism. A number of conclusions are made from this review; focusing on the nature of the philosophical assumptions used in entrepreneurship research and the common traps that researchers fall into. The chapter concludes by arguing for diversity in underlying assumptions and calls for growth in 'interpretive' and 'critical' perspectives within the subject.

IS THERE STILL A HEFFALUMP IN THE ROOM?

EXAMINING PARADIGMS IN HISTORICAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP RESEARCH

1. Introduction

In this chapter we seek to explore the underlying assumptions of historic entrepreneurship thinking to consider its consequences for contemporary thought. Kilby (1971) is widely quoted as criticising the search for a definition of entrepreneurship through analogy with A.A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* where attempts are made to describe and trap a mythical Heffalump. Kilby argued that the entrepreneur as a focus of research had escaped explanation because each researcher had applied an approach that described specific aspects yet did not capture the whole. In A.A. Milne's (1926) story, the uncritical application of definitions leads to the development of traps which serve only to ensnare the hunters themselves. In this chapter, therefore, we seek to build from this idea by illustrating how common underlying meta-theories have caused a degree of myopia in entrepreneurship theory and we argue for the use of meta-theoretical diversity in entrepreneurship thought as a means to consider a wider range of approaches. We categorise this willingness to consider a diverse set of underlying philosophies as an 'interpretive' perspective to the construction of theory (Grant and Perren, 2002).

Many years have passed since Kilby (1971) made this point. Thinking in entrepreneurship research has advanced and yet there is a nagging suspicion amongst many, as articulated in this book, that while research studies have become more nuanced, certain 'traps' have once again grown to dominate research (Grant and Perren, 2002; Pittaway, 2005). Indeed, it can be argued that other philosophies have been neglected or fragmented, obscuring our understanding of the range of phenomena associated with entrepreneurship (Davidsson, Low and Wright, 2001; Sarasvathy, 2004; Jennings, Perren and Carter, 2005). This chapter aims to ask whether in the pursuit of common definition and measurement, entrepreneurship researchers have become too focused on constructing more intricate traps while failing to appreciate the underlying assumptions that guide them to dif-

ferent, and yet, not completely incompatible views of entrepreneurship. As we present them later, the common traps appear to include: an overriding desire on the part of some researchers to create a scientific rather than a social scientific discipline; a common under-estimation of social and institutional factors; and, an assumption that entrepreneurs are ‘special’ individuals.

This chapter builds on the work of Pittaway (2005) by considering historical research in entrepreneurship. It will explore the underlying meta-theories used with the aim to illustrate the dangers of applying assumptions without fully considering their implications. The chapter will then progress to consider how appreciation of such ‘taken-for-granted’ assumptions can inform the development of contemporary theory and research. The contribution of this work is to lay out the foundation philosophies of prior entrepreneurship theory, so that they can be appreciated and understood. By laying out these foundations we contend that researchers can more carefully consider the philosophical assumptions that guide their own research and be more aware of the implications such assumptions may have.

2. Meta-theory and its Implications

Meta-theory is the deeper assumptions that researchers apply when they construct theories and conduct empirical research (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). Researchers in many fields of study actively debate and consider these prior assumptions, yet in entrepreneurship research, these assumptions are rarely discussed (Ogbor, 2000).

1.1. Basic Philosophies

Meta-theories are basic philosophies that apply one stance on a subject and in doing so inherently exclude alternatives, they come in several forms:

- i) Ontological assumptions focus on the ‘nature of being’ and thus focus on questions about the nature of reality. The concreteness of nature beyond human consciousness and reali-

ty's interpretation by humans is a central consideration. Within entrepreneurship such assumptions may, for example, guide how researchers view 'opportunity' (Fischer, Reuber, Hababou, Johnson and Lee, 1997; Alvarez, Barney, McBride and Wuebker, 2014). Is it constructed in the mind of the entrepreneur and created by independent human action or is it 'out-there' waiting to be discovered by entrepreneurs who have a special ability to sense it (Learned, 1992)?

- ii) Epistemological assumptions are focused on the 'nature of knowledge' and consider how knowledge is constructed. Debates focus on how people conceptualise and understand the world and ask questions about what constitutes knowledge. In entrepreneurship questions about knowledge construction often revolve around issues of 'definition' and 'measurement' (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000; Gartner, 2001). What is the best way to capture and understand knowledge about entrepreneurship, what traps are valid and how should we use them? How should entrepreneurship be defined? And, should it be considered and researched in a 'normative scientific' manner rather than a focus on the practical experiences of individuals?
- iii) Axiological assumptions come in two forms 'ethics' and 'aesthetics' and are focused on the 'nature of value'. Assumptions about 'ethics' are most relevant and ask questions about underlying, often implicit values, that govern what is considered 'good' or 'correct' for individual and social conduct. In entrepreneurship common axioms that exist include, for example, a focus on 'individualism', a taken-for-granted view that entrepreneurship is 'good' and an over-emphasis on the positive outcomes of entrepreneurial effort (Ogbor, 2000).
- iv) Assumptions about human nature concentrate on prior beliefs about humankind and the underlying factors that guide human behaviour. Common debates include 'nature' versus 'nurture' and 'freewill' versus 'determinism' (Carland, Hoy and Carland, 1988; Gartner, 1989). In entrepreneurship these assumptions can influence the extent to which entrepre-

neurial action is considered to be learnt or naturally acquired and the extent to which entrepreneurs are influenced by their environment.

- v) Assumptions about the nature of society overlap both with axiology and human nature and questions are asked about the relationship between human beings and the societies they construct. A common theme focuses on ‘order and stability’ versus ‘conflict and change’ and the extent to which society can be viewed as stable or undergoing constant contradictions, stress and turbulent change. Assumptions in entrepreneurship hinge on whether the entrepreneur is considered to be a part of such change, which is best articulated through Schumpeter’s concept of creative destruction (Pittaway, 2005).

Within each of these areas there are many arguments and differences of position that guide debate and underpin theory. Occasionally empirical observations can undermine such taken-for-granted tenets and be the cause of ‘paradigm shifts’ (Kuhn, 1962). Such shifts can be viewed to have occurred in the field of entrepreneurship, for example, in the early 1980s entrepreneurship researchers moved away from a focus on the ‘entrepreneurial personality’ to consider what entrepreneurs ‘do’, taking on a different set of underlying meta-theoretical assumptions (Bygrave, 1989). Another shift can be observed to have occurred in the late 1990s and early 2000s when researchers began to move away from ‘new venture creation’ perspectives of ‘doing’ entrepreneurship to a focus more on the ‘opportunity recognition’ part of the process (Alvarez et al., 2014).

1.2. Research Paradigms

Such shifts were observed in the field of organisational studies by Burrell and Morgan (1979), who then led debates about the nature of these meta-theories, and their impact on the construction of theory. The paradigms presented by Burrell and Morgan positioned different philosophical assumptions into dichotomous relationships (e.g. relativity versus realism and interpretive knowledge construction versus positivism) and positioned these along two dimensions, the “objec-

tive versus subjective” dimension and the “sociology of radical change versus the sociology of regulation” dimension. Using these dimensions four paradigms of social science were constructed (Burrell and Morgan, 1979; Pittaway, 2005) and these are presented in Figure 1.

[Insert Figure 1 Near Here]

The concept of paradigms of social science received much attention in organisational studies in the 1980s and 1990s. Within entrepreneurship Burrell and Morgan’s (1979) paradigms were considered to be useful tools to review, and then reflect on, the underlying assumptions guiding prior studies (Grant and Perren, 2002; Pittaway, 2005). The view that they could be a useful ‘tool’ for unpicking implicit assumptions within subjects was supported by other fields where the paradigms were also used to make explicit taken-for-granted assumptions (Willmott, 1993; Parker, 1998; Nightingale and Cromby, 1999).

Grant and Perren’s (2002) work, for example, reviewed developments in research in entrepreneurship in the late 1990s using the paradigms to assess the underlying meta-theoretical assumptions applied and concluded that entrepreneurship research was dominated by functionalist assumptions. The study observed that entrepreneurship research had broadly applied realist, positivist, determinist meta-theoretical assumptions and nomothetic methodological assumptions (Grant and Perren, 2002). Importantly for this book, it critiqued entrepreneurship research for excluding interpretive research from mainstream journals and considered that entrepreneurship research had further largely ignored ‘critical studies’ that were derived from assumptions applied in the radical humanist and radical structuralist paradigms (Grant and Perren, 2002).

The second study in entrepreneurship that used Burrell and Morgan’s (BM) paradigms (Pittaway, 2005) provides the basis for the work reported here. Pittaway (2005) used the paradigms to unravel the underlying assumptions applied in historical studies of entrepreneurship in economics. The study aimed to understand the meta-theoretical assumptions applied in economic theories associated with entrepreneurship, sought to categorise these according to the BM paradigms and tried to explain the ‘decline’ of the entrepreneur in economic inquiry (Barreto, 1989). The research found

three principle sets of meta-theoretical assumptions. Like Grant and Perren (2002) the study found much of the prior work on entrepreneurship in economics to be dominated by functionalist assumptions (Pittaway, 2005). It also noted the gradual removal of the entrepreneur from mainstream economic theory and concluded that extreme functionalist assumptions (in particular realism; positivism and determinism) posed problems for understanding entrepreneurship in economics because they had eliminated important alternative philosophies from inquiry, such as human action and philosophies of social and economic change (Pittaway, 2005).

