

LITERATURE-BASED LESSONS FROM ENTREPRENEURIAL  
ECOSYSTEMS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A SOCIAL AND  
EMBEDDED PRACTICE FOR INCLUSIVE AGRI-PRENEURSHIP  
PROJECTS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Frenske Blom

MASTER DEVELOPMENT & RURAL INNOVATION | WAGENINGEN UNIVERSITY

# LITERATURE BASED LESSONS FROM ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEMS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A SOCIAL AND EMBEDDED PRACTICE FOR INCLUSIVE AGRI-PRENEURSHIP PROJECTS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

14-08-2020, Etten-Leur

## Author:

Frenske Blom

951103075130

[frenske.blom@wur.nl](mailto:frenske.blom@wur.nl)

Wageningen University, MSc Development and Rural Innovation

BMO-80424 MSc minor thesis Business, Management and Organization

## Supervisors:

Domenico Dentoni

Associate Professor in Sustainable Business in Agri-Food Systems

Subdivision: Business, Management and Organisation

Wageningen University

[domenico.dentoni@wur.nl](mailto:domenico.dentoni@wur.nl)

Amos Omore

ILRI regional representative, Eastern and Southern Africa

International Livestock Research Institute

[a.omore@cgiar.org](mailto:a.omore@cgiar.org)

James Rao

Agricultural Economist

International Livestock Research Institute

[j.rao@cgiar.org](mailto:j.rao@cgiar.org)

## PREFACE

This minor thesis research 'Literature based lessons from entrepreneurial ecosystems and entrepreneurship as a social practice for inclusive agri-preneurship projects in developing countries' is executed by Frenske Blom as part of the Master Program Development and Rural Innovation of Wageningen University from April 2020 until August 2020. This thesis research is guided by Domenico Dentoni, professor in Sustainable Business in Agri-Food Systems at the Business Management & Organization Group of Wageningen University.

I would like to thank Domenico Dentoni for his support and flexibility in changing plans from executing an internship to a minor thesis due to Covid-19. I would also like to thank Domenico for guiding the writing process of both the proposal as the thesis report.

I would also like to thank International Livestock Research Institute and especially Amos Omore and James Rao for their continues time, flexibility and effort even during Covid-19.

## ABSTRACT

A commonly used approach in entrepreneurship projects in developing countries, like the Maziwa Zaidi, is the ecosystem approach. This means that an optimal system should be created around smallholders to allow them to improve their livelihood. The entrepreneurial ecosystem (EE) approach seeks to provide bundles of products/services in order to stimulate an activity such as entrepreneurship. This EE literature assumes that the right incentives, providing resources and knowledge is enough to create successful entrepreneurship. Literature on EEs does not look at the social dynamics, practices and embeddedness that takes place in specific communities when developing an EE. The problem with projects that only employ the EE approach is that they risk ignoring the local social practices, which could result in an EE that does not fit the local context and becomes ineffective. This research therefore explores the opportunities of considering entrepreneurship as a socially embedded practice (SEP) while using the EE approach. This is done by answering the MRQ: 'How can recent literature on EE and SEP be used to inform projects that stimulate inclusive agri-preneurship in developing countries?'. This research is tackled through a systematic review of literature on the concepts of EE and SEP.

The results of the EE articles show that most literature in EE focusses on developed urban areas to stimulate entrepreneurship. EE literature speaks of disadvantages of rural, developing areas such as a low governmental support, lack of infrastructure (transport and information), lack of education, lack of skilled and diverse labour and less access to finance. These disadvantages of developing rural areas result in entrepreneurs who are mostly subsistence or necessity based instead of opportunity driven.

The results of the SEP articles highlight that using Western theories to explain what is happening in emerging economies does not make sense since the underlying conditions and attitudes are different (Anderson & Ronteau, 2017). SEP literature highlights that African economies rely heavily on interpersonal relations and social networks. SEP literature also highlights the existence of collective cultures in African economies in which everyone takes responsibility for the group, resulting in support and security for everyone but also obligations for successful entrepreneurs to share with less fortunate.

The EE concept could be a good start as a framework for (projects stimulating) entrepreneurship since it is a more established concept than SEP in the field of entrepreneurship research. Project that want to adopt the EE concept in developing, rural context should consider that using the EE concept in a collective culture will not create the same results as in individual cultures, even if all factors, domains and attributes are present. These projects should be cautious of the influences of family and kindship obligations for entrepreneurs and the mixing of personal and working life.

Project that want to stimulate entrepreneurship in agriculture should to pay attention that entrepreneurs in agriculture are fixed to their location and should be able to execute their practices from their own region. If the EE concept is used in a project that stimulates entrepreneurship in agriculture, it should also consider the focus on the family unit and long-term survival rather than individual gain.

It is advices to projects like the Maziwa Zaidi to not solely base their strategy on concepts like EE since these do not fit the context. The local, contextualised circumstances and their effects on entrepreneurship should not be underestimated. It is therefore recommended to first create contextual understanding. The SEP concept could supplement the EE concept as a first step of creating an understanding of the rural, developing context. These local circumstances and cultures should be taken as a starting point of forming an EE that fits the context instead of reforming these localities to Western principles or standards.

# TABLE OF CONTENT

1. Introduction.....	5
2. Context of the research.....	7
2.1. Context of entrepreneurship projects in developing countries.....	8
3. Theoretical framework.....	9
3.1. Concepts.....	9
4. Research Design.....	11
4.1. Methodology.....	11
4.1.1. Selection of data sources.....	11
4.2. Data analyses.....	12
5. Results.....	14
5.1. Descriptive analytics of dataset.....	14
5.2. Defining entrepreneurship.....	16
5.2.1. Analysis of the definition of entrepreneurship by the EE and SEP concept.....	16
5.3. The concept of EE.....	17
5.3.1. Describing the concept of EE.....	17
5.3.2. Use of the EE concept and critique on these uses.....	18
5.3.3. Criticism on the EE concept.....	19
5.4. The concept of SEP.....	20
5.4.1. Describing the concept of social embeddedness.....	20
5.4.2. Benefits of being embedded.....	21
5.4.3. Acknowledging benefits and constraints of embeddedness.....	22
5.4.4. How to reach embeddedness?.....	22
5.4.5. Criticism.....	23
5.5. Analysis of the EE and SEP concept.....	23
5.6. The concepts in the context of the project: EE.....	24
5.7. The concepts in the context of the project: SEP.....	26
5.8. Analysis of concepts in the project context.....	27
6. Discussion & Conclusion.....	28
6.1. Summary of findings.....	28
6.2. Discussion, Implications and recommendations of using EE and SEP concept.....	28
6.3. Implications and recommendations for future research.....	29
6.4. Conclusion.....	30
7. Bibliography.....	31

Appendices.....	35
Appendix I: List of selected articles.....	35
Appendix II: EE describing entrepreneurship.....	37
Appendix III: SEP describing entrepreneurship.....	38
Appendix IV: describing the concept of EE.....	39
Appendix V: Criticism on the EE concept.....	42
Appendix VI: Defining the SEP concept.....	44
Appendix VII: Advantages of being embedded.....	46
Appendix VIII: Enabling and constraining effects of being embedded.....	47
Appendix IX: Criticism on embeddedness.....	48

# 1. INTRODUCTION

A commonly used approach in entrepreneurship projects in developing countries, like the Maziwa Zaidi, is the ecosystem approach. This means that an optimal system should be created around smallholders to allow them to improve their livelihood. An optimal system should include local conditions and takes the context into account. This optimal system could include a supportive regulatory environment, accessible markets, human capital, access to funding and finance, access to education and training and cultural support (Long, Blok, & Coninx, 2019). Stam and Spigel (2017) defined entrepreneurial ecosystems (EE) as ‘a set of interdependent actors and factors coordinated in such a way as to enable productive entrepreneurship in a particular territory’ (Stam and Spigel, 2017, as cited in Tiba, van Rijnsouwer, & Hekkert, 2020, p. 1). The EE approach seeks to provide bundles of products/services in order to stimulate an activity such as entrepreneurship.

This EE literature assumes that the right incentives, providing resources and knowledge is enough to create successful entrepreneurship. Literature on EEs does not look at the social dynamics, practices and embeddedness that takes place in specific communities when developing an EE. The problem with projects that only employ the EE approach is that they risk ignoring the local social practices, which could result in an EE that does not fit the local context and becoming ineffective. This research therefore explores the opportunities of considering entrepreneurship as a socially embedded practice (SEP) while using the EE approach.

The Maziwa Zaidi project is in this research taken as an example of a project that uses the EE approach. The overall objective of this project is to catalyse uptake of dairy technology packages through institutional approaches that involve inclusive agribusiness models for improved livelihoods of smallholders and environmental sustainability in Tanzania. The EE approach is used by providing bundles of products/services in order to stimulate entrepreneurship by smallholders in the dairy sector.

This research contributes to this Maziwa Zaidi project with literature-based lessons on the concepts of EE and SEP to inform successful and inclusive roll out of agri-preneurship in a local context. This research not only contributes to the Maziwa Zaidi project but also similar projects of other NGOs, government agencies or international organizations employing an EE approach could benefit from the outcomes of this research. The outcomes of this research could help projects to create an EE that fits local circumstances and social practices in order to effectively stimulate entrepreneurship.

This problem statement results in the objective to ‘analysing recent literature on the concepts of EE and SEP to inform projects that stimulate inclusive agri-preneurship in developing countries.’ This objective is met by answering the MRQ: ‘How can recent literature on EE and SEP be used to inform projects that stimulate inclusive agri-preneurship in developing countries?’ This MRQ is addressed through answering 3 SRQs of:

SRQ1: What are the concepts of EE and SEP?

SRQ2: Do the concepts of EE and SEP fit to the context of an inclusive agri-preneurship project in a developing country?

SRQ3: What lessons could be taken from the concepts of EE and SEP to inform inclusive agri-preneurship projects in developing countries?

This report starts with introducing the context of the research, including a general description of entrepreneurship in agriculture, inclusive entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs in developing countries due

to their distinctiveness. The context of the research also includes a description of the Maziwa Zaidi project. Next the theoretical framework is provided which explains the concepts of EE and SEP and the ontology of this research. Followed by the research design which presents the methodology, methods and analyses strategy. The results chapters present the outcomes of this research. This chapter starts by providing the descriptive analytics of the dataset, being the selected articles. This is followed by explaining how each concept defines entrepreneurship and more insight in the concepts itself in order to answer SRQ 1. Next a description is provided of the concepts in the context of a project like Maziwa Zaidi to answer SRQ 2 and 3. The analysis and discussion of each of the results is given and finally the conclusion, bibliography and appendices are presented.

## 2. CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

This chapter describes the general broader context in which projects like Maziwa Zaidi operate. This thesis report is directed towards the Maziwa Zaidi or similar projects and it is therefore of importance to define the specific context for which this report is written. This chapter first defines the general context by addressing entrepreneurship in agriculture, inclusion and entrepreneurship in developing countries. It continues by describing the specific project of Maziwa Zaidi.

### Agri-preneurship

Literature shows many different attempts to establish a universal definition of entrepreneurship. According to Shane and Venkataraman (2000) a general consensus is found in the fundamental, distinctive feature of entrepreneurship to identify, evaluate and pursue business opportunities (Lans, Seuneke, & Klerkx, 2013).

This report is directed towards projects that aim to stimulate entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector. In agriculture entrepreneurship means the ability of farmers to generate opportunities in addition to the 'traditional' agricultural production (Carter, Ljunggren, Welter, & Alsos, 2011). Entrepreneurship in agriculture is different from non-agricultural entrepreneurship since farms are strongly embedded in regions. The geographical location is important for entrepreneurial opportunities in agriculture (Lans, Seuneke, & Klerkx, 2013). Generally farming families have a low entrepreneurial focus such as being driven by ideas of growth and profit maximalisation. Their focus is on survival, preserving family heritage, autonomy, rural lifestyle, and passing through farms for future generations (Jervell, 2011).

The agricultural sector does offer opportunities for entrepreneurship since it is one of the largest sectors in terms of cumulative income and the total labour force, especially in developing countries (Dethier & Effenberger, 2011). Bruton et al. (2013) even argue that '... entrepreneurship offers a means through which people have an opportunity to break the cycle of poverty' (Bruton, Ketchen Jr., & Ireland, 2013, p. 683).

### Inclusion

This thesis report is written for projects that want to stimulate entrepreneurship in order to create inclusion. Inclusive entrepreneurship is directed towards inclusion of disadvantaged groups. Disadvantaged groups are facing unequal barriers to either set up a business or to become self-employed. These disadvantaged groups include women, youth, senior, ethnic minorities, immigrants, individuals with disabilities and the unemployed (Holienka, Jancovicová, & Kovacicová, 2016). A report by the UN on women's economic empowerment (2016) stated that '... women are less likely than men to own small or medium-sized enterprises—only 20 percent of firms in the poorest countries have female owners. Women-owned enterprises (WOEs) tend to be smaller, are more likely to be home-based, and are often disadvantaged in their access to credit, resources and assets' (UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment, 2016, p. 2).

Inclusiveness in the agricultural sector is mainly directed towards youth due to the aging farmer communities which creates concern for the sector's continuity (Nhamo & Chikoye, 2018). The need to include youth is also important due to the high rate of youth unemployment, especially in countries with high population growth rates. ILO showed these differences with youth unemployment rate of being 9% in Northern America and the rate in sub-Saharan Africa is up to 30% (International Labour Office, 2020).

## Entrepreneurship in a developing country

This report is directed towards project that stimulate entrepreneurship in developing countries. Unfortunately, most literature in entrepreneurship orients on the so-called 'developed countries'. But during decolonization a new academic interest rose for entrepreneurship in 'developing countries'. Entrepreneurs in developed or developing countries face a different set of circumstances, mainly caused by a different type of economy. The developing countries mostly lack a stable, consistent or mature market. The access to finance in developing countries is more difficult than for entrepreneurs in developed countries. Most entrepreneurs in developing countries rely on informal sources of finance to start their business (Lingelbach & De La Vina, 2005).

A challenge to categorizing countries as either 'developed' or 'developing' is the heterogeneity within that category. Not all 'developing' countries could simply be regarded as having the same conditions (Farias, 2019). This heterogeneity in 'developing' countries is also observed in literature on entrepreneurship as there is an increasing interest in a more contextualized understanding of entrepreneurship (Fitz-Koch, Nordqvist, Carter, & Hunter, 2018). Welter (2011) states that 'there is growing recognition in entrepreneurship research that economic behavior can be better understood within its historical, temporal, institutional, spatial, and social contexts, as these contexts provide individuals with opportunities and set boundaries for their actions' (Weber, 2011, p. 165). Welter explains that understanding the context is important in order to know when, how and why entrepreneurship takes place and who becomes involved (Welter, 2011).

### **2.1. Context of entrepreneurship projects in developing countries**

This research contributes to the Maziwa Zaidi project 'Agri-entrepreneurship, technology uptake and inclusive dairy development in Tanzania'. The project is being executed by International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), which is part of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), in partnership with national partners including Tanzania Livestock Research Institute (TALIRI) and Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) and collaboration with local and international NGOs. The overall objective of this project is to catalyse uptake of dairy technology packages through institutional approaches that involve inclusive agribusiness models for improved livelihoods of smallholders and environmental sustainability in Tanzania. Agripreneurs will be trained and mentored to skilled entrepreneurs. These agripreneurs will promote the uptake of technology packages by smallholder dairy farmers. The project has a special focus on youth and women to create inclusive entrepreneurship.

This thesis research contributes to this project with literature-based lessons on the concepts of EE and SEP to inform successful and inclusive roll out of agri-preneurship in the Maziwa Zaidi project.

## 3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter starts with the 2 concepts that are used to execute this research. Next the ontology is provided, which explains how the concepts are looked at, interpreted, and combined them together.

### 3.1. Concepts

The concepts that are used in this research are EE and SEP. These concepts are defined as:

Entrepreneurial ecosystem (EE): systems are composed of components interacting with each other. 'Ecosystems can be described as the associations that are formed between, and within, communities of living beings and their environment. The components within an ecosystem develop a specific network for exchange of resources (i.e., tangible and intangible) and the maintenance and development of their own activities.' (De Bernardi & Azucar, 2020, p.16). The entrepreneur is placed at the centre of this ecosystem and can influence this ecosystem. This EE includes stakeholders who have an interest but also effect on entrepreneurial success. These stakeholders can include a variety of organizations and actors from government, knowledge institutes, investors or other businesses. This EE perspective believes that a specific context can either facilitate or restrict entrepreneurship (Long, Blok, & Coninx, 2019).

Entrepreneurship as a socially embedded practice (SEP): social structures, embeddedness and practices affect the creation and operation of entrepreneurship (Jack & Anderson, 2002). Dodd et al (2013) as cited in Anderson & Obeng (2017) mention that '... social environments shape what people do' (p. 23). The entrepreneur's participation in a social context is ongoing through social relations, networks, and deeper bonds. Context or social embeddedness is especially an influencing factor for entrepreneurship in a rural environment (Björklund & Johansson, 2020).

Embeddedness: '... the nature, depth and extent of an individual's ties into an environment, community or society can be understood as a configurating element of general economic process, which indicates a direct link to entrepreneurship' (Whittington 1992; Uzzi, 1997; Gemici, 2008, as cited in McKeever, Anderson & Jack, 2014, p.222). Embeddedness is more than social network, it involves understanding the nature of the structure, acting in the structure and reproducing the structure (Jack & Anderson, 2002). Being embedded means being accepted and included in the place.

### 3.2. Ontology of constructivism

This research uses the ontology of constructivism which defines that reality is constructed and each of us sees a different reality. What reality we see is determined by a complicated mix of social and contextual influences and/or presuppositions (Moses, 2007). This ontology recognized the role of the researcher and the society in constructing 'reality'. Constructivism states that universal and objective reality is not existing since the researcher and the society will always influence how a 'reality' is constructed. All choices that are made by the researcher in a research are grounded in personal experience and social and contextual influences and/or presuppositions and thus affect the outcomes.

This ontology allows to acknowledge the influence of the researcher in this systematic review and thus the outcome. This ontology is used by being transparent about the selection procedure of articles, process of distraction and how the 'reality' is constructed by the researcher. Constructivism also allows to acknowledge the role of the researchers in the selected articles that are used for this systematic review. This research does therefore not claim to find a universal, objective outcome. Instead this research

attempts to be transparent about how the outcome and reality is constructed in this research (Moses, 2007).

Using constructivism as an ontology allows to state that both EE and SEP are experienced as a reality or 'the truth' in a certain context. Using the ontology of constructivism help to examine if these 2 concepts of the (contextual) constructed reality have links or contradictions and if these could fit in another context as regularly used. Constructivism also allows to create interpretations of how the EE and SEP concept could possibility fit in a context like the Maziwa Zaidi project.

## 4. RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter provides the methodology of this research, including the selection of data sources and methods of analysing the data.

### 4.1. Methodology

This research is a systematic review of literature, 'a literature review can broadly be described as a more or less systematic way of collecting and synthesizing previous research (Baumeister & Leary, 1997; Tranfield, Denyer, & Smart, 2003, as cited in Snyder, 2019, p. 333)'. A qualitative systematic review of literature requires that data should be interpreted in order to create meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge (Bowen, 2009). Using the ontology of constructivism allows to acknowledge that the selected articles are an interpretation of the authors on reality. Using the ontology of constructivism allows to interpret results from the articles and to create a more rich, contextualised analysis compared to research aiming to find universal, objective outcomes.

Snyder (2019) states that a 'by integrating findings and perspectives from many empirical findings, a literature review can address research questions with a power that no single study has' (p. 333). Analysing different perspectives in literature and interpreting them allows to construct a reality that fits to the context.

The data sources that are used for this research consist of scientific articles on the concept of EE or SEP.

#### 4.1.1. SELECTION OF DATA SOURCES

In order to select articles for the systematic review, the searching engines of WUR Library and Scopus are used. To select articles on the concept of EE the following keywords are used: 'Entrepreneurial ecosystem' OR 'EE' AND 'Agriculture' OR 'Rural' OR 'Developing countries' OR 'Emerging economies'. To select articles on the concept of SEP the following keywords are used: 'Entrepreneurship' AND 'Embeddedness' OR 'Social Practice' AND 'Agriculture' OR 'Rural' OR 'Developing countries' OR 'Emerging economies'

In addition to the articles that derived from these searching engines articles suggested by the supervisors Domenico Dentoni, Amos Amore and James Rao are included. All the selected articles needed to pass the inclusion criteria of:

- Recent articles; to be published in the past 20 years (2000-2020).
- Quality of articles; to be peer-reviewed
- Should at least include one of the concepts: EE or SEP

After reading the abstract, the article should at least include an explanation of the concept EE and/or SEP and/or: relate the concept(s) to at least one of the terms: inclusion, agriculture, developing countries, smallholders or rural. If the concepts were included enough in the abstract and/or if the article matched the context enough was based on the interpretation and judgement of the researcher.

In total 15 articles on the concept of EE and 15 articles on the concept of SEP were selected for this systematic review. There are more articles than these 30 totals that met the criteria. These 30 articles were prioritized over others due to their high listing (and thus suggested as matches) in the searching engines. The amount of 30 articles is chosen to allow an in-depth systematic review in the time span of 4 months total. The list of the selected 30 articles and where they were found is added in appendix I.

## 4.2. Data analyses

The articles that met the inclusion criteria are analysed by using a data extraction form. This method is intended to ensure consistency as much as possible in analysing articles (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). The extraction form is filled in according to interpretations of the articles by the researcher. The extraction form that is used for this study can be found in Table 1. This form is used for all the selected articles to allow comparison and analyses between articles. The extraction form includes cursive text and underlined text. The cursive text indicates that the outcomes direct towards answering SRQ 1. The underlined text indicates outcomes that direct towards answering SRQ 2 and 3.