Taking these studies forward the work reported here uses the BM paradigms to explore further the historical studies in entrepreneurship. We focus principally on studies that take a psychological or social psychological approach in researching the entrepreneur, beginning with studies conducted in the 1960s and concluding with studies from the 1990s. Within this chapter we focus principally on this historical review of the subject for a number of reasons. First, we believe it is important to reflect on older work and its contribution to the underlying assumptions that might exist in common thought today. Research in entrepreneurship often has an ‘immediacy’ bias, an axiom that encourages researchers to concentrate only on what is currently fashionable within the domain, rather than looking back in a thorough manner at what has gone before. We believe there is much merit in returning occasionally to historical studies in the field to ‘take stock’ of the foundations of the subject to ensure that promising lines of enquiry have not been lost in time. Secondly, attempts to understand meta-theories within research requires a very detailed, ‘deep-dive’ approach to reviewing literature, which aims to carefully unpick assumptions in a way that is consistent with the work conducted. Doing this form of review takes some considerable time and effort on behalf of the researcher and so it is important to frame the focus carefully.

In this chapter, therefore, we have thus chosen to draw the boundaries of the study around the early research in entrepreneurship that derives from psychology and social psychology and not expand our review to more contemporary work. Our rationale for drawing the boundaries around these dates is driven by the dominance of the psychological approaches to entrepreneurship during

this period and we seek to fully understand the philosophies that guided this particular ‘paradigm’. While there remains much merit in expanding the use of BM paradigms, as a tool, to consider other contemporary theories we contend that fully understanding the philosophical assumptions of this period of research will have merit as it is often considered to be a ‘dead-end’ by some commentators (Gartner, 1989). Why was it a dead-end? Were there underlying philosophical assumptions, like those in the theory of the firm, that somehow led to it being a dead-end in the view of many entrepreneurship researchers? These are questions this work seeks to explore and they have merit for contemporary theory if today’s researchers want to understand and perhaps avoid the ‘traps’ of prior research periods. Before undertaking this review, however, we explain how the BM paradigms were applied during the review process.

3. Methodological Notes

Using BM’s paradigms to review a field of literature is not without its limitations and problems despite its prior use as a tool for these purposes (Willmott, 1993; Parker, 1998; Nightingale and Cromby, 1999; Grant and Perren, 2002; Pittaway, 2005). The paradigms have been widely criticised and a number of issues arise. The paradigms align forms of philosophy alongside one another (e.g. ontology and epistemology) along a subjective-objective dimension when the different forms of philosophical assumption may not be aligned. For example, making a realist ontological assumption does not inherently mean a researcher will take a positivist epistemological assumption, these are in fact independent of each other (Willmott, 1993). Secondly, the paradigms present assumptions as dichotomous of each other (e.g. voluntarism versus determinism), while there are some dichotomous aspects, in most cases philosophical assumptions are significant debates with multiple alternatives (Parker, 1998). Consequently, presenting them as two alternatives along a continuum rather simplifies the nature of the debates (Nightingale and Cromby, 1999). Finally, the BM paradigms assume a degree of incommensurability, the paradigms are “contiguous but separate” (Burrell and Morgan, 1979, p. 22) and this aspect caused considerable debate about the nature of com-

munication across paradigms, particularly near paradigm boundaries where assumptions are less extreme (Jackson and Carter, 1991; 1993).

To operationalise the BM paradigms as tools to consider implicit philosophical assumptions the study had to develop several techniques. It allowed for the dichotomous nature of the paradigms to continue to be represented but considered variation of approach to exist within a paradigm (e.g. assumptions about positivism in knowledge construction can be more or less extreme). The study allowed for variation between different types of assumption by developing review criteria for each type of philosophical assumption separate from each other within the objective-subjective dimension (Morgan and Smircich, 1980, see Table 1). For the regulation-radical change dimension, where criteria had not previously been developed, the study reviewed the sociology literature and developed criteria for this dimension (Table 2). The review selected literature using a narrative review method and used the criteria presented to consider and report the underlying philosophical assumptions that were observed in the literature as presented in the following section.

[Insert Table 1 and Table 2 Near Here]

The approach applied a narrative review method (Pittaway, Holt and Broad, 2014). The narrative review method is the common form in academic research and it is iterative in nature. Narrative reviews are used extensively in management research and require the researcher to follow ‘lines of inquiry’; reading literature as it is found and following selected relevant citations (Tranfield, Denyer and Smart, 2003). It does have a number of weaknesses and in recent years there has been growth in the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method, which has been designed to address some of these weaknesses (Pittaway et al., 2014). For example, narrative reviews can suffer from researcher bias in the selection and inclusion of studies (Hart, 1998) and cannot easily be used to generalise or enable knowledge accumulation in the way that SLRs can (Greenhalgh, 1997).

In this study the researchers began by sampling the conference proceedings of *Frontiers of Entrepreneurship* from 1980 through to 1990. The initial sample, therefore, is likely to be somewhat biased toward US authors and a different outcome may have occurred had the researchers

started with papers published at the European RENT conference; although it must also be noted that RENT conferences started somewhat later (1987) within the sample frame. The conference proceedings served as a citation bank for this study. Papers within the proceedings that focused on psychological aspects of entrepreneurship were identified and their bibliographies were comprehensively studied for highly cited papers in the field. In this stage there were around 120 relevant conference papers that included from 5 to 30 citations per paper.

From this review process seminal work that was highly cited was identified and consequently sourced through the narrative review method. The method used did not, therefore, favour publication outlet (i.e. book chapter versus journal paper) and did not seek judgments of quality (i.e. by using journal rankings) beyond the fact that the work was widely cited and considered seminal within the reviewed literature. The review conducted included many papers not listed in the following discussion. As is common with the narrative method to literature reviews the researchers made judgments about the critical papers to report in this review. These judgments were guided by the desire to seek out diversity in the meta-theoretical assumptions made and by an effort to include seminal studies during the review period and as such are designed to encourage creative lines of inquiry (Alvesson and Sandberg, 2011; 2013).

Once papers were selected each was reviewed in detail applying the criteria developed and presented in Tables 1 and 2. Here the researcher was required to read sources multiple times to consider deeply the underlying assumptions used by theorists when considering the possible forms available (as summarised in Tables 1 and 2). The review criteria were used as guides to remind the researcher of the various forms and options during the review process. Undoubtedly, while the work was carried out in a relatively thorough manner, this process includes a degree of interpretation and judgment, and this must be considered a limitation of the work carried out.

The review focused on psychological and social psychological approaches to entrepreneurship research conducted from the 1960s to the 1990s. During this period trait personality studies dominated research in entrepreneurship and studies generally were criticised for lacking consistency

in definition (Gartner, 1985; Bull and Willard, 1993) and it was argued that studies were largely atheoretical (Smith, Gannon and Sapienza, 1989). Although studies draw on different schools of thought within these disciplines it was evident from the review that they have a common focus on the entrepreneurial ‘person’, as they hold in common an interest in trying to explain why some individuals act or behave in one way while others behave differently. Typically researchers in these areas are interested in explaining what makes an entrepreneur do what they do. In this sense these studies focus on the individual, their traits, motivations and behaviours.

Previous reviews of the literature on the psychology of the entrepreneur do exist (Brockhaus, 1982; Chell, 1985; Brockhaus and Horwitz, 1986; Chell, Haworth and Brearley, 1991). These reviews provide critiques of the common approaches and categorise theories into forms but they do not consider the underlying meta-theories guiding theory. The common approaches explored during this review were categorised as: single trait; multi-trait; displacement; social development; psychodynamic; interactionism; and social constructionism. This categorisation was based on both underlying meta-theoretical assumptions made and prior reviews of this literature (Chell et al., 1991; Chell, 1997; 2000). Each of these is now explored with explicit attention paid to the meta-theories underpinning these approaches. A historic timeline of these approaches is also presented (see Figure 2).

[Insert Figure 2 Near Here]

4. A Focus on Single Traits 1960s-1970s

1.1. Single trait theory

There are two major types of trait theory in entrepreneurship research. In the 1960s work began by trying to seek ‘single-trait’ explanations that focused on seeking out one particular aspect of personality that could determine behaviour (Chell and Burrows, 1991). From these grew more comprehensive multi-trait theories that attempted to identify a pattern of traits that could be used to construct personality (Hampson, 1982). The most significant single trait theories in entrepreneur-

ship were ‘need for achievement’, ‘locus of control’ and ‘risk-taking propensity’ and these continue to guide researchers in contemporary research; particularly when they discuss entrepreneurial competencies. The development of the achievement construct started with the work of Murray (1938) and was formalised and applied to entrepreneurship by McClelland (1955). McClelland’s (1971) concept of the achievement motive and its role in economic development and entrepreneurship was conceptualised as the ‘desire to do well’, not for social recognition or prestige, but for a sense of inner personal accomplishment.

McClelland considered motivation to be ‘internal’ and ‘unconscious’ and tested the motive through the analysis of fantasy via the Thematic Appreciation Test (TAT). After a number of studies McClelland concluded that people with a high need for achievement would exhibit certain behaviours that could predict ‘entrepreneurial success’. Despite many criticisms (Klinger, 1966; Schatz, 1971; Miner, 1980; Frey, 1984) McClelland’s concept was widely adopted and used in entrepreneurship research until the late 1980s (Johnson, 1990). Johnson (1990), for example, compared the results of twenty-three studies using the construct in entrepreneurship research and reviewed eight different measurement techniques (see for example Table 3).

[Insert Table 3 Near Here]

Johnson (1990) concluded that in 20 of 23 studies there was a relationship between ‘entrepreneurship’, however defined, and the ‘need for achievement’, however measured, even when there was no consistency between studies (Shaver and Scott, 1991). Many commentators though have pointed to the contradictions between studies, particularly with regard to lack of definitional clarity as a major weakness of the approach (Gartner, 1989).

A second key single-trait theory in entrepreneurship was ‘locus of control’, which began with the work of Rotter (1966); Table 4 summaries the research on locus of control during the review period.

[Insert Table 4 Near Here]

Rotter hypothesised that there were two extremes of control beliefs; internal and external. Internal control beliefs were the degree to which a person would expect outcomes to be contingent on their own behaviour while in external control beliefs they considered outcomes to be contingent on factors beyond their control, such as chance, luck or fate (Rotter, 1990). Overall, this theory proposed that at the individual level people take on personal beliefs that may (or may not) guide their personal actions and their willingness to take such actions. Intuitively, it made sense to researchers to consider that entrepreneurs might have high internal locus of control beliefs (Chell et al., 1991) and so research focused on the entrepreneur's perception of a specific situation and how this would influence their intention to act (Liles, 1974). Most research that followed in entrepreneurship tried to link locus of control beliefs to need for achievement and risk-taking propensity (McGhee and Crandall, 1968) and a series of studies followed (Venkatapathy, 1984; Shaver and Scott, 1991). Once again results were contradictory (Chell et al., 1991) and the construct was criticised for being one-dimensional, in that it did not allow for varying contexts to alter locus-of-control beliefs and saw these beliefs as a fixed personality construct (Furnham, 1986).

The third single trait theory that was introduced in entrepreneurship during this period was 'risk-taking propensity'. In personality theory risk-taking is not just something that the entrepreneur 'does' it is something an entrepreneur 'is', in that they have a personality which inclines them to take more risks (Brockhaus, 1982). The majority of research that followed used the Choice Dilemmas Questionnaire - CDQ (Brockhaus, 1982; Brockhaus and Horwitz, 1985) and sought to assess risk-taking propensity amongst respondents. The CDQ as an instrument has been criticised (Shaver and Scott, 1991) and the idea that 'risk-taking propensity' could be considered a personality trait has been disputed (Timmons, Smollen and Dingee, 1985). Researchers have pointed out that taking risks is often 'calculated' and that entrepreneurs can be observed to remove or reduce risk in situations (Chell et al., 1991; Sarasvathy, 2004).

5. Personality and Psychological Approaches 1970s-1980s

1.1. *Multi-trait theory*

Dissatisfaction with the inability of single trait theories to ‘predict’ entrepreneurial behaviour in the late 1970s and early 1980s led to significant growth in multi-trait approaches to entrepreneurship research. Table 5, for example, illustrates a sample of multi-trait approaches to entrepreneurship during the review period.

[Insert Table 5 Near Here]

Here researchers sought to assess the constellation of traits that could help predict entrepreneurial behaviour. Many different instruments were used, for example, the Behavioural Event Questionnaire (Flanagan, 1954), the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (Edwards, 1959) and the Personality Research Form – E (Jackson, 1974) to support the many studies taking this approach (Gartner, 1989). Like single-trait theories, multi-trait studies once again struggled to define the entrepreneur in a common way and very few studies employed the same definition and as a result the samples employed were extremely diverse (Gartner, 1989). So many traits became associated with the ‘entrepreneurial psychological profile’ that Gartner argued that they depicted an individual who would be:

“...larger than life, full of contradictions, and, conversely, someone so full of traits that (s)he would have to be a sort of generic everyman” (Gartner, 1989, p. 57).

This crisis for personality theory in entrepreneurship in the 1980s led to a ‘paradigm shift’ that introduced behavioural and subsequently cognitive theories of entrepreneurship. The wider criticisms of personality theory included the inadequacies of measuring instruments, the poor definition of the population to which the traits were being applied and the inadequacy of attempts to describe and manage population samples. When applying BM’s paradigms to the underlying assumptions of

personality theory another picture emerges; there are clear meta-theoretical assumptions used in these studies that ultimately undermined the paradigm.

The first core assumptions of personality theory are ‘stability’ and ‘consistency’, or the axioms that personality is relatively stable and consistently influences behaviour in particular ways (Hampson, 1982). Although the concept of stability does allow for some long-term development in an individual’s personality over time and allows for some day to day variation, the axiom assumes that personality is stable creating a second axiom that personality leads to continuity of behaviour over time and across contexts. As such, these assumptions apply the view that personality ‘determines’ behaviour, assuming that other factors have limited effect (e.g. personal choice or social context).

While it clearly excludes the ‘nurture’ aspect of behaviour it also largely excludes the ‘free-will or voluntarism’ view of human behaviour and as such could be described as ‘extreme psychological determinism’. Individuals are effectively born with, or acquire early on in life, their personality traits and these principally guide their future behaviour. In terms of the BM paradigms this assumption in personality theory also disregards factors external to the individual (such as the social context or culture) ignoring the role of society in human behaviour. A further major assumption in personality theory is ‘internality’ or the idea that personality resides within an individual, is unique and that behaviour is the outward expression of individual personality (Hampson, 1982).

In terms of the BM paradigms one can see the use of both relativist and realist ontologies. On the one hand, internality implies ‘a unique reality’ for each individual in terms of their personality. On the other hand, capturing personality via observation of common behaviours and beliefs implies realist ontology, that these ‘exist’ as concrete things to be observed. In reviewing personality theory we thus observe a paradox between the initial assumptions which were relativist and later implementation, which was realist. Researchers sought to ‘capture’ observable behaviours as if these somehow ‘existed’ as representations of social reality and ultimately as descriptions of an individual’s personality.

Approaches to capture ‘personality’ via systematic quantitative instruments that test behaviours and beliefs in scientifically rigorous ways in order to predict behaviour are also positivist in terms of knowledge construction and nomothetic in terms of methodology. From the review conducted it is reasonable to consider that researchers’ use of these meta-theories may also have contributed to the decline of personality theory in entrepreneurship.

1.2. Displacement theory

During the dominance of personality theory in entrepreneurship research there were a number of theories about entrepreneurial behaviour that were not widely adopted in mainstream studies of the subject. One such theory was, displacement (Shapero, 1975) and in a very similar vein Scase and Goffee’s (1980) social marginality theory. The basic premise of these theories was that entrepreneurs are ‘displaced’ people who have been supplanted from their familiar way of life. They are unemployed, have been made redundant, or simply have become tired of their current way of life and seek more autonomy. Displacement occurs within two forms, as a consequence of either negative or positive forces. Positive forces, for example, included a close friend’s suggestion, chance encounters and opportunities that unexpectedly emerge (e.g. a management buy-out). Negative forces in contrast included unemployment, divorce or economic stress.

In Shapero’s (1975) work, while displacement can be led by psychological factors (e.g. internal beliefs and personality) most entrepreneurship occurs because of external drivers that are either ‘push’ or ‘pull’ in form. Push factors are mostly negative, that displace an individual from a known situation into an unknown one (e.g. redundancy). Pull factors, in contrast, may include attractive unexpected opportunities, personal tendencies (including traits) and role models. Displacement theory thus draws on wider sociological factors when considering human behaviour and suggests that significant contextual factors play a role in encouraging (or not) a tendency towards entrepreneurship. The concept of displacement was embedded in many subsequent contextual studies, such as those focused on immigrant entrepreneurship, female entrepreneurship and necessity-based

entrepreneurship (Folger, Timmerman and Wooten, 1992; Price and Monroe, 1992; see for example Table 6).

[Insert Table 6 Near Here]

The theory applies several meta-theoretical assumptions relevant to the BM paradigms. Displacement, for example, does allow for some ‘personal choice’ or freewill in decisions to become an entrepreneur but predominately presents these choices as forced by circumstances. In this sense it tends to ignore prior intentions or propensity to become entrepreneurs before circumstances arose and ignores deliberate efforts. Displacement can, therefore, be considered a form of ‘sociological determinism’. While social context plays a much more important role than in personality theory behaviour is still largely ‘determined’, this time by exogenous factors beyond the individual’s control. Even where ‘choice’ is applied the displacement model applied personality traits as the means to assess who will choose what courses of action.

1.3. *Psycho-dynamic model*

A third approach that sat alongside personality theory but that did not enter into mainstream entrepreneurship research during the 1970s was Kets de Vries’s (1977) study, which we have described as a ‘psycho-dynamic model’. Kets de Vries (1977) appears to build on the displacement concept of Shapero (1975) but places more focus on the person and applies ideas based on Freudian psychology. The psychological assumptions applied leads Kets de Vries to view displacement in two ways, ‘actual’ displacement that occurs because of exogenous factors and ‘perceived’ displacement that occurs because of psycho-dynamic forces. In the second stance displacement is considered to be a psychological state. From this concept Kets de Vries (1977) portrays the ‘entrepreneur’ as a person who is yearning to control the environment around them and who may use innovation to rebel against the current norms and structures that are perceived to exist. He thinks these tendencies may occur because of, “...reactive ways of dealing with feelings of anger, fear and anxi-

ety” (Kets de Vries, 1977, p. 35) that lead to the possession of different value systems that lead entrepreneurs to ‘unconventional’ behaviour.