Table 1 Extraction form

Data to be extracted	
Title	
Author(s)	
Year of publication	
Concept(s)	Entrepreneurial ecosystem/ social practice, embedded
Location of study	
Time when study took place	
Study objective	
Study methodology	
Data sources	
OUTCOMES (ACCORDING TO ARTICLE)	
<i>Definition(s) of concept(s)</i>	
<i>How does the concept describe entrepreneurship?</i>	
<i>How can the concept be used?</i>	
<i>What is mentioned in the article as positive of the concept?</i>	
<i>What is mentioned in the article as negative of the concept?</i>	
<i>How can the concept be improved?</i>	
<u>Is the concept mentioned in relation to at least 1 of the 'project context' ?</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Entrepreneurship in agriculture</li> <li>- Inclusiveness (of youth and women in entrepreneurship)</li> <li>- As goal: improved livelihoods of smallholders</li> <li>- In developing countries/emerging economies</li> <li>- Working with service providers (network) to create capacity building</li> </ul>
<u>How does the concept relate to the context</u>	
<u>Is the article positive or negative towards combining the concept to the context (+how)</u>	
<u>Lessons for the context</u>	
<u>Relevant quotes</u>	

First descriptive analytics of the articles is composed by putting the data from the extraction forms in an excel document. This document recorded the year of publication, the research design, the location of the research and the author(s) of the articles, to see if repetition in authors occurred.

The next step to answer the SRQs was to compare the outcomes of the distraction forms. After analysing the first articles it was noticed that the concepts of EE and SEP and even within the concepts define entrepreneurship differently. It is therefore chosen to present the definitions of entrepreneurship as a first separate chapter.

For the first SRQ outcomes of the distraction forms on concepts are first analysed within the concept before comparing between the 2 concepts. This analysis in the concept is done by comparing outcomes on similarities and contradictions. This indicates what most of the articles state, but also which articles point to a different direction. These results are presented separately in the concept of EE and SEP before comparing the concepts. Next the concepts were compared with each other to find contradictions but also similarities or overlaps.

The next step to answer SRQ 2 and 3 was to analyse the outcomes of the distraction forms related to the context of the project. First, results of the context are compared for contradictions and similarities before including the concepts. Next, the concepts are included in interpreting the outcomes on the context and how the context fits to the concepts of EE and SEP.

## 5. RESULTS

The results start with descriptive analytics of the dataset to illustrate what type of articles are used for this systematic review. This chapter follows by presenting how the concepts define entrepreneurship. Next, the EE and SEP concept are defined, further explained and benefits and criticism are provided. Lastly, the concepts of EE and SEP are linked in relation to the context.

### 5.1. Descriptive analytics of dataset

This systematic review of 30 articles consists of 15 articles including the concept of EE and 15 articles including the concept of SEP. Figure 1 shows the year of publication for the 30 selected articles on the concepts of EE and SEP. The figure shows that the selected articles on EE are all published between 2015 and 2020. Articles on SEP that fit the criteria to this systematic review were more difficult to find. The selected articles on SEP are therefore from less recent years of publication.

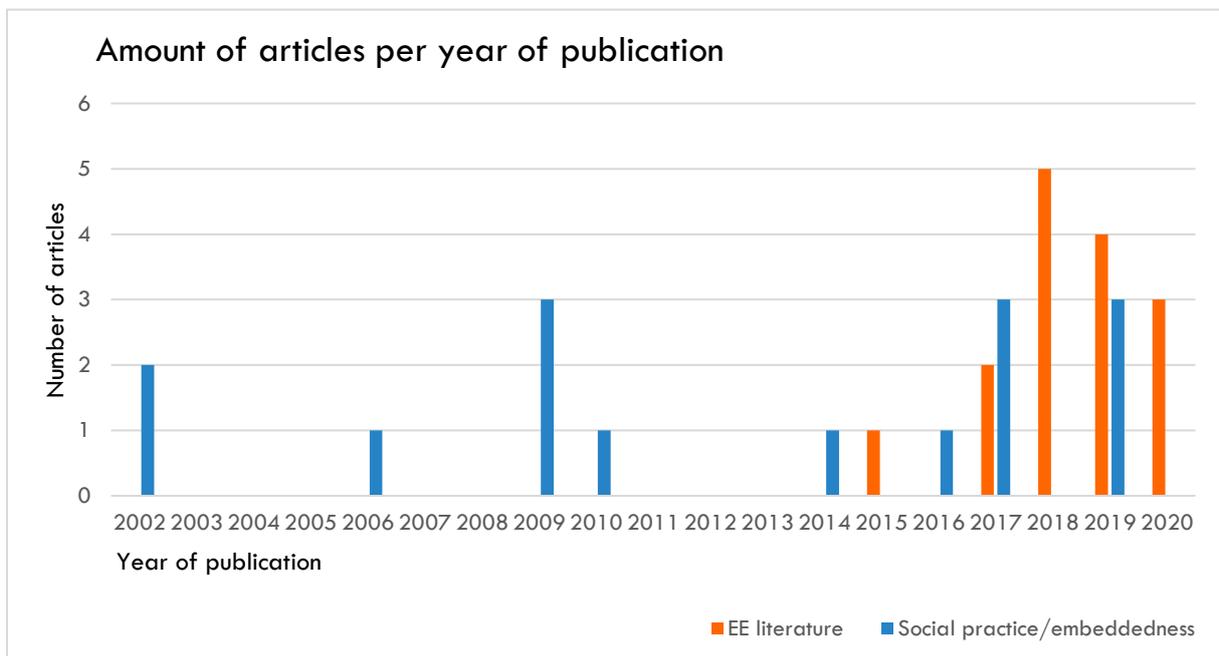


Figure 1 Number of articles per year of publication

Out of the 15 articles of the concept of EE 4 articles use a conceptual research design, 3 are a systematic review and 8 articles have a case study design of which 7 are qualitative and 1 is quantitative. Out of the 15 articles of the concept of SEP 5 articles use a conceptual research design, 1 is theory/framework building and 9 are case studies of which 5 qualitative, 3 quantitative and 1 is using both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The selected articles for both concepts have almost equal number of articles with a conceptual research design and case study design. This allows an equal comparison between the concepts. 3 articles on EE do have a systematic review as a research design compared to none of the SEP articles. Unfortunately, there were no SEP articles found that use a systematic review as a research design and that also fit the criteria of this research.

Out of the 15 articles of the EE concept 2 articles are not location specific but generalised. The other 13 articles are directed towards a location or collect their data in a certain area. These locations include 2 articles in Asia (1 in Bangladesh, 1 in Malaysia and Laos), 2 articles in the United States (1 in Geneva and Newton Falls in Ohio, 1 in North Carolina), 2 articles in Africa (1 in Algeria, 1 in Lagos, Nigeria), 5 articles in Europe (2 in Berlin, Germany, 1 in Latvia, 1 in 121 EU regions and 1 in the Netherlands, Spain,

Denmark, Sweden, Italy, Finland, Ireland, France, Hungary, the United Kingdom and Switzerland), 1 article in South America (in Santiago, Chile), 1 articles in Australia and 1 articles focussed on peripheral places but did not define the exact location. All these locations of EE articles could be found in figure 2.

Out of the 15 articles of the SEP concept 6 articles are not location specific but generalised. The other 9 articles are case studies that collect their data in a certain area. These locations include 3 articles in Asia (1 in Yuhuan City, China, 1 in Karachi, Pakistan, 1 in Israel), 2 articles in Africa (1 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 1 in Ghana) and 4 in Europe (1 in Denmark, 1 in London, 1 in the Highlands of Scotland and 1 in Sweden). All these locations of SEP articles could be found in figure 3.

Figure 2 and 3 show that the EE articles are more focussed on developed countries compared to the SEP articles.

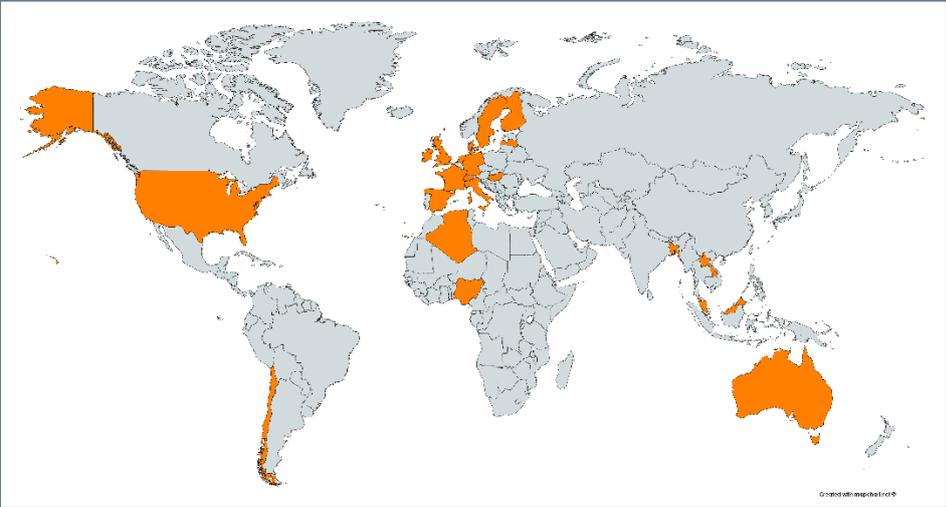


Figure 2 Locations of EE articles on the world map

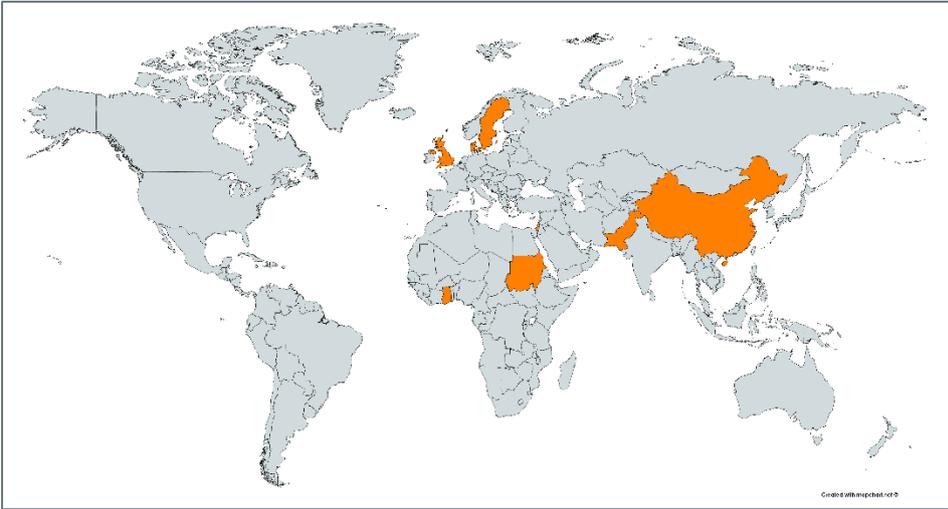


Figure 3 Locations of SEP articles on the world map

The 30 selected articles on EE and SEP included a variety of authors. In the articles on the concept of EE 1 author, named Morgan P. Miles, authored 3 out of the 15 articles. In the articles on the concept of SEP 1 author, names Alistair Anderson, authored 4 out of the 15 articles and 1 author, named Sarah L. Jack, authored 2 out of the 15 articles. Using a variety of authors allowed to create a better versified interpretation of general literature.