In Kets de Vries’s view a number of reasons can cause this: displacement by force; denigration of valued symbols; inconsistency between status symbols or changes in the distribution of economic power; and, non-acceptance of immigrant groups. Such feelings of displacement he contends will lead to a greater disposition towards ‘entrepreneurial behaviour’. He also argues that prior family dynamics can lead to a sense of perceived displacement, delving deeply into these issues he considers a child’s relationship with their father, their mother and inter-sibling rivalry, as well as, the role of family events like the early death of parent. Within the context of BM’s paradigms it is an interesting model. On the BM continuum associated with the sociology of regulation versus radical change it makes much more pronounced assumptions about the role of societal change in encouraging entrepreneurial acts. For example, it highlights the role of displacement by force and considers how revolutionary change might encourage immigration and subsequent immigrant entrepreneurship.

While accepting significant societal change much of Kets de Vries’ work concentrates on ‘psychological displacement’ and so focuses on internal family dynamics and personal psychology. When considering human nature, the theory appears to consider humans as adaptive within a social structure; applying a strong Freudian perspective to the construction of future behaviour. Humans are either displaced by changes to social structures or are caught within social structures against which they rebel. Entrepreneurial action within this theory is tied to a desire to change existing social structures because of beliefs that have arisen out of displacement or dissatisfaction with what exists. Kets de Vries (1977) theory is also notable because it presents a ‘darker-side’ to entrepreneurial efforts and does not apply the commonly held axiom that entrepreneurship is a positive force in society (Ogbor, 2000).

6. Importance of Social Psychology 1980s-1990s

1.1. Social development model

Another approach that did not receive much mainstream attention during the 1980s was Gibb and Ritchie's (1981) social development model. This work can perhaps be considered the forerunner of much later study of 'entrepreneurial learning' and for this reason is considered an important focus for the study carried out (Pittaway and Thorpe, 2012). The authors explicitly rejected personality theory and argued that it assumed entrepreneurs were 'born' when in fact they were 'made'. Here they suggested that, "...entrepreneurship can be better understood in terms of the types of situation encountered and the social groups to which the individuals relate" (Gibb and Ritchie, 1986, p. 27). In other words, individual behaviour grows, adapts and improves as individuals engage in social groups/networks, or in other words they learn through social engagement.

Gibb and Ritchie's model was one of the first to articulate the view that entrepreneurs change throughout the course of their life and that the individual's relationship with previous social contexts will mould and influence their engagement with future contexts. The model they presented, was designed to explain how different stages in the 'life course' might influence how they choose to engage in entrepreneurial effort; how it impacts on their motivations for entrepreneurship. They presented four different forms, improvisers, revisionists, superseders and reverters. Chell (1985) offered a number of criticisms of this particular model including that it was 'situational', describing behaviour as a function of social influences, was 'stereotypical' presenting a typology based on abstractions and was somewhat limited methodologically. Despite the weaknesses the model is interesting in the context of the BM paradigms. It considers social and individual factors, it allows for greater 'voluntarism' and choice in decisions, it places the entrepreneur within the context of social change and ultimately allows for 'development', or learning, so that entrepreneurs can improve as they become more familiar with the contexts experienced. Evidently, it may also provide the initial foundation on which significant subsequent work has been built within theories of 'entrepreneurial learning'.

1.2. *Interactionism*

As outlined previously, a number of researchers became increasingly dissatisfied with the dominance of personality theory during the 1980s and began to provide extensive critiques undermining its use in entrepreneurship (Chell et al., 1991; Gartner, 1989). The immediate response was a blossoming towards the late 1980s and early 1990s of what can be described as ‘social psychological’ theories of entrepreneurship. This equated to a paradigm shift as some researchers focused more on what entrepreneurs ‘do’, initially focusing on venture creation, than on what they ‘are’ (Gartner, 1989) and theories from social psychology were used to address these new research questions. The first of these approaches was interactionism. Interactionism in social psychology describes the interaction between the individual and their environment. Within entrepreneurship a number of theories were introduced that described the interaction of a range of factors, for example, personality, self-perception, intentionality, propensity to act and situational variables (Greenberger and Sexton, 1988).

These interactionist models aimed to bring together three broad concepts; ‘intentionality’, ‘self-efficacy’ and ‘situational’ aspects (Bird, 1988; Naffziger, Hornsby and Kuratko, 1994). Intentionality was viewed as the individual’s desire to achieve a specific objective (goal) or a path of objectives (Bird, 1988). Self-efficacy was the person’s belief in their ability to achieve an objective based on mastery experiences, observational learning, social persuasion and judgments of their own psychological and physiological states (Boyd and Vozikis, 1994). Situational components included aspects of the external context that had a bearing on the entrepreneur’s decision or impacted on their ability to implement the chosen course of action. Models vary somewhat in terms of their concepts of ‘intentionality’ and ‘self-efficacy’ and on what situational factors they think important. All models hold in common a narrowing of the definition of entrepreneurship to ‘venture creation’.

Models in the early 1990s could, however, be separated into ‘cognitive interactionism’ and ‘propositional interactionism’. The former, which is best represented by the work of Bird (1988), Boyd and Vozikis (1994) and Shaver and Scott (1991), tends towards considering how an intention

to act towards venture creation becomes formed in the minds of entrepreneurs and as such tends to focus on cognitive processes (e.g. rationality and intuition). It also considers the role of temporal tension, between the individual's imagined future state, and the actions that are required in the present to bring about the outcomes desired; including the impact that self-confidence may have on implementation (Boyd and Vozikis, 1994). The emphasis in 'processional interactionism' differs because the focus is more on the decision-making process during venture creation than on the individual's cognitive skills and perceptions (Greenberger and Sexton, 1988; Learned, 1992; Naffziger et al., 1994). Models tend towards focusing on the factors that go into the process of making a decision to start a venture. The meta-theoretical assumptions of these models, as defined by the BM paradigms, are interesting as they seem to continue to guide the significant contemporary study in entrepreneurship focused on 'cognition'.

There is also some diversity between approaches. Cognitive approaches tend to apply a slightly more relativist position as they see reality residing outside the individual but recognise that it is mediated by cognitive skills and interpretation. Process interactionist models in contrast are more interested in objective factors and how they impact on entrepreneurial decision-making to start a venture. The temporal nature of the models is also interesting (Bird, 1988). Theorists consider that entrepreneurs can only understand the context that is presented before them at a given time and must cope with significant uncertainty about future conditions (Kirzner, 1973; 1980). The view is both more relativist and more accepting of societal change than personality theory. Studies in the 'cognitive' genre do appear to see human behaviour in 'information processing' terms. Entrepreneurs collect information about their environment, use certain cognitive skills to make sense of it in a way that is different to others and consequently 'see' new opportunities, which they can then act on. In this view the opportunities were largely considered to 'exist' and were waiting to be 'discovered'. In contrast, studies in the 'process' genre tend to see human nature as an adaptive process. Inputs and outputs within the models tend to be seen as generalisable to entrepreneurial activity

more broadly and entrepreneurial activity is viewed in rather homogenous terms, with little role for variation in entrepreneurial activity across different social contexts.

1.3. Social constructionism

Interactionist theories, it may be argued, developed out of dissatisfaction amongst 'normative science' researchers to achieve a reasonable level of reliability from traditional trait theories and so researchers sought to use more behaviour-oriented approaches but these approaches largely maintained a relatively realist, normative set of meta-theoretical assumptions. This dissatisfaction also led to a reconsideration of personality based on different meta-theoretical assumptions (Hampson, 1982). Social constructionist approaches to researching the entrepreneur, were led and developed by Chell et al. (1991). Social constructionism begins from the premise that a person's perception of reality is constructed from experience and accumulated 'knowledge' about their general environment and their specific social context (Cunliffe, 2008).

Underlying social constructionism is a view that individuals 'construct' knowledge about themselves and other people by labelling and categorising their thoughts, feelings and experiences (Chell, 1997). The act of labelling is perceived to be the way in which individuals externalise their thought processes and make sense of the world. In this view reality is 'relativist', unique to individual interpretation, while labels can be common; shared between people as a means to describe and explain observations and experiences (Chell, 1997). The social construction of personality as applied in entrepreneurship, therefore, had a number of key features. 'Traits' were considered to be categorising concepts that are inferred from actual behaviour, personality metaphorically 'existed' between people. The relationship between 'personality' and 'behaviour' can be viewed differently by different people. 'Traits' were considered to be prototypical categories and were thus imprecise descriptors of behaviour mediated by language and interpreted by people in varying ways (Chell et al., 1991).

Research using social constructionism in entrepreneurship during this period applied the critical incident interview technique and unstructured interviews to explore the behaviours that were prototypical of particular forms of entrepreneurship (Chell and Haworth, 1988; Chell, Hedberg-Jalonen and Miettinen, 1997). The categorisation process explored behaviour and the features of behaviour that were prototypical of a particular 'trait' and categorised a set of traits that were prototypical of a category of business owner. From the research a number of prototypical categories or types of business owner were identified, 'entrepreneur', 'quasi-entrepreneur', 'administrator' and 'caretaker' (Chell et al. 1991) and four prototypical categories related to business growth including: 'growth', 'declining', 'rejuvenating' and 'plateauing'. The social constructionist approach to entrepreneurial personality, therefore, was keenly aware of the heterogeneity of the business owner population and demonstrated the complex relationship between growth, business context and the business owner's behavioural type. In this sense, unlike cognitive and processional interactionist approaches, the social constructionist approach accepted that not all individuals involved in venture creation behaved entrepreneurially, while also precluding the notion that entrepreneurial behaviour is internal to a 'special' person, and instead connecting entrepreneurship to behaviour exhibited in the context of venture development.