## 5.2. Defining entrepreneurship

Articles of the EE and SEP concept defined entrepreneurship all differently. Different clusters could be recognized in how entrepreneurship is defined.

### Entrepreneurship as purely positive and accessible for all

One cluster defines entrepreneurship as purely positive and becoming an entrepreneur is accessible and possible for everyone. In this perspective 3 EE articles and 1 SEP articles described entrepreneurship as a driver for development and only mentioned the positive effects of entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship is seen as a solution to reduce poverty, food insecurity, to create jobs and income, but also for community advancement (Erina, Shatrevich, & Gaile-Sarkane, 2017) (McKague, Wong, & Siddiquee, 2017) (Roundy, 2019) (Anderson & Obeng, 2017). 5 articles on the EE concept and 1 article of the SEP concept describe entrepreneurship as recognizing and exploiting opportunities. In this perspective is assumed that opportunities are present and ready to be recognized and exploited by entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs are innovating by recognizing and using opportunities that others do not recognize or use. (Xu & Dobson, 2019) (Pillai & Ahamat, 2018) (Long, Blok, & Coninx, 2019) (Stam, 2015) (Roundy, 2019) (Ozdemir, Moran, Zhong, & Bliemel, 2016)

### Entrepreneurship and its dependency on the outside environment

A second cluster of articles recognizes that the success of the entrepreneur is dependent of the outside environment of the entrepreneur. 2 articles of the EE concept and 4 articles of the SEP concept recognize the role of the outside environment and its influences on entrepreneurship. This cluster mentions that productive entrepreneurship can only occur if outside factors and actors are supportive. The entrepreneur is dependent on its social context to become successful (Audretsch, Mason, Miles, & O'Connor, 2018) (Szerb, Lafuente, Horváth, & Páger, 2018) (De Clercq & Voronov, 2009) (Ozdemir, Moran, Zhong, & Bliemel, 2016) (Schnell & Sofer, 2002) (McKeever, Anderson, & Jack, 2014).

### Entrepreneurship as something else than individualistic economic optimisation

A last cluster of only SEP articles state that entrepreneurship is not individualistic and not purely economic. This perspective describes entrepreneurship as not intentionally planned, and as a practice that is not always rational. It recognizes that most entrepreneurs are individuals that act in a community and are affected by their social life rather than individuals who only aim for economic opportunity. Dahl & Sorenson (2009) even mentioned that deciding on a location for an entrepreneur is mostly based on the proximity to family and friends rather than economic attractiveness. Anderson & Obeng (2017) recognized that enterprises in a village are more driven by communal survival rather than individualistic economic optimisation (Johannisson, 2011) (Zhu, Feng, & Pan, 2019) (Dana, Gurau, Light, & Muhammad, 2019) (Dahl & Sorenson, 2009) (Jack & Anderson, 2002) (Björklund & Johansson, 2020) (Anderson & Obeng, 2017).

Exact quotes from the articles that describe entrepreneurship could be found in appendix II for the EE concept and in appendix III for the SEP concept.

### 5.2.1. Analysis of the definition of entrepreneurship

#### Defining entrepreneurship as a job occupation or as a way of life

The descriptions or definitions of entrepreneurship differ between the 2 concepts. Most of the selected EE articles describe the entrepreneur as an opportunity seeking individual aiming to create (economic) growth or development. Most of the SEP articles describe the entrepreneurship as practices that are

influenced by relations and social context. The EE articles describe being an entrepreneur more as a job occupation compared to the SEP articles which describe being an entrepreneur as a way of live/for livelihood purposes. There are different assumptions on the motives of being an entrepreneur for the concepts of EE and SEP. These different interpretations, assumptions and definitions of entrepreneurship could possibly explain the different approaches and explanations of entrepreneurship by the concepts of EE and SEP.

## 5.3. The concept of EE

### 5.3.1. DESCRIBING THE CONCEPT OF EE

#### Geographically bounded EEs

The EE concept includes geographically bound descriptions in defining EE. 8 out of the 15 EE articles included words like 'within a region', 'in a particular territory' or 'regional' in their description of EEs. (Xu & Dobson, 2019) (Miles & Morrison, 2018) (Audretsch, Mason, Miles, & O'Connor, 2018) (Scheidgen, 2020) (Bliemel, Flores, De Klerk, & Miles, 2018) (Tiba, van Rijnsoever, & Hekkert, 2020) (Szerb, Lafuente, Horváth, & Páger, 2018) (Harima, Harima, Jan, & Freiling, 2020). The EE concept acknowledges the importance of location but also defines entrepreneurs as individuals who exploit economic opportunity. These statements together form the assumption that the EE concept view the region or environment as something that is purely recognized for its opportunities. The EE concept seems to view the decision of where to locate for an entrepreneur as purely rational and economically based.

#### The entrepreneur as the centre of the EE

The EE articles placed the entrepreneur at the centre of the EE. 3 out of the 15 articles mentioned this specifically (Xu & Dobson, 2019) (Harima, Harima, Jan, & Freiling, 2020) (Long, Blok, & Coninx, 2019). The whole system of EE is evolving around the entrepreneur. All factors and actors are present to support the entrepreneur in their activities. These statements of placing the entrepreneur at the centre confirm the individualistic approach to entrepreneurship, as mentioned in chapter 5.2.1.

#### Importance of interconnected relational actors

The EE concept highlights the importance of interconnected actors to create relational dynamics for a well-functioning EEs that promotes entrepreneurship. 10 out of 15 articles speak of interconnected or relational actors in their description of the EE. EEs are described as clusters or agglomerations of linkages that create a supportive setting for entrepreneurship. Actors in the EE benefit mutually by exchanging information and capital. The EE concept speaks of social capital as thus considers social relations as a resource or a way to explore opportunities (Xu & Dobson, 2019) (Pillai & Ahamat, 2018) (Erina, Shatrevich, & Gaile-Sarkane, 2017) (Bliemel, Flores, De Klerk, & Miles, 2018) (Tiba, van Rijnsoever, & Hekkert, 2020) (Szerb, Lafuente, Horváth, & Páger, 2018) (Stam, 2015) (Chohra, 2019) (Roundy, 2019) (McKague, Wong, & Siddiquee, 2017).

#### Entrepreneurs influencing and shaping the EE

The entrepreneurs can influence and shape the existence and the form of the EE. 4 out of the 15 articles confirmed this (Tiba, van Rijnsoever, & Hekkert, 2020) (Erina, Shatrevich, & Gaile-Sarkane, 2017) (Szerb, Lafuente, Horváth, & Páger, 2018) (Long, Blok, & Coninx, 2019). Especially successful entrepreneurs or start-ups have an ideal position to create and shape the makeup of an EE due to their legitimacy and recognition. These successful entrepreneurs or start-ups could influence the conditions of cultural, social and material factors in the EE. The existence and form of the EE and entrepreneurs co-evolve together as the entrepreneurs influence the EE and the EE influences the entrepreneurs, making it self-reinforcing.

### Elements, factors, domains or attributes to categorize EEs

EE literature categorizes different elements, factors, domains or attributes of what an EE should include in order to create a well-functioning EE. 10 out of the 15 articles mention elements, factors, domains or attributes (Audretsch, Mason, Miles, & O'Connor, 2018) (Miles & Morrison, 2018) (Erina, Shatrevich, & Gaile-Sarkane, 2017) (Scheidgen, 2020) (Bliemel, Flores, De Klerk, & Miles, 2018) (Tiba, van Rijnsoever, & Hekkert, 2020) (Long, Blok, & Coninx, 2019) (Stam, 2015) (Roundy, 2019) (McKague, Wong, & Siddiquee, 2017). The 6 domains of Isenberg are mentioned by multiple articles, consisting of policy, finance, culture, support, human capital and markets. Other categorizations exist but point to a similar direction. These 6 domains make it easy to categorize what is needed to create a supportive environment for entrepreneurship. These categories could also be used to describe and analyse the presence and quality of each category in a specific location.

### Actors or stakeholders that should be involved in an EE

Next to these elements, factors, domains or attributes EE also describes certain actors or stakeholders that should be involved in the EE. Different articles mention different actors but 8 out of the 15 articles acknowledge that certain actors or stakeholders should be present in the EE (Xu & Dobson, 2019) (Pillai & Ahamat, 2018) (Miles & Morrison, 2018) (Erina, Shatrevich, & Gaile-Sarkane, 2017) (Tiba, van Rijnsoever, & Hekkert, 2020) (Long, Blok, & Coninx, 2019) (Chohra, 2019). Examples of actors are new ventures, large established companies, entrepreneurs, customers, firms, venture capitals, universities, government policy and institutions, research institutions and investors. Most articles mention a combination of private sector, government and universities.

Quotes of the articles that describe the EE concept could be found in appendix IV.

## 5.3.2. USE OF THE EE CONCEPT AND CRITIQUE ON THESE USES

Not all articles on EE mentioned how the EE concept was used or could be used as a framework or theory. There were however 3 uses of the EE concept that stood out. They are explained below.

### Flat structure use of EE

Xu & Dobson (2019) mentioned the use of EE as a 'flat structure' in which the dimensions or factors '... are offered as equally weighted ingredients of the ecosystem' (p. 412). This flat structure use of the framework has been recognized by other articles since 10 out of the 15 articles mentioned the so called elements, factors, domains or attributes to categorize what an EE should include (Audretsch, Mason, Miles, & O'Connor, 2018) (Miles & Morrison, 2018) (Erina, Shatrevich, & Gaile-Sarkane, 2017) (Scheidgen, 2020) (Bliemel, Flores, De Klerk, & Miles, 2018) (Tiba, van Rijnsoever, & Hekkert, 2020) (Long, Blok, & Coninx, 2019) (Stam, 2015) (Roundy, 2019) (McKague, Wong, & Siddiquee, 2017). This 'flat structure' use of the EE concept assumes that if all factors or dimension are in place a successful EE is created. This 'flat structure' of EE could be used as a theory to categorize what is happening in an EE or as a strategy to create an EE according to the dimensions or factors.

Using EE as a flat structure is criticized for being 'laundry lists' of attributes rather than frameworks (Tiba, van Rijnsoever, & Hekkert, 2020) (Stam, 2015). EE is criticized for assuming that if all factors, domains and components are present EEs will be successful (Scheidgen, 2020). According to 4 articles the concept is under-theorized since it lacks a strong theoretical foundation. EE lacks explanation of how the factors in an EE interact and the lists of attributes do not give a clear reasoning of cause and effect (Audretsch, Mason, Miles, & O'Connor, 2018) (Scheidgen, 2020) (Long, Blok, & Coninx, 2019) (Roundy, 2019).

### EE as a tool to identify facilitators or restrictions to entrepreneurship

Another use of the EE concept as a tool or framework is to identify what is facilitating or restricting entrepreneurship. These facilitators or restrictions for entrepreneurship could be observed in terms of the factors or domains or in terms of the (social) context. Roundy (2019) mentioned that EEs are a metaphor for describing the set of forces that promote and sustain entrepreneurship. This use of the concept is similar to the 'flat structure' by taking the factors of an EE and analysing a situations according to these factors (Long, Blok, & Coninx, 2019) (Roundy, 2019) (Stam, 2015).

Using the EE framework to identify what is restricting or facilitating entrepreneurship is vague since it is unsure at what level these allowances or restrictions take place. This could for examples be analysed in terms of factors, at individual or system level, location specific, looking at the rate of new venture creation, survival rate or at the overall equilibrium of the system.

### 3 different levels of focus points for EEs

Audretsch, Mason, Miles & O'Connor (2018) described 3 perspectives or uses of the concept within the EE literature named entrepreneurial proliferation, entrepreneurial survival and entrepreneurial evolution. These 3 perspectives analyse EEs on a different level with different focus or measuring points for a 'successful' EE. The first perspective is named 'entrepreneurial proliferation' and 'brings into focus the rates of business founding as the objective with a primary focus on the influence of the EE on firm birth rates' (Audretsch, Mason, Miles, & O'Connor, 2018). This first perspective is purely focussed on which factors could stimulate starting new businesses. 'The second perspective suggests that EE may be conceptualized as the preservation of the new venture through 'healthy' creation, survival, continuity, and/or growth' (Audretsch, Mason, Miles, & O'Connor, 2018). This second perspective takes influences over time into consideration and is focussed on the business stages from starting to firmly established. This second perspective is called 'entrepreneurial survival'. 'The third perspective is concerned with new venture creation that influences equilibrium and disequilibrium forces among markets and business populations, causing change and evolution, seeing the demise of some business populations and the emergence of new ones' (Audretsch, Mason, Miles, & O'Connor, 2018). This third perspective takes a system approach as it focusses on the changes in the overall system. This third perspective is called 'entrepreneurial evolution'.

## 5.3.3. CRITICISM ON THE EE CONCEPT

### EE as a static framework

A criticism to the EE framework is that it is static and does not include changes or development over time. EEs are evolving system and yet it is analysed from a static point of view. Including time and acknowledging the evolutionally perspectives is important since entrepreneurship and EEs entail constantly changing dynamics (Xu & Dobson, 2019) (Audretsch, Mason, Miles, & O'Connor, 2018) (Harima, Harima, Jan, & Freiling, 2020).

### Different definitions of EE

There is no consensus on the definition of EE which causes different uses and understanding of the concept. Malecki (2018) mentions that 'There is no consensus on one definition of entrepreneurial ecosystems that offers a consistent set of objectives, the scale of analysis, attributes, actors, or processes' (in Miles & Morrison, 2018, p. 933). If there is no consistent set of objectives, scale of analysis, attributes, actors, or processes it difficult to create a unified understanding of EEs. The lack of consensus on defining EEs could

be explained by the complexity of EEs, thus creating different understanding or interpretation of EEs (Miles & Morrison, 2018) (Scheidgen, 2020) (Harima, Harima, Jan, & Freiling, 2020) (Stam, 2015).

#### EE focussing on one type of entrepreneur and context

EE is criticized for focussing on one type of entrepreneur or context, mostly being start-ups in urban areas, while at the same time treating EE as a generalised concept that could be used for any environment and type of entrepreneurship. Scheidgen (2020, p. 4-5) confirmed this criticism by mentioning that 'First and foremost, EE research has emphasized heterogeneity across regions yet implicitly treated each EE as a homogenous environment for entrepreneurship within a region'. By emphasizing on one type of entrepreneur or context, EE ignores the existence of other types of entrepreneurs occurring in an EE (Scheidgen, 2020) (Roundy, 2019) (Stam, 2015).

#### EEs as tautological systems

A cluster in EE literature states that strong EEs can only exist if there is successful entrepreneurship and that successful entrepreneurship can only exist if there is a strong EE. This suggests co-existence of the two instead of causation and could therefore not be used as a framework or strategy to stimulate entrepreneurship. An example of this criticism is the article of Stam (2015, p. 1764) who mentioned that 'The phenomenon at first appears rather tautological: entrepreneurial ecosystems are system that produce successful entrepreneurship, and where there is a lot of successful entrepreneurship, there is apparently a good entrepreneurial ecosystem'. These statements show that EE literature has a lack of knowledge on how EEs could emerge in regions without sufficient entrepreneurial resources from its initiation (Harima, Harima, Jan, & Freiling, 2020).

#### Lack of knowledge on processes in and outside of the EE

Other criticism is that we still know little about the processes that happen within the EE. There is limited knowledge on how entrepreneurs make use of EEs (Scheidgen, 2020). EE literature highlight the importance of access to markets and finance but does not explain why or how this process takes place (Long, Blok, & Coninx, 2019). Not only knowledge on the processes within the EE is lacking but also on the relation between the entrepreneur and the community. Bliemel, Flores, De Klerk, & Miles (2018, p. 3) mentions 'However, there remains a gap in research that explicitly considers how different processes at the level of the community might affect the effectiveness of the cluster as a whole'. EEs do not operate in a vacuum but take place in a community of a certain region (Pillai & Ahamat, 2018). It is therefore important that not only processes within the EE are understood but also the relations between the EE and the surrounding community.

The quotes with criticism of the other articles can be found in appendix V.

## 5.4. The concept of SEP

### 5.4.1. DESCRIBING THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL EMBEDDEDNESS

Embeddedness is explaining the relationship between an individual entrepreneur and the surrounding, local society that an individual operates in. It explains how an individual is connected to the social, economic and local institutional context. An embedded person is described as '. . . someone who knows their neighbours, someone who can navigate the local scene, someone who understands the history of a place, someone trusted by the community' (Dahl & Sorenson, 2009 p. 172).

### Granovetter's theory of strong ties

A cluster in SEP highlights the individual's ties into the environment, community and/or society in defining embeddedness. This cluster of SEP literature believes that the nature, depth and extent of one's ties are affecting entrepreneurship. These ties are described as configuring elements of general economic processes. This theory of strong ties is based on the theories of Polanyi and Granovetter. 10 out of the 15 articles mentioned the theory of strong and weak ties of Granovetter. This theory states that strong ties create closed networks and weak ties create access to other social networks beyond the own direct network. The strength of the tie is based on a combination of the amount of time, emotional intensity, the intimacy and the level of mutual benefits that is invested in the interactions. This theory shows that economic systems are embedded in social relations and institutions and thus entrepreneurial outcomes are dependent on social ties (Wang & Altinay, 2010) (Jack & Anderson, 2002) (McKeever, Anderson, & Jack, 2014) (Björklund & Johansson, 2020) (Kebede, 2020) (Chung & Whalen, 2006) (Anderson & Ronteau, 2017) (Ozdemir, Moran, Zhong, & Bliemel, 2016) (Zhu, Feng, & Pan, 2019) (Dahl & Sorenson, 2009).

### Giddens's structuration theory

Another cluster in SEP literature mentions that individual actions affect the social structure and the social structure is affecting individual actions. This cluster falls under the theory of structuration by Giddens. Jack & Anderson (2002, p. 470) confirm this statement by mentioning 'It is argued here that to understand entrepreneurship, we must take account both structure and agency; we can then appreciate how societal influences shape entrepreneurial agency and how agency redefines or develops structure'. The entrepreneur is thus not seen as manipulated by the structure but also not as a free and autonomous agent. An actor becomes embedded once he or she becomes part of the structure. Becoming part of the structure is done through a process that includes understanding the nature of the structure, enacting the structure and maintaining both the link and the structure (De Clercq & Voronov, 2009) (Jack & Anderson, 2002) (Dana, Gurau, Light, & Muhammad, 2019) (Wang & Altinay, 2010) (McKeever, Anderson, & Jack, 2014) (Björklund & Johansson, 2020).

The quotes of the SEP articles describing the concept can be found in appendix VI.

## 5.4.2. BENEFITS OF BEING EMBEDDED

### Embeddedness to draw on social and economic resources

Being well connected in networks is important for entrepreneurs in order to recognize and realize opportunities in a specific local context (Zhu, Feng, & Pan, 2019). Being embedded created trust between the entrepreneur and the local society. Trust is important for entrepreneurs since they operate in a network of interpersonal relations (Chung & Whalen, 2006). Trust enables entrepreneurs to get more access to support or the ability to draw on social and economic resources. If an entrepreneur is embedded, he or she gets access to more support during the entrepreneurial process. Local connections give access to private information, the ability to raise funds, recruit employees, get advice and to create customers. The extent to which an entrepreneur is embedded is affecting the ability to draw on social and economic resources (Dana, Gurau, Light, & Muhammad, 2019) (Zhu, Feng, & Pan, 2019) (Kebede, 2020) (Jack & Anderson, 2002) (McKeever, Anderson, & Jack, 2014) (Chung & Whalen, 2006).

### Understanding local rules through culture, social structure and institutional milieu

Being embedded can also help in understanding the locality. Business is conducted in a specific way, depending on its local rules. Becoming embedded helps in understanding local rules and thus playing according to local context (Jack & Anderson, 2002)

Embeddedness takes place in a local society and each local society has its own culture, social structure and institutional milieu. The culture includes the customs, habits, shares interpretations and ideas, norms and values, informal rules and routines of a local community. In order to become embedded this local culture should be understood (Schnell & Sofer, 2002) (Zhu, Feng, & Pan, 2019). The social structure of a local community exists of the agent's connectedness, reciprocity, interdependence, autonomy and power relations within a local community (Schnell & Sofer, 2002). Understanding the social structure of a local community helps to know who you could or should address for support and how to operate in this social structure. The institutional milieu of a local community exists of the access to education and training institutions, incubation, market organizations and business associations (Schnell & Sofer, 2002). The institutional milieu also refers to the local regulations and legal enforcement (Zhu, Feng, & Pan, 2019).

### Understanding local rules through practice theory

Practice theory acknowledges entrepreneurship as an everyday practice. De Clercq & Voronov (2009) mentioned that 'it [practice theory] focuses on the minutia of the everyday life of people and groups, through which phenomena such as new product development or strategy get accomplished' (p.397). These everyday practices include routines as well as improvisation in order to cope with unexpected event.

The main purpose of the practice theory is to gain understanding and explanation from a local context. Anderson & Ronteau (2017) mentioned that a theory should be based on what entrepreneurs actually do within their local context in order to provide understanding and explanation. Practice theory can be used to examine the situated practice that is linked to a local context. Practice theory can explain how everyday practices link to the broader societal structures. It enables to understand how entrepreneurial agency engages with the structures. Practice theory can help to understand cultural rules, language, procedures and local shared understanding (De Clercq & Voronov, 2009) (Anderson & Obeng, 2017) (Anderson & Ronteau, 2017).

Quotes on the advantages of being embedded could be found in appendix VII.