The types presented are also dynamic allowing for social development and changes of motivation by individual business owners. From the review it was evident that the meta-theories used to underpin the social constructionist approach to entrepreneurship were derived from BM's interpretive paradigm. Ontological assumptions apply ideas from the social construction of reality, which are along the subjective part of the subjective-objective continuum and knowledge is also perceived to be fairly subjective because individual's experience and knowledge are unique guided by prior contexts, experiences and interpretations of the world mediated by labels embedded in discourse.

7. Discussion and Implications for Contemporary Study in Entrepreneurship

[Insert Table 7 Near Here]

The meta-theories underlying the different psychological and social psychological theories in entrepreneurship from the 1960s to the 1990s are summarised in Table 7. A number of implications for contemporary study can be drawn from this review along with its counterpart that focused on economic theories (Pittaway, 2005). These implications highlight why it is important to take stock of historical approaches to entrepreneurship and in particular for contemporary researchers to consider why certain lines of inquiry did not develop further. Initially, it is clear that there are different meta-theoretical assumptions underpinning theory in entrepreneurship research and these do guide researchers to different and often contradictory views of the nature of the entrepreneur and the entrepreneurial process (Pittaway, 2005). Clearly, this study supports those of Grant and Perren (2002) and Pittaway (2005) and can conclude that the psychological theories of the period were dominated by functionalist assumptions.

Within psychology and social psychology, underlying disciplinary ‘paradigms’ have influenced the development of common approaches in entrepreneurship, for example, the social development model appears to guide initial thinking in entrepreneurial learning and interactionism seems to play a role in contemporary theories on opportunity recognition. These different approaches often apply contrasting implicit views on key meta-theories and, therefore, lead to significant differences in theoretical constructs and thus influence the research conducted. Such assumptions are nearly always applied implicitly and so it can be difficult for researchers to appreciate the implications that these have on the development of their work. Consequently, it is clear that studies need to aim to be more explicit about these guiding assumptions when developing and applying theories. ‘Axioms’ do exist in entrepreneurship research, for example most of the studies in this review, possibly by definition, applied an ‘individualistic’ axiom (Ogbor, 2000) and, thus tended to obscure or minimise the role of societal factors. Research was also predominately functionalist in terms of BM’s paradigms (Grant and Perren, 2002; Pittaway, 2005). None of the studies can be described as taking a ‘radical structuralist’ or ‘radical humanist’ approach and only a few took an ‘interpretive’ one.

From this review we can also conclude that extreme functionalist assumptions, which often dominate entrepreneurship research, need to be carefully applied. At least in two instances, the theory of the firm (Pittaway, 2005) and traditional trait theory, their use can be considered as problematic when seeking to understand entrepreneurial activity. In the former, extreme efforts to ‘objectify’ and ‘measure’ economic activity removed purposeful behaviour and entrepreneurship from theorising (Pittaway, 2005). In the latter, efforts to ‘measure’ and ‘predict’ the entrepreneurial personality led to a mass of traits that did not achieve meaningful advances in the subject (Gartner, 1989). The review has found a number of interrelated philosophical assumptions from the use of BM’s paradigms that may have caused these issues and that need to be more widely considered. These have also been discovered previously in reviews of economic thinking (Pittaway, 2005) and within reviews of contemporary study during the 1990s (Grant and Perren, 2002).

- i) Strong realist ontological assumptions tend to view the social world as an external structure and objectify social behaviour and yet entrepreneurship emphasises agency and deliberate human action. Change, both incremental and discontinuous, seems to be important in entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs are thought to play a role in encouraging the occurrence of change, either through exploiting opportunities or through purposively creating them. By over-emphasising ‘externality’ and ‘order’ realist assumptions may impinge a researcher’s ability to consider how individuals and groups engage and lead reconfigurations which impact on industries and markets, and the social world more generally. Ultimately our review would suggest that concepts of ‘human action’ are inherently interwoven with entrepreneurship and assumptions that move towards removing a degree of relativity in human systems essentially remove the entrepreneurial function (as occurred in the theory of the firm – Barreto, 1989).
- ii) Positivism, in an extreme form, can also present challenges. Greater precision in measurement, via the use of mathematics, requires clarity of definition. Yet, ‘entrepreneurship’

has been notoriously difficult to define narrowly (e.g. to define it as venture creation was one attempt) and attempts to narrow the subject so that normative science methods can be applied often leads to the exclusion of complexity, uncertainty, messiness and variety. Order and measurement, as implied by extreme positivism and certain applications of positivism (e.g. probability theory), seems to sit poorly in entrepreneurship which requires understanding of complex, chaotic systems and an appreciation of the ‘unknown’.

- iii) Determinism also presents challenges. Theories that seem to imply that behaviour is determined by something (e.g. personality, displacement, situational factors etc.) tend towards ignoring the role of human action, choice and learning in the process of entrepreneurship. Yet, conceptions of human action, entrepreneurial learning and perseverance when acting seem to be essential (Knight, 1921). If researchers erode the role of human action, in the pursuit of a ‘normative science’ approach, they are in fact, we would contend, removing something essential to understanding entrepreneurship as it occurs in practice (i.e. action focused on the creation of change).
- iv) Axioms in the historic subject are also evident. The most obvious axiom is ‘individualism’, where the focus of research tends towards individuals rather than groups, social processes and institutional contexts. Another widespread axiom that was evident in the studies reviewed was ‘success bias’, where researchers tend to focus on and one could say celebrate, the successes of entrepreneurs.

These implications have resonance for contemporary study in entrepreneurship. They show the value of understanding the influence of meta-theories in the historical development of the field and lead us to look at the conceptual ‘traps’ that have arisen and that are being used once again by contemporary scholars to ‘capture’ the essence of entrepreneurship. Theories of entrepreneurship have been particularly influenced by attention to the individual and economic opportunity, largely through the enduring influence of early economic theorists and their conceptualisations (Pittaway,

2005). Many early economic studies emphasised uncertainty and the nature of opportunity but applied diverse definitions about the ‘individual’ entrepreneur, each theory felt that the individual entrepreneur must be important but could never quite explain how the individual contributed (Pittaway, 2005).

This chapter has illustrated that the early psychological theories tried to fill this void by explaining the individual, but that in doing so they tended to understate the role of external structures and context while remaining fixated on deterministic approaches to human behaviour. Shane and Venkataraman (2000), amongst others, have provided a more recent impetus in the field by trying to explain the links between the individual, the context and interrelated processes associated with entrepreneurship (Shane and Venkataraman, 2013). Such efforts, while seemingly advancing the field apply prior assumptions (in their case disequilibrium theory, Kirzner, 1980) without considering the underpinning meta-theoretical assumptions inherent in such an approach.

While we may stand on the shoulders of giants, we may also unthinkingly build on their assumptions. For this reason it is important that as a field we occasionally reflect, including reflecting on underlying taken-for-granted assumptions that underpin our theory (Gartner, 2001; Pittaway et al., 2014). Yet despite this, major theorists who have a leading impact on our field, rarely discuss the meta-theories guiding their approach nor often carefully consider alternatives. Meta-theories are choices for researchers, often they are applied implicitly without thought but it would be far better if these discussions were carried out and assumptions made in an explicit way; just as we are required to do with our methodological decisions.

This study, and its counterpart, shows that meta-theoretical decisions made by researchers do have consequences for the ways in which entrepreneurship is conceived, conceptualised and studied. An approach which made these assumptions explicit therefore, would add value within entrepreneurship research by helping to critically engage the subject allowing us to unpick, deconstruct and question some of our underlying assumptions. By undertaking one such critically reflect-

tive review we can present some common traps that historic researchers have occasionally fallen into and that might be avoided in future.

1.1. Heffalump Trap 1 – Aiming to be a scientific (rather than a social scientific) discipline.

This study also outlines that there has been a tension between mainstream attempts to build theories about entrepreneurship based on ‘normative science’ approaches, which tend to look for causality, and the need to allow for entrepreneurs to engage in ‘human action’. The reviews conducted display some tension when applying scientific philosophies of knowledge construction to a field where the focal actors, by definition, engage in action that can lead to economic and social change (Sarasvathy and Venkataraman, 2011; Watson 2013a; 2013b). Causality implies prediction, either deterministically or probabilistically, and does not easily cope with randomness, luck, chaos and underdetermined multiple but unrealised futures, nor do such approaches cope well with the desire by individuals to create such futures that they imagine or appreciate their efforts to build them.

From this review philosophies applied to entrepreneurship need to be able to fully embrace both human action and relativity in future reality and common scientific methods do not inherently do this well. For example, the individual-opportunity nexus has become a key theory in entrepreneurship whereby opportunities are conceived as ‘out there’ to be ‘discovered’ (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000; 2013; Alvarez and Barney, 2013), yet it is evident that the construction of opportunity, imagination to visualise what is possible and human action to pursue and create opportunity are all essential components of high impact entrepreneurial efforts (Fischer et al., 1997; Alvarez and Barney, 2007; 2010). Current theoretical disagreements about whether opportunities are ‘discovered’ or ‘created’ reflect the tension between causality and human action, yet such arguments continue to coalesce around realist ontology (Alvarez and Barney, 2013). By considering alternative paradigms, it is possible to see new avenues for opportunity creation, as a theory of entrepreneur-

ship. These new lines of enquiry lie in both separating opportunity creation from opportunity recognition (Alvarez and Barney, 2007; 2010) and considering studies which move away from realist ontology. In so doing, researchers can add value by exploring opportunity creation through employing different subjectivist, social constructionist and interpretive ontologies (Chell et al., 1997; Fletcher, 2006; Korsgaard and Neergaard, 2010).

1.2. Heffalump Trap 2 – Ignoring the role of social context, structures and institutions

Through the analysis outlined in this chapter it is possible to identify that the theory which most closely fits the stance on human beings and reality adopted by critical realists is cognitive interactionism and this stance appears to have become popular in recent research. Such a critical realist perspective has the opportunity to build ontologically appropriate theories of entrepreneurship drawn from the radical structuralist paradigm of BM's framework. Approaches of this nature can more appropriately consider the contextual, sociological and institutional factors that might guide theory and the importance of these factors has been highlighted by a growing trend in the field (Aldrich, 2010; Mole and Mole, 2010).

These developments show an acknowledgement of the need to expand the 'sociological' aspects of entrepreneurship research to include social structures, social context and social change and that some focus on radical structuralism (i.e. radical change to social and economic structures) might be an intriguing area for future research in this paradigm (Sarason, Dean and Dillard, 2006; Zahra, 2007; Sarason, Dean and Dillard, 2010). Our historical analysis would appear to concur with the view that such a shift could be beneficial for the field and that we should continue to expand such 'institutional' and 'critical realist' approaches. At the same time, our analysis provides a cautionary tale for these approaches. Critical realist and institutional theories continue to have fairly strong determinist overtones. Institutional frameworks and sociological structures are given more weight in guiding behaviour and human action. In contrast relativity and volition take somewhat of a back seat and yet, as with functionalist perspectives, there is a danger that the 'future yet to come'

and the entrepreneur's ability to envision and enact that future remains under-appreciated, here studies which apply alternative sociological approaches to understanding entrepreneurship, organising and social systems may prove insightful (e.g. Sarason et al., 2006; Kostera, 2013).

1.3. Heffalump Trap 3 – Assuming entrepreneurship is about 'special' individuals

The review also outlined a key axiom that the 'individual entrepreneur' was focused on and was considered to be a 'special individual' without much reference to social aspects (e.g. teams; families; social context etc.). Despite a growth in research concerned with the social factors of entrepreneurship the dominance of study on the individual-opportunity nexus has taken forward this axiom and reinforced a view of the entrepreneur as a 'special' individual who discovers opportunities through their unique cognitive powers. Likewise these theories rarely include a focus on the actions entrepreneurs take in pursuit of these opportunities (Venkataraman, Sarasvathy, Dew and Forster, 2012). While Alvarez and Barney (2010) provide an alternative explanation of entrepreneurs creating opportunities through interpretation, the focus remains on the individual. Even in institutional entrepreneurship where creative destruction of institutions occurs, the entrepreneur is again considered a 'special' individual, who acts relatively autonomously (Aldrich. 2012). Some contemporary theory, therefore, seems to uncritically perpetuate the individualistic axiom previously identified (Ogbor, 2000) without carefully considering alternatives (Dimov, 2011; Johannisson, 2011; Welter, 2011; Zahra and Wright, 2011).

From this review, and the traps presented, we can make some conclusions about the role of understanding meta-theories for future studies and the value of diversity in the research domain. We will explore these conclusions next.

8. Conclusions

This chapter used BM's paradigms to review and consider the meta-theoretical assumptions in the historic (1960s-1990s) psychological and social psychological approaches to entrepreneur-

ship. The study was a companion of a similar review that explored economic theories (Pittaway, 2005) and its purpose was to explore and understand the common meta-theories that have been used to guide prior theories. From this review we have been able to present some concerns about the use of extreme functionalist assumptions within the subject (e.g. realist; positivist; and deterministic assumptions) and have presented some common traps previous researchers have fallen into. The chapter, therefore, makes a number of contributions. First and foremost, prior reviews of meta-theories in entrepreneurship research show some diversity in the meta-theories used within the functionalist paradigm but a lack of diversity across paradigms. Yet most researchers rarely consider these assumptions when developing theory. While we do not wish to encourage excessive 'self-reflection', as sometimes occurs in other disciplines, we do suggest that entrepreneurship researchers need to be more reflective about these underlying assumptions and that as a field we need to engage in 'critical studies' that allow us to step back and consider our philosophies and axioms more diligently. Secondly, the review identified a number of prior traps from historic research including: a desire to create a scientific discipline; ignoring sociological and institutional factors; and a focus on 'special' individuals. These traps suggest that there is much merit in applying BM's framework to consider new approaches and their philosophical assumptions and it might assist researchers when they seek to bring new theories into the domain (Sarasvathy, 2001; Aldrich, 2012; Venkataran et al., 2012; Alvarez and Barney, 2013).

Our review of historic approaches also demonstrates that the functionalist paradigm in BM's framework has consistently been employed in mainstream entrepreneurship theory. While there have been some encouraging developments in recent years, and this book is an example, we still consider much contemporary research to be dominated by many of the same assumptions. As illustrated by our analysis and its counterpart (Pittaway, 2005), this dominance is caused partly by the history of previous work which was functionalist in nature and by an effort to mimic scientific research via a normative science approach to the subject (Aldrich, 2012). For us two issues arise. Firstly, philosophies in the more subjective domain of the BM paradigms seem to be important but

somewhat overlooked. In particular human action (or volition) as a guiding philosophy behind theory seems important as does relativity when applied to unknown futures. These meta-theories seem neglected as guiding philosophies for theory in entrepreneurship and yet to us they seem essential when seeking to explain the entrepreneurial role in society. Secondly, there is merit in continuing to expand and accept research that has diverse meta-theoretical backgrounds, so long as underpinning assumptions are clear and we argue that diversity across the BM's paradigms is healthy for the subject in exploring new avenues.

In particular following the 1990s there has been growth in 'interpretive' approaches to entrepreneurship studies (Cope, 2005; Watkins-Mathys and Lowe, 2005; Anderson and Starnawska, 2008) which seek to explore entrepreneurial experience and meaning in social contexts through approaches drawn from social constructionism, interactionism and symbolic discourse analysis (Downing, 2005; Chell, 2008; Lindgren and Packendorff, 2009; Perren and Jennings, 2012), yet these remain relatively marginal in mainstream debates which often seek to avoid competing theories (Dimov, 2011; Aldrich, 2012). We consider such diversity in explanations as valuable for understanding alternative explanations of various socially-situated entrepreneurial phenomena.

Despite the growth of interpretive studies, there has only relatively recently been a development of approaches to entrepreneurship studies in the radical structuralist and radical humanist paradigms, as defined by BM. Early dominance of functionalist approaches, it can be argued, has limited the acceptance and legitimacy of these alternative more critical perspectives to the subject, yet some research has, however, begun to develop.

Within BMs 'radical structuralist' paradigm, scholars adopting an approach known as 'critical entrepreneurship studies' have begun to outline the 'dark side' of entrepreneurship as a political discourse in society and markets and have argued that it reinforces the ideals of capitalism and individualism (Tedmanson, Verduyn, Essers and Gartner, 2012). Approaches in this form outline how dominant social structures limit the extent to which an individual can act entrepreneurially and have highlighted the social mechanisms which reinforce this (Du Gay, 1996; Jones and Spicer, 2009).

The radical structural perspective is interested in identifying sources of domination in order to identify change which will support a wider variety of entrepreneurial activity and some studies have begun to focus on this, although they remain at the periphery of the contemporary subject.

Similarly, developments have occurred in radical humanist approaches to entrepreneurship. Here, rather than being the preserve of 'special' individuals entrepreneurship is outlined as an aspect of every-day life (Spinosa, Flores and Dreyfus, 1997) which is relatively 'mundane' in that it may be enacted by anyone in order to engender social change (Stayaert, 2007; Johannisson, 2011; Hjorth, 2013), or 'disclosing new [social] worlds' (Spinosa et al., 1997). These approaches provide opportunities to see how entrepreneurship is part of a wider desire for change and development in society, linked to changes in personal aspiration at the level of the individual-in-the-world.

These developing approaches to entrepreneurship research illustrate the insights and opportunities to advance understanding that might be possible if we are open to diversity and encourage the development of new approaches by applying other BM paradigms in entrepreneurship studies. By closely considering meta-theoretical assumptions we may also remain aware of the limits of adopting any approach, by critically engaging our studies to better support the maturing of our field.