### 5.4.3. ACKNOWLEDGING BENEFITS AND CONSTRAINTS OF EMBEDDEDNESS

Being embedded is not only positive but could also possibly constraint entrepreneurs. Embeddedness as a theoretical lens or methodological tool could help to understand how membership of social groups could facilitate but also constrain action. Embeddedness can constraint or hinder actions due to pressure and normative expectations from the family or kinship members. Entrepreneurs could feel obliged to support relatives which could hinder their business. Embeddedness can also be turned into a liability in which entrepreneurs act on social expectation instead of own agency. This could for example happen if entrepreneurs feel indebted to their early on supporters once they have succeeded as an entrepreneur. Overembeddedness can even reduce the inflow of new information in the local setting if a community is not open to input or new ideas from outsiders (McKeever, Anderson, & Jack, 2014) (Wang & Altinay, 2010) (Kebede, 2020) (Anderson & Obeng, 2017) (Jack & Anderson, 2002) (Schnell & Sofer, 2002).

### 5.4.4. HOW TO REACH EMBEDDEDNESS?

Suggestions for entrepreneurs on how to become embedded mainly consisted of everyday practices, to build mutual understanding and trust to form personal relations. Getting to know locals in personal life is important to create trust for business life. Becoming embedded is not created from deliberate planning or intentions but from the interplay of everyday life and the social context. Creating a mutual understanding between the entrepreneur and the alter and to develop trust is critical for the willingness to help the entrepreneur. Having a large network is not enough but the acceptance and inclusion is a

place is important (De Clercq & Voronov, 2009) (Ozdemir, Moran, Zhong, & Bliemel, 2016) (Schnell & Sofer, 2002) (Björklund & Johansson, 2020) (Jack & Anderson, 2002).

### 5.4.5. CRITICISM

The main criticism towards the embeddedness theory consists of not having a clear definition of the embeddedness theory. There exist many interpretations to the theory which creates confusion. Ozdemir, Moran, Zhong & Bliemel (2016, p. 73) mention about the various definitions that 'Our review of the brokerage, cohesion and embeddedness literatures yielded a growing number of, sometimes conflicting and confusing, observations and accounts regarding the networking behaviour of entrepreneurs'. Some even call embeddedness an umbrella concept since it means many different things and has many different uses of the concept all put under the same term of embeddedness (Ozdemir, Moran, Zhong, & Bliemel, 2016) (Dana, Gurau, Light, & Muhammad, 2019) (Wang & Altinay, 2010) (McKeever, Anderson, & Jack, 2014).

The quotes on the argument of many interpretations of embeddedness can be found in appendix VIII.

## 5.5. Analysis of the EE and SEP concept

### Level of analysis

Even though there is disagreement within the EE concept on which level it operates, it is still observed that the EE concept is generalised at a bigger level than the concept of SEP. Articles on the EE concept generalise for example the factors needed to create an effective EE, regardless of the location. The EE articles that include case studies mostly talk about regional or national cases. The SEP articles that include case studies mostly talk about communities instead of regional or national level, showing a smaller level of analysis.

### Perspectives on location

The EE concept acknowledges that ecosystems are geographically bound and thus specific to each different location. The concept of SEP also highlights the importance of not generalising among different contexts. The concepts do however differ in how these specific locations are chosen and viewed by entrepreneurs. The EE concept acknowledges the importance of location but also defines entrepreneurs as individuals who exploit economic opportunity. These statements together form the assumption that EE concept view the region or environment as something that is purely recognized for its opportunities. The EE concept seems to view the decision of where to locate for an entrepreneur as purely rational and economically based. The concept of SEP differs in ideas about the location of entrepreneurs. This concept regards the location as a structure to operate in. The decision of where to locate for an entrepreneur is according to the concept of SEP based on personal ties in a certain area. Dahl & Sorenson (2009, p. 173) even mention that 'Social factors weigh in more than four times as heavily as economic ones in entrepreneur's location decision'. The SEP concept includes the personal life of the entrepreneur in their perspective on location compared to the EE concept which focusses purely on opportunities in location.

### Relational dynamics

The EE concept recognized the interconnectedness of actors and relational dynamics in the EE. The SEP concept also acknowledges the importance of relational ties in order to become a successful entrepreneur. Both concepts do however differ in how these relations affect entrepreneurship. The EE concept speaks of social capital as thus considers social relations as a resource or a way to explore opportunities. The SEP concept is divided about the effects of social ties on entrepreneurship. Some articles of SEP mentioned the same social capital as in the concept of EE. 6 articles of SEP did however mention that being

embedded in relational ties can have both enabling as restricting consequences for entrepreneurs. These restricting abilities of relational ties are not recognized in the EE articles.

#### Agency and ability to influence the structure

3 articles on the EE concept puts the entrepreneur at the centre of the ecosystem. 5 articles mention that the entrepreneurs have influence in shaping the EE. The concept of SEP acknowledges the agency of actors to influence the bigger structure. This is thus in line with the EE articles that argue that entrepreneurs have influence in shaping the EE. 6 out of the 15 articles on SEP mention the theory of Giddens called the structuration theory. This theory suggests that actors have agency in a context that forms the structure. Societal influences shape entrepreneurial agency, and agency redefines or develops structure.

#### Level of maturation and frequency of use for the concepts

It was more difficult to find recent articles on the concept of SEP that fitted the inclusion criteria compared to the concept of EE. Most articles on the concept of the EE provided explanation on how the concept could or would be used. These articles on the concept of EE provided also more criticism towards the concept compared to the concept of SEP. Most of the articles on the concept of SEP provided a theoretical background on where this is concept derived from. These articles on the concept of SEP also provided less critical feedback to the concept compared to the concept of EE. These findings suggest that the concept of EE is further matured and more frequently used in entrepreneurship literature than the concept of SEP.

## 5.6. The concepts in the context of the project: EE

#### Defining entrepreneurship in developing countries

Entrepreneurship in developing countries is rather new and therefore defined differently than in developed countries. This is acknowledged by mentioning that 'Many authors, such as Naudé and Havenga (2005), have noted that the history of entrepreneurship in the majority of developing countries is recent, and the term of entrepreneur was associated with the emergence of private sector, which, in this context, refers to anyone who creates a business and a job' (Chohra, 2019, p. 245). This resulted in the defining entrepreneurship in developing countries by self-employment and small businesses.

#### Rural areas as disadvantaged compared to urban areas

Literature in EE acknowledges that rural areas are disadvantages in creating EEs compared to urban areas. Rural areas are disadvantages compared to urban areas in access to and coordination between the components of which EEs are composed (McKague, Wong, & Siddiquee, 2017). Peripheral places often have a scarcity in resources, less key institutions, a lack of infrastructural connectivity (of both transport and information) and a low skilled labour force or lack of labour diversity (Xu & Dobson, 2019). Rural areas are not attractive locations for accelerator programs due to the scarcity of resources and businesses (Miles & Morrison, 2018). Next to a lack of technical, financial or institutional resources, rural areas also have smaller social infrastructure. Even though the social networks in rural areas might be denser, the size of the network is smaller and entrepreneurs in rural areas could therefore reach less (heterogenic) ties than in urban areas (Miles & Morrison, 2018). Entrepreneurs in rural areas receive less recognition compared with urban areas. This lack of recognition and thus lack of stimulation could hinder entrepreneurs of starting their business (Xu & Dobson, 2019). Another obstacle for entrepreneurs in rural areas is the entrepreneurial capacity which affects the growth and development of entrepreneurs in the rural area (McKague, Wong, & Siddiquee, 2017).

In further defining how rural areas are disadvantages, different components of government, transport, finance and human capital are discussed.

### Lacking support of the government

The entrepreneurs in rural areas of least developed economies are constrained by limited government support. This limited governmental support in rural areas is observed in the lack of appropriate public goods like infrastructure and education. These components and their limited coordination that should have been provided by the government create institutional voids and barriers to the development of entrepreneurship or EEs. (McKague, Wong, & Siddiquee, 2017).

### Transport

Peripheral places have limited transport infrastructure since business, trains or flights are less (frequent) available. Good transportation is important to establish resource flow and information or knowledge sharing processes. These resources, information and knowledge are crucial to stimulate entrepreneurship and EEs (Xu & Dobson, 2019).

### Finance

Most rural areas have sparse bank branches and insufficient access to finance for entrepreneurs (Xu & Dobson, 2019). Most access to formal finance is available in urban areas but due to geographical proximity, rural entrepreneurs cannot access these options. Even the informal access to finance, such as business angels, is less accessible for rural entrepreneurs since most business angels invest close to where they live in urban areas (Miles & Morrison, 2018). Some even state that entrepreneurs in rural areas need more finances to succeed compared to entrepreneurs in urban areas. The need for more finances could be explained by the lack of sufficient entrepreneurial capacity, education, business experience, and the perspective to identify and exploit market opportunities (McKague, Wong, & Siddiquee, 2017).

### Human capital

Rural areas have less access to education, universities, skilled and educated people compared to urban areas. High skills are important since 'supporting talents, especially those with high skills, is an essential driving force behind business (Henderson, 2002) and economic growth' (Venhorst et al., 2010, Henderson, 2002, and Venhorst et al., 2010, in Xu & Dobson, 2019, p. 416). Universities are critical and unfortunately most rural areas do not have access to universities or research institutions (Miles & Morrison, 2018). On average the level of skill and education of entrepreneurs in rural areas is lower than in urban areas. This lack of skilled workers can possibly lead to higher production costs or less competitive advantages (Xu & Dobson, 2019). This lack of appropriate human capital can even constrain business growth, especially in rural areas where the population is sparser (Miles & Morrison, 2018).

### Subsistence entrepreneurship as a result of disadvantages in rural areas

These disadvantages of rural areas together result in a different type of entrepreneurship, being subsistence or necessity entrepreneurship (Xu & Dobson, 2019). Entrepreneurs in rural areas are less likely to be opportunity driven. This subsistence or necessity entrepreneurship is seen as a symptom of market failure and could result from high unemployment (Miles & Morrison, 2018).

### Aiming for bigger markets

A possible solution or strategy for entrepreneurship in rural areas to these disadvantages is to look for larger markets. Rural areas have generally a low population density and therefore a small local market and limited demand within the rural region. Businesses can become successful and create economic growth if they expand their market outside their own region (Xu & Dobson, 2019) (Miles & Morrison, 2018).

### The role of the government in solving disadvantages

The government has an important role in stimulating entrepreneurship and in developing EEs through creating the right policy interventions (Xu & Dobson, 2019). The governments should play a role in regulating the market and creating an entrepreneurial environment that is favourable and encourages entrepreneurship. Especially a strong collaboration between the public and private sector at different levels of regional and national level is important to create well-functioning EEs (Chohra, 2019). Policy makers have an important role in responding to changing dynamics and evolutionary processes to still create a favourable environment that supports and stimulates entrepreneurship (Xu & Dobson, 2019).

### Other suggestions

Rural places need to overcome barriers through a collective effort and holistic approach. Especially farmers in rural areas should diversify their practices in order to adapt to the changing market (Xu & Dobson, 2019). The first step of creating rural EEs is to recognize the types of natural capital in a region and the existing enterprises that have already developed because of it. This natural capital and the existing enterprises are a starting point of how to develop further (Miles & Morrison, 2018). If regions do not possess this natural capital, regions can acquire other resources through resource injection. This could for example be done through the attraction of transnational entrepreneurs, who bring various types of resources such as human capital, finance, knowledge and education from one country to another (Harima, Harima, Jan, & Freiling, 2020).