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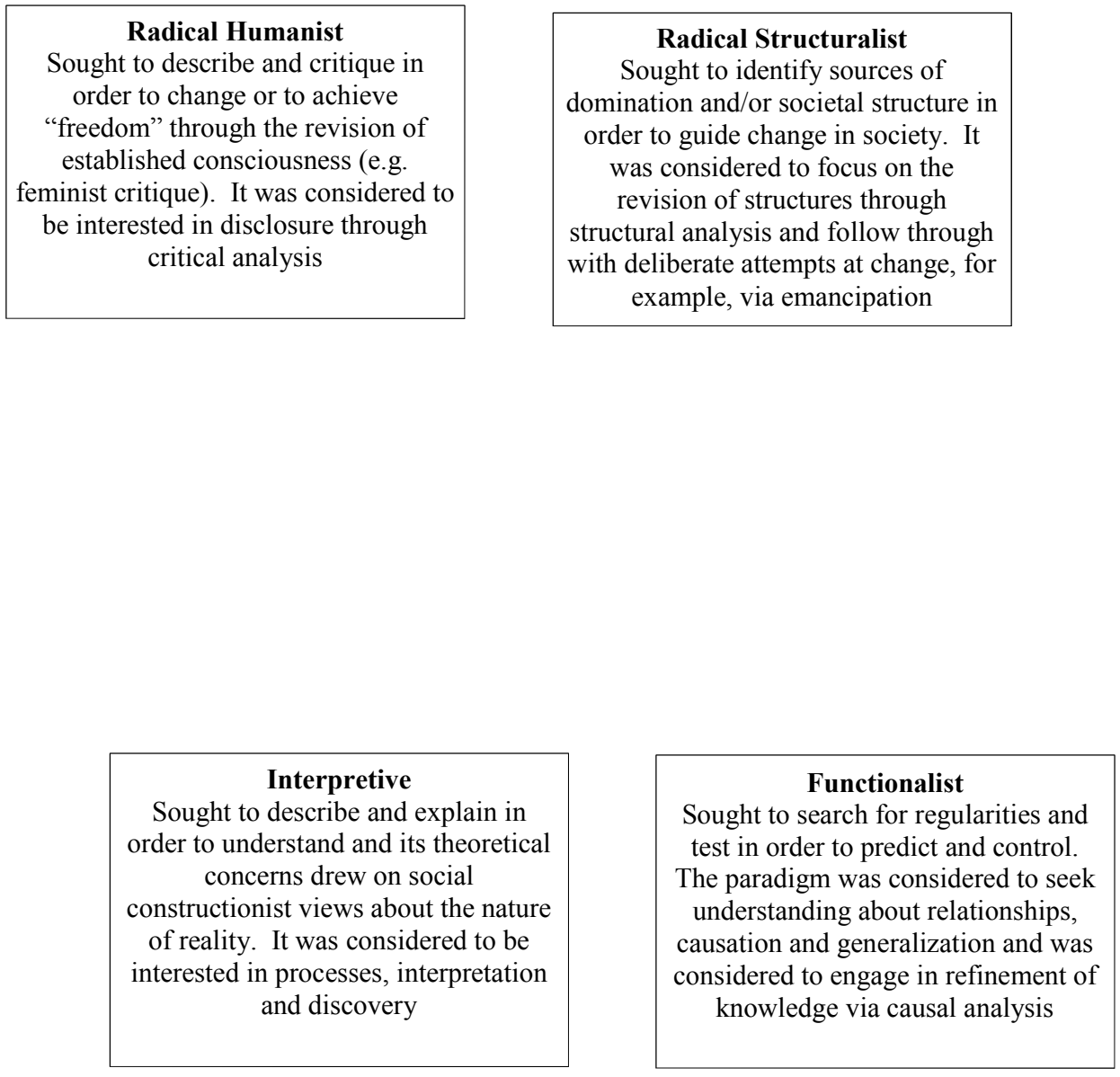
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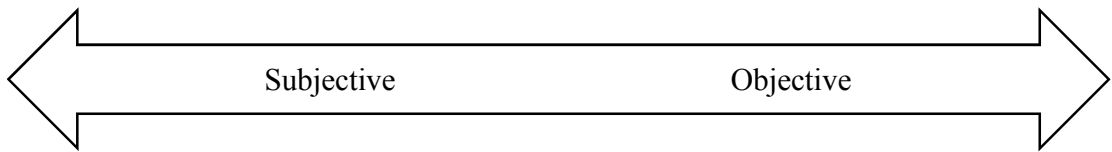
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Figure 1 – BM’s Sociological Paradigms





Relativity	Ontology	Realism
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Interpretive	Epistemology	Positivism
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Voluntarism	Human Nature	Determinism
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Ideographic	Methodology	Nomothetic
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Figure 2 – Timeline of Psychological Approaches to Entrepreneurship (1960s to 1990s)

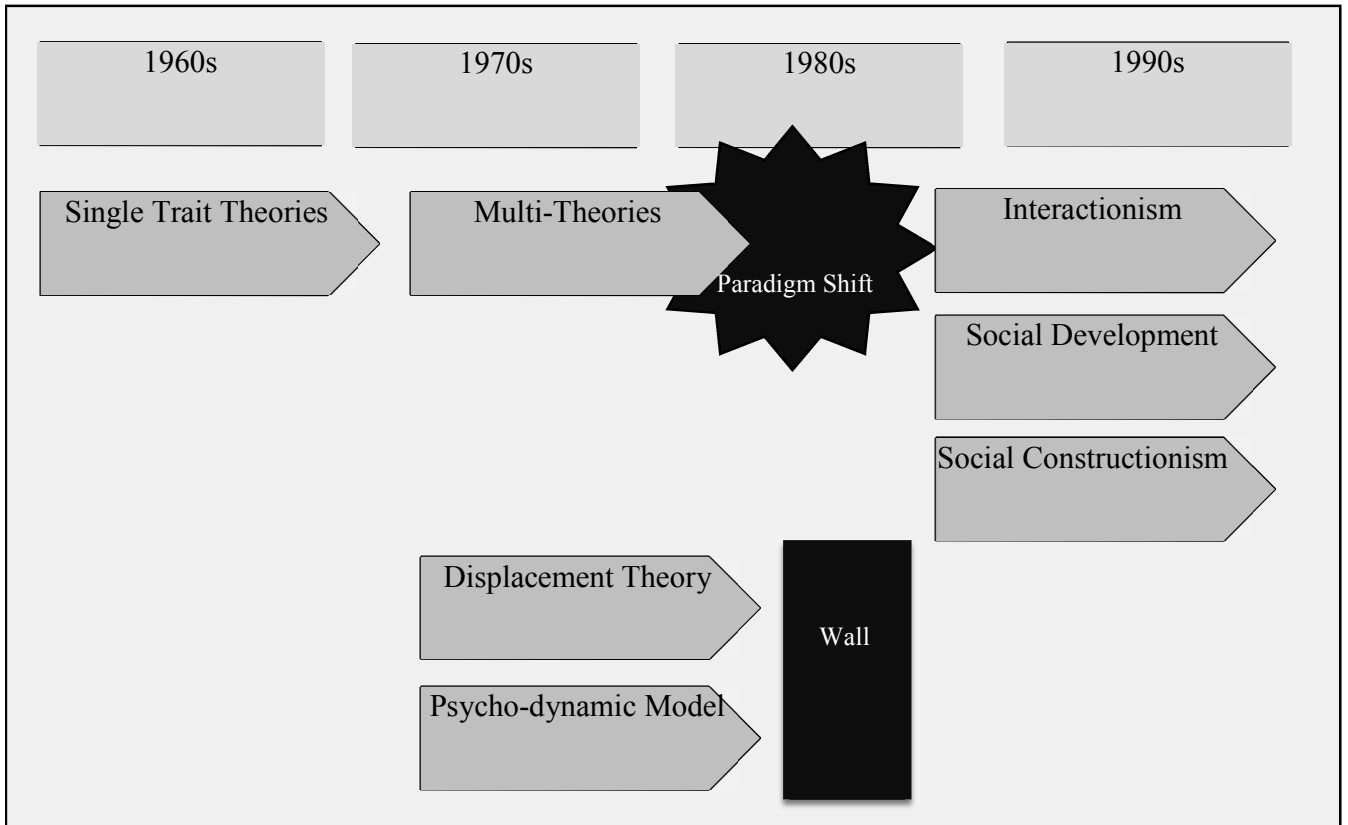


Table 1: A Summary of the Criteria used to Analyse BM's Subjective - Objective Dichotomy

	SUBJECTIVISM			OBJECTIVISM		
Ontological Assumptions	Reality as a projection of human imagination	Reality as a social construction	Reality as the realm of symbolic discourse	Reality as contextual fields of information	Reality as a concrete process	Reality as a concrete structure
Epistemological Assumptions	To obtain phenomenological insight, revelation	To understand how social reality is constructed	To understand patterns of symbolic discourse	To map contexts	To study systems, processes and change	To construct a positivist science
Assumptions about Human Nature	Man as pure spirit, consciousness, being	Man as the social constructor; the symbol creator	Man as an actor; the symbol user	Man as an information processor	Man as an adapter	Man as a responder
Favoured Metaphors	Transcendental	Language game	Theatre, Culture	Cybernetic	Organism	Machine
Examples	Exploration of pure subjectivity	Hermeneutics	Symbolic analysis	Contextual analysis	Historical analysis	Surveys

Adapted from Morgan and Smircich (1980)

Table 2 - A Summary of the Criteria used to Analyse BM's Radical Change - Regulation Dichotomy

	RADICAL CHANGE			REGULATION		
Assumptions about change to society	Every society is at every point subject to forces of radical change	Every society experiences periods of revolution and periods of stability	Every element in society is subject to incremental but continuous change	Every element in society has facilitates change to the existing social order	Every element in society responds to change imposed upon it	Every element in society is relatively stable and change occurs infrequently
Assumptions about the structure of society	Every element in society renders a contribution to internal disintegration	Every element in society displays contradiction and paradox	Every element in society is in a constant state of structural flux	Every element in society displays surface flux which obscures general structural principles	Every element in society is part of an organic system	Every society is a well integrated structure of elements and each element has a function
Assumptions about the degree of conflict in society	Every society at every point displays dissensus and conflict	Every society is based on the coercion of some of its members by others	Every group in society protect their own interests and are in open conflict with other groups	Every element of society is determined by power relationships between individuals and groups	Every functioning social structure is based on negotiation between the demands of its stakeholders	Every functioning social structure is based on a consensus of values among its members
Favoured Metaphors	Anarchy and chaos	Transformation revolution	Tribal factions	Morphogenic	Organic	Mechanistic
Examples	Analysis of anarchy and chaos including action	Critical analysis of the <i>status quo</i> including action to transform	Critical analysis of the <i>status quo</i>	Analysis of functional autonomy	Analysis of the latent functions of society	Analysis of laws governing society