## 5.7. The concepts in the context of the project: SEP

### The need for contextual understanding in emerging economies

Emerging economies have distinct circumstances and therefore need different theories to explain what is happening than developed economies. Western theories that are used as an explanation for emerging economies may not work very well since the underlying conditions and attitudes are different. Using a theory of practice on entrepreneurship in emerging economies could help to understand the practices of entrepreneurs in emerging economies and thus creating a fitted theory (Anderson & Ronteau, 2017).

This need for contextual understanding is not only related to emerging economies but also to the rural context that differs from urban entrepreneurship. Rural entrepreneurs cannot be compared to urban entrepreneurs since the context is more crucial in rural environments as an influence on entrepreneurship. Examining specific contexts and the attached sub-culture is necessary to understand since entrepreneurship in rural areas is unique (Björklund & Johansson, 2020).

### The need to embed connections in emerging economies

Entrepreneurs in emerging economies have an enlarged need to embed connection compared to established economies. Building trust is crucial for the performance of entrepreneurs in rural areas (Ozdemir, Moran, Zhong, & Bliemel, 2016). Especially African economies have the need to embed relations because 'unlike industrialized economies where economic exchange is mainly based on impersonal transactions, African economies rely heavily on interpersonal relationship and social networks' (Kebede, 2020, p. 651). This need for strong personal relations is needed to solve material and non-material disadvantages of African rural economies (Kebede, 2020). Especially entrepreneurs in economies with institutional weakness could overcome this by turning to family, friends and ethnic networks to access financial capital, information, suppliers and customers (Kebede, 2020).

### Informal sector

Informal entrepreneurs work outside the governmental regulations and have less access to finance and resources from formal institutions. In the current state of Africa with inefficient regulatory frameworks of the formal system, informal systems of social networks show potential of substituting the formal system. The social network of informal entrepreneurs in Africa is important since they provide sources of livelihood security and support in the rural and urban areas (Kebede, 2020).

### Collectivist culture & survival

The importance of strong ties in African countries creates a collectivist culture. Hofstede (1984) describes this collective culture as 'collectivist cultures focus on group obligation and interpersonal harmony, fostering strong relations where everybody takes responsibility for their group members' (in Kebede, 2020, p. 633). The benefits of collectivist culture are that society and strong family ties are possible sources of social protection for the poor (Kebede, 2020). This collectivist culture is characterized by not separating personal and working life as mentioned in; 'life and livelihood are rarely separated and kinship expectations and obligations permeate practices' Anderson & Obeng (2017, p. 25). Not separating personal and working life together with collective culture could have some negative results such as committing high percentages of business resources to family matters at the expense of the business (Anderson & Obeng, 2017). The entrepreneurs that are successful might be confronted with obligations to share with less successful associates. Examples could be to send money back home, to find jobs for family members or to host family members. These obligations of family and kinship can dramatically affect entrepreneurs in pursuing and developing a profitable enterprise (Kebede, 2020).

## 5.8. Analysis of concepts in the project context

The EE concept got criticized for the fact that most EE literature is focussed on urban areas. The EE articles that did mention something about EEs in rural areas were mostly focussing on the limitations or disadvantages of rural areas to create entrepreneurship or EEs. The fact that only a few EE articles focused on rural areas, and if they focussed on rural areas it was mostly on the limitations showed that the EE concept is not fully suited to advice entrepreneurship in rural areas.

The limitations or disadvantages that were mentioned by the EE concept of rural areas were in the domains of government, transport, finance and human capital. This shows that successful entrepreneurship is not occurring due to limitations in those domains. This confirms again that EE assumes that successful entrepreneurship can occur if all domains or factors are present, regardless of the context. The SEP concept on the other side highlights the need for contextual understanding. SEP emphasized the different needs of each context in order to create successful entrepreneurship.

It shows that the concept of EE regards being an entrepreneur as a job occupation. EE does not discuss the influence of a person's personal life on entrepreneurship. The articles on SEP did however bring up the collective culture in African countries in which personal life is highly influencing entrepreneurship. This shows that the EE concept is difficult to use for understanding entrepreneurs in collective cultures.

## 6. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

This thesis research aims to answer the MRQ: 'How can recent literature on EE and SEP be used to inform projects that stimulate inclusive agri-preneurship in developing countries?'. This MRQ is tackled through a systematic review of literature on the EE and SEP concept resulting in a better understanding of both concepts and their relation to a developing, rural context for agripreneurs.

This chapter first presents a short summary of the findings on which the discussion is built on. Next the implications and recommendations for projects that stimulate inclusive agri-preneurship in developing countries is provided and finally a conclusion is given.

### 6.1. Summary of findings

#### EE in the developing, rural context of agripreneurs.

The results of the EE articles show that most literature in EE focusses on developed urban areas to stimulate entrepreneurship. The EE literature that focusses on developing rural areas is mostly speaking of disadvantages for the entrepreneurs due to their context. These disadvantages according to EE are a low governmental support, resulting in less quality and quantity access of public goods like infrastructure (connectivity in terms of transport and information) and education. A low governmental support can also result in the lack of a supportive legislative environment for entrepreneurs. Less access to education, universities and research institutions creates low skilled human capital and a lack of diversity in labour force. The lack of skilled and diverse labour can lead to higher production costs or less competitive advantages for enterprises. There is insufficient access to finance in developing rural areas, especially access to formal finance is very limited. The social infrastructure in rural areas is denser but smaller, meaning that entrepreneurs in rural areas have less connections to reach for support, finance, information or other resources. These disadvantages of developing rural areas result in entrepreneurs who are mostly subsistence or necessity based instead of opportunity driven.

#### SEP in the developing, rural context of agripreneurs.

The results of the SEP articles highlight that using Western theories to explain what is happening in emerging economies does not make sense since the underlying conditions and attitudes are different (Anderson & Ronteau, 2017). SEP literature highlights that African economies rely heavily on interpersonal relations and social networks. Strong personal relations could even solve material and non-material disadvantages or substitute the weak formal system of African rural economies, especially economies with institutional weakness. The inefficient regulatory frameworks of African rural economies do not provide enough access to formal finance and resources causing more informal entrepreneurs. SEP literature also highlights the existence of collective cultures in African economies in which everyone takes responsibility for the group, resulting in support and security for everyone but also obligations for successful entrepreneurs to share with less fortunate.

### 6.2. Discussion, Implications and recommendations

#### An individualistic concept in a collective culture

The EE concept is built on the assumption that entrepreneurs base their position on individual gain and aim to make profit. SEP highlights the existence of collective cultures which aim for the best collective outcomes instead of individual gain. The EE concept is not a good strategy to use in a context of collective cultures since the EE concept is built on individual motives of entrepreneurs. The EE concept assumes that entrepreneurs take decisions based on individual gain instead of collective survival. Using the EE concept

in a collective culture will not create the same results as in individual cultures, even if all factors, domains and attributes are present. Projects that want to use the EE concept in a collective culture should therefore be cautious on the influences of family and kinship obligations for entrepreneurs. These projects need to be careful to assume that by implementing the EE concept with all the factors, domains and attributes is enough to create successful entrepreneurship.

The articles on SEP describe the African context as having a collective culture in which personal and working life are mixed. The concept of EE does not discuss the influence of personal life to entrepreneurship. This shows that the EE concept is based on Western principles of entrepreneurship in which personal and working life are separated. Projects stimulating entrepreneurship in a culture that mixes personal and working life should consider that decisions made by entrepreneurs are affecting but also affected but their personal life. Their decisions might therefore not always be rational as assumed in the EE concept.

### Agricultural entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurs in agriculture are strongly embedded in regions and mostly fixed to their geographical location. It is therefore important for a project that want to stimulate entrepreneurship in agriculture to pay attention that entrepreneurs should be able to execute their practices from their own region due to fixed locations.

Next to this fixed geographical location, farming families are mostly not driven by growth or profit maximalisation. They are focussed on survival, preserving family heritage, autonomy, the rural lifestyle and passing through farms for future generations. If the EE concept is used in a project that stimulates entrepreneurship in agriculture, it should consider the focus on the family unit and long-term survival rather than individual gain.

### Inclusiveness

Projects that use EE a strategy of stimulating inclusive entrepreneurship should keep in mind that inclusion and equality in the EE itself might not be enough to include disadvantages groups. The disadvantages groups face unequal barriers that could be based in the cultural, religious and societal beliefs, norms and values. It could therefore not be enough to offer equal access to finance, information, education, resources and network. It is therefore of importance to understand the local context, cultures and power dynamics before implementing an EE. Understanding the local dynamics could be done through applying the SEP concept.

### SEP lacking strategy

The EE concept could be a good start as a framework for (projects stimulating) entrepreneurship since it is a more established concept than SEP in the field of entrepreneurship research. Even though the SEP concept could provide a better contextual understanding of a local region it does not offer a further strategy of how to stimulate entrepreneurship. SEP could be a good a good first step in order to understand a local context and culture. These insights could be used to adapt the current EE concept in order to make it fit to the local context.

### Recommendations for future research

Due to Covid-19, the objectives and RQs of this research were last minute changed from field-based observation and interviews to literature as a data source. Only using literature for a research forms a limitation since it does not allow to triangulate data properly, affecting the reliability of the research. It

is therefore recommended for future research on this topic to explore the conceptual findings of this research in a field-based setting.

Due to time limitations this research chose to only include 15 articles on the EE concept and 15 articles on the SEP concept. The amount of 30 articles is not enough to make generalisation about the EE and SEP literature. This research therefore only claims to create a small insight in a section of the EE and SEP literature. It is recommended to future research on this topic to explore if the findings of this research form a possibility to be generalized by using more literature.

The EE concept assumes that all sorts of factors, domains or attributes should be present to stimulate successful entrepreneurship. This is however based on Western principles. It would be interesting for future research to investigate, by using the SEP concept, what is already present in a rural developing context in terms of the factors of EE such as infrastructure, education, governmental support, human capital and finance. It would be interesting to research the current state of these factors and how disadvantages are currently tackled. This way a concept that is still inspired by EE could be generated that fits the context of rural, developing areas.

### **6.3. Conclusion**

This systematic review shows that the concept of EE is an established concept that is based on Western principles of entrepreneurship. EE describes entrepreneurship as an occupation of individuals who exploit economic opportunities. EE assumes that if the right conditions are created that successful entrepreneurship will occur. The concept of SEP could be applied to multiple contexts and highlights the influence of personal life to entrepreneurship. This concept describes entrepreneurship as a livelihood rather than an occupation and acknowledges the importance of social relations and being embedded for entrepreneurs.