Table 3 - Achievement Measures Used in Entrepreneurship Research

Measure	Type	Design
1. TAT (McClelland, 1955)	Projective: imaginative stories	4 pictures: work situation, study situation, father-son situation, young boy
2. MSCS-Form T (Miner, 1982, 1986)	Projective: sentence completion	40 sentence stems: 8 for each of five subscales: 1) self-achievement, 2) avoiding risks, 3) feedback of results, 4) personal innovation, 5) planning for the future.
3. EPPS (Edwards, 1959)	Comprehensive personality scale	225-item inventory: achievement one of 15 needs measured.
4. PRF-E (Jackson, 1974)	Comprehensive personality scale	352-item inventory: achievement one of 20 personality traits measured.
5. LAMQ (Lynn, 1969)	Achievement questionnaire	8 yes-no questions, e.g. Do you find it easy to relax on holiday? Have you always worked hard in order to be among the best in your own line?
6. MAS (Mehrabian, 1968, 1969)	Achievement questionnaire	26-item scale measuring extent of agreement or disagreement on such items as: "I worry more about getting a bad grade than I think about getting a good grade."
7. SCT (Mukjerhee, 1968)	Achievement questionnaire	50 forced-choice triads measuring achievement values, e.g. I like A. to be faithful to my friends and colleagues B. to be very systematic in my work C. to do my best in whatever work I undertake.
8. WOFO (Spence and Helmreich, 1978)	Achievement questionnaire	3 achievement scales: 1) mastery needs, 2) work orientation, 3) inter-personal competitiveness.

Source: Johnson, 1990, p. 42

Table 4 – Research on Locus of Control Beliefs

Authors	Research Results
Ahmed, 1985	Examined locus of control beliefs of Bangladesh immigrants living in the UK and concluded that the locus of control scale was positively related to entrepreneurship.
Anderson, 1976	Used a longitudinal study of 90 'entrepreneurs' and discovered that those with high internal locus of control beliefs suffered less stress and employed more task-centred coping behaviours than those with external beliefs.
Begley and Boyd, 1986	Found no evidence to suggest that locus of control beliefs differed between business founders and business managers.
Borland, 1974 (cited in Brockhaus, 1982)	Suggested that a belief in internal locus of control was a better predictor of entrepreneurial intentions than need for achievement
Brockhaus and Nord, 1979	Found that Internal locus of control scores failed to help distinguish between entrepreneurs and managers
Brockhaus, 1980	Used a criterion for success, which was that the business still existed after three years. Found that successful business founders had a higher internal locus of control than founders of those businesses that ceased to exist.
Cromie and Johns, 1983	Established 'entrepreneurs' scored significantly higher than senior managers did on internal locus of control beliefs.
Durand and Shea, 1974	Investigated the entrepreneurial activity of black adults engaged in operating small businesses (USA). 'Entrepreneurs' with high nArch and internal locus of control were found to be significantly more 'active'.
Hull, Bosley and Udell, 1980	Failed to find any relationship between locus of control and entrepreneurial activity but did think the need for achievement motive was the more important variable.
Pandey and Tewary, 1979	Provided 'empirical' evidence to suggest that people with high internal locus of control are more likely to become successful entrepreneurs.
Venkatapathy, 1984	'Entrepreneurs' differed significantly from non-entrepreneurs on all the scales of the I-E inventory.

Constructed from: Venkatapathy, 1984, pp. 97-100; Chell et al, 1991, pp. 39-41; Shaver and Scott, 1991, p. 30.

Table 5 - A Sample of Research Using Multi-trait Perspectives

Author(s)	Sample	Characteristics
DeCarlo and Lyons, 1979	Random selection of 122 individuals from a pooled listing of female entrepreneurs drawn from the business and manufacturing directories of several Mid Atlantic (USA) states, from directories of women business owners, and from directories of minority owned firms.	Age, marriage rate, education, previous entrepreneurial effort, regimentation, means of starting, achievement autonomy, aggression, independence, leadership, support conformity.
Hisrich and O'Brien, 1981	21 female entrepreneurs in greater Boston area in service and construction businesses	Self-discipline and perseverance, desire to succeed, action orientation, energy level.
Hornaday and Aboud, 1971	60 entrepreneurs from East Coast (USA) in manufacturing, sales, and services businesses. No industry specified.	Need for achievement, autonomy, aggression, recognition, independence, leadership.
Hull, Bosley, and Udell, 1980	57 owners or partial owners of business. 31 of the 57 had helped create the business or had been involved with the creating of a business in the past.	Interest in "money or fame," social desirability, task preferences, locus of control, risk-taking propensity, creativity, achievement.
Litzinger, 1965	15 owner-operators of motels in Northern Arizona.	Risk preference, independence, leadership, recognition, support, conformity, benevolence, structure, consideration.
McClelland, 1961	Middle level managers from Harvard and MIT executive programs, General Electric unit managers, managers from Turkey, Italy, Poland and Indian mechanics.	Achievement, optimism, affiliation, power, conscientiousness, asceticism, belief in achieved status, market morality.
Meredith, Nelson and Neck, 1982.	Descriptive account discussing how to be an entrepreneur.	Self confidence, risk-taking, flexibility, need for achievement, independence.
Mescon and Montanari, 1981	31 real estate brokers who owned and operated their own firms in north central region of the United States.	Achievement, autonomy, dominance, endurance, order, locus of control.
Schrage, 1965	22 R&D companies, less than 10 years old, in service, consulting, and manufacturing.	Veridical perception, achievement motivation, power motivation, awareness of impaired performance under tension.

Wainer and Rubin, 1969	51 technically based service and manufacturing companies that were spin-offs from MIT, 4 - 10 years old.	Achievement, power, affiliation.
Welsch and Young, 1982	53 owners of small businesses. Average size of 10 full time employees and 4 part time employees. All types of industries and businesses.	Locus of control, Machiavellianism, self-esteem, risk-taking, openness to innovation, rigidity, government regulation, economic optimism.

Constructed from: Gartner, 1989a, pp. 49-56

Table 6 - A Sample of Research using the Displacement Assumption.

Authors	Research
Ahmed, 1985	Examined Risk-taking and Locus of Control among the Bangladeshi immigrant community in the UK.
Folger, Timmerman and Wooten, 1992	Examined the personality traits of business managers who had been laid off as a result of companies downsizing. Data was collected before an explicit decision to start a business and later contrasted with the managers subsequent decision. Found that personality traits could help predict which managers would start a business as a result of their displacement.
Ohe, Honjo, Okada, and Miura, 1992	Conducted a psychological study that compared male and female entrepreneurs in Japan and the USA. Concluded that female entrepreneurs in both countries had a higher degree of 'entrepreneurial spirit' than their male counterparts.
Price and Monroe, 1992	Claimed that women and minorities were launching new enterprises six times faster than any other group in the USA. Suggested that this occurred because of the displacement caused by downsizing and because of inflexible working conditions. Researched the effectiveness of entrepreneurial training schemes for women and minorities in Colorado.
Sexton and Bowman, 1986	Examined the psychological characteristics of female business students majoring in entrepreneurship, female business students majoring in functional areas of business, female entrepreneurs and female managers. Concluded that personality traits were significantly different between entrepreneurship students and business students and between female managers and entrepreneurs.
Watkins and Watkins, 1986	Examined the influences leading women to adopt an entrepreneurial career in the United Kingdom. The research used in-depth interviews with 58 male and 58 female business owners. Concluded that the background and experience of women entrepreneurs differed substantially from their male counterparts. Discovered that the male control group fitted the displacement model of entrepreneurship while the female group did not. The female group were motivated more by internal push factors such as the desire for autonomy and need for achievement (not as a psychometric measure).
Moriya, Judd and File, (1988)	Discovered that women entrepreneurs were more values orientated than male entrepreneurs who were more profit orientated. Identified significant differences between women entrepreneurs in different segments of the same industry.

Table 7: A Summary of the Meta-theories Observed in the Review

Theory	Ontology	Epistemology	Human Behavior	Nature of Society
Trait Theory	A combination of both realist and nominalist assumptions	Positivist	Psychological determinism. Personality determines behavior	Behaviour is 'real' and represents personality but context does not play much role in explaining and individual's behaviour
Displacement Theory	Reality as a concrete process	Systems building	"Man" as an adaptor	Society undergoes surface flux which hides actual structural relationships
Social Development Theory	Reality is a concrete process	Systems building	"Man" as a responder	Society is relatively ordered
Psycho-dynamic Theory	Reality is a contextual field of information: people can be displaced and they can feel displaced	Systems building	"Man" as an adapter	Society goes through periods of radical change that can displace people but existing social order is focus of entrepreneurial efforts for the psychologically displaced
Cognitive Interactionism	Symbolic interactionism	Information exchange	"Man" as an information processor	Society is organic

ProceSSIONal Interactionism	Contextualism	Systems building	“Man” as an adapter	Society is organic
Social Constructionism	Social construction of reality	Symbolic discourse	“Man” as the social constructor; the symbol creator	Society has structural flux