The EE concept could be a good start as a framework for entrepreneurship since it is a more established concept than SEP in the field of entrepreneurship research. As discussed, the EE concept shows some limitations of fitting to a rural, developing context of collective cultures due to basing of Western assumption on entrepreneurs rather than the rural, developing context. Using Western concepts like EE in rural, in developing contexts should be questioned. If individual economic gain is not the focus, using a framework to reach this individual economic gain does not make sense. In general, can be concluded that concepts or theories that are based on research in Western contexts could not be generalised or applied to every context. If concepts or theories include assumptions based on Western principles, they will never be able to explain phenomena in different circumstances.

It is advices to projects like the Maziwa Zaidi to not solely base their strategy on concepts like EE since these do not fit the context. The local, contextualised circumstances and their effects on entrepreneurship should not be underestimated. It is therefore recommended to first create contextual understanding of the practices and culture of communities in which projects will be implemented to stimulate entrepreneurship.

The SEP concept is not as established as the EE concept but could add on the concept by creating contextualised understanding that includes effects of social life to entrepreneurship. The SEP concept could supplement the EE concept as a first step of creating an understanding of the rural, developing context. These local circumstances and cultures should be taken as a starting point of forming an EE that fits the context instead of reforming these localities to Western principles or standards.

## 7. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment. (2016). *Leave no one behind - A call to action for gender equality and women's economic empowerment*. UNHLP.
- Anderson, A. R., & Obeng, B. A. (2017). Enterprise as socially situated in a rural poor fishing community. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 23-31.
- Anderson, A., & Ronteau, S. (2017). Towards an entrepreneurial theory of practice; emerging ideas for emerging economies. *Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies*, 110-120.
- Audretsch, D., Mason, C., Miles, M. P., & O'Connor, A. (2018). Time and the dynamics of entrepreneurial ecosystem. *Entrepreneurship & regional development*, 471-474.
- Björklund, C. J., & Johansson, J. (2020). Farming beyond food: Effect of embeddedness and governance structures on farmer's role in rural development. *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, 1-21.
- Bliemel, M., Flores, R., De Klerk, S., & Miles, M. P. (2018). Accelerators as start-up infrastructure for entrepreneurial clusters. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 1-17.
- Bowen, G. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative research journal*, 27-40.
- Bruton, G. D., Ketchen Jr., D. J., & Ireland, R. D. (2013). Entrepreneurship as a solution to poverty. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 683-689.
- Carter, S., Ljunggren, E., Welter, F., & Alsos, G. A. (2011). Introduction: Researching entrepreneurship in agriculture and rural development. In H. o. development, Carter, Sara; Ljunggren, E.; Welter, Friederike; Alsos, Gry Agnete (pp. 1-18). Edward Elgar.
- Chohra, M. (2019). A critical review of the academic entrepreneurial ecosystem in developing countries: The case of Algeria. *International Journal of Technology Management & Sustainable Development*, 243-259.
- Chung, E., & Whalen, K. (2006). The embedded entrepreneur: Recognizing the strength of ethnic social ties. *New England Journal of Entrepreneurship*, 51-61.
- Dahl, M. S., & Sorenson, O. (2009). The embedded entrepreneur. *European Management Review*, 172-181.
- Dana, L.-P., Gurau, C., Light, I., & Muhammad, N. (2019). Family, community, and ethnic capital as entrepreneurial resources: Towards an integrated model. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 1-21.
- De Clercq, D., & Voronov, M. (2009). Towards a practice perspective of entrepreneurship - entrepreneurial legitimacy as habitus. *International Small Business Journal*, 395-419.
- Dethier, J.-J., & Effenberger, A. (2011). *Agriculture and Development - A Brief Review of of Literature*. The World Bank.

- Erina, I., Shatrevich, V., & Gaile-Sarkane, E. (2017). Impact of stakeholder groups on development of a regional entrepreneurial ecosystem. *European Planning Studies*, 755-771.
- Farias, D. B. (2019). Outlook for the 'developing country' category: a paradox of demise and continuity. *Third World Quarterly*, 668-687.
- Fitz-Koch, S., Nordqvist, M., Carter, S., & Hunter, E. (2018). Entrepreneurship in the Agricultural Sector: A literature Review and Future Research Opportunities. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 129-166.
- Harima, A., Harima, Jan, & Freiling, J. (2020). The injection of resources by transnational entrepreneurs: towards a model of the early evolution of an entrepreneurial ecosystem. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 1-28.
- Holienka, M., Jancovicová, Z., & Kovacicová, Z. (2016). Women entrepreneurship in Visegrad region and its drivers. *Acta Univ. Agric. Silvic. Mendelianae Brun*, 1899-1910.
- International Labour Office. (2020). *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020: Technology and the future of jobs*. Geneva: ILO.
- Jack, S. L., & Anderson, A. R. (2002). The effects of embeddedness on the entrepreneurial process. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 467-487.
- Jervell, A. (2011). Chapter 4: The family farm as a premise for entrepreneurship. In G. Alsos, S. Carter, A. Ljunggren, & F. Welter, *The handbook of research on entrepreneurship in agriculture and rural development*. Cheltenham/Northampton: Edward Elgar.
- Johannisson, B. (2011). Towards a practice theory of entrepreneuring. *Small Business Economics*, 135-150.
- Kebede, G. F. (2020). Network locations or embedded resources? The effects of entrepreneurs' social networks on informal enterprise performance in Ethiopia. *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, 630-659.
- Khan, S. C. (2015). *Social exclusion: topic guide. Revised Edition*. Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham.
- Lans, T., Seuneke, P., & Klerkx, L. (2013). Agricultural Entrepreneurship. In E. G. Carayannis, *Encyclopedia of Creativity, Invention, Innovation and Entrepreneurship*. 1-6: Springer Reference.
- Lingelbach, D. C., & De La Vina, L. (2005). What's Distinctive about Growth-Oriented Entrepreneurship in Developing Countries? *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 1-10.
- Long, T. B., Blok, V., & Coninx, I. (2019). The diffusion of climate-smart agricultural innovations: System level factors that inhibit sustainable entrepreneurial action. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 993-1004.
- McKague, K., Wong, J., & Siddiquee, N. (2017). Social franchising as rural entrepreneurial ecosystem development: The case of Krishi Utsho in Bangladesh. *The International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, 47-56.

- McKeever, E., Anderson, A. R., & Jack, S. (2014). 13. Social embeddedness in entrepreneurship research: The importance of context and community. In E. Chell, & M. Karatas-Özkan, *Handbook of research on small business and entrepreneurship* (pp. 222-236). Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Miles, M. P., & Morrison, M. (2018). An effectual leadership perspective for developing rural entrepreneurial ecosystems. *Small Business Economics*, 933-949.
- Moses, J. &. (2007). Chapter 1: Introduction. In *In Ways of Knowing: Competing Methodologies in Social and Political Research* (pp. 1-14). Basingtoke, England: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Nhamo, N., & Chikoye, D. (2018). Models Supporting the Engagement of the Youth in Smart Agricultural Enterprises. In N. Nhamo, D. Chikoye, & T. Gondwe, *Smart Technologies for Sustainable Smallholder Agriculture - Upscaling in Developing Countries* (pp. 211-232). Elsevier.
- O' Sullivan, M., Rao, A., Banerjee, R., Gulati, K., & Vinez, M. (2014). *Levelling the field - improving opportunities for women farmers in Africa*. Worldbank.
- Ozdemir, S. Z., Moran, P., Zhong, X., & Bliemel, M. J. (2016). Reaching and acquiring valuable resources: the entrepreneur's use of brokerage, cohesion, and embeddedness. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*, 49-79.
- Petticrew, M., & Roberts, H. (2006). *Systematic Reviews in the Social Sciences - A Practical Guide*. Malden, USA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Pillai, T. R., & Ahamat, A. (2018). Social-cultural capital in youth entrepreneurship ecosystem: Southeast Asia. *Journal of Enterprising Communities People and Places in the Global Economy*, 232-255.
- Roundy, P. T. (2019). "It takes a village" to support entrepreneurship: intersecting economic and community dynamics in small town entrepreneurial ecosystems. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 1443-1475.
- Scheidgen, K. (2020). Degrees of integration: how a fragmented entrepreneurial ecosystem promotes different types of entrepreneurs. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 1-26.
- Schnell, I., & Sofer, M. (2002). Unbalanced embeddedness of ethnic entrepreneurship: The Israeli Arab case. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour & Research*, 54-68.
- Snyder, H. (2019). Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines. *Journal of Business Research*, 333-339.
- Stam, E. (2015). Entrepreneurial ecosystems and regional policy: a sympathetic critique. *European Planning Studies*, 1759-1769.
- Szerb, L., Lafuente, E., Horváth, K., & Páger, B. (2018). The relevance of quantity and quality entrepreneurship for regional performance: the moderating role of the entrepreneurial ecosystem. *Journal of Regional Studies*, 1308-1320.
- Tiba, S., van Rijnsoever, F. J., & Hekkert, M. P. (2020). The lighthouse effect: How successful entrepreneurs influence the sustainability-orientation of entrepreneurial ecosystems. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 1-16.

- Wang, C. L., & Altinay, L. (2010). Social embeddedness, entrepreneurial orientation and firm growth in ethnic minority small businesses in the UK. *International Small Business Journal*, 3-23.
- Welter, F. (2011). Contextualizing Entrepreneurship - Conceptual Challenges and Ways Forward. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 165-184.
- Xu, Z., & Dobson, S. (2019). Challenges of building entrepreneurial ecosystems in peripheral places. *Journal of Entrepreneurship and Public Policy*, 408-430.
- Zhu, H., Feng, J., & Pan, F. (2019). Mixed embeddedness and entrepreneurial activities of rural migrants in the host region: The case of Yuhuan City, China. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 390-404.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: List of selected articles

<b>WUR Library:</b>		
1	Impact of stakeholder groups on development of a regional entrepreneurial ecosystem – Inga Erica, Vladimir Shatrevich, Elina Gaile-Sarkane (2017)	Entrepreneurial ecosystem
2	Degrees of integration: how a fragmented entrepreneurial ecosystem promotes different types of entrepreneurs – Katharina Scheidgen (2020)	Entrepreneurial Ecosystem
3	The relevance of quantity and quality entrepreneurship for regional performance: the moderating role of the entrepreneurial ecosystem -László Szerb, Estaban Lafuente, Krisztina Horvárh, Balázs Páger (2017)	Entrepreneurial ecosystem
4	The injection of resources by transnational entrepreneurs: towards a model of the early evolution of an entrepreneurial ecosystem – Aki Harima, Jan Harima, Jorg Freiling (2020)	Entrepreneurial ecosystem
5	Challenges of building entrepreneurial ecosystems in peripheral places – Zimu Xu, Stephen Dobson – 2019	Entrepreneurial ecosystem
6	An effectual leadership perspective for developing rural entrepreneurial ecosystems – Morgan P. Miles, Mark Morrison – 2018	Entrepreneurial ecosystem
7	Social-cultural capital in youth entrepreneurship ecosystem: Southeast Asia – Tharuma Rajan Pillai, Amiruddin Ahamat – 2018	Entrepreneurial ecosystem + social capital
8	Social embeddedness, entrepreneurial orientation and firm growth in ethnic minority small business in the UK – Caterine L. Wang -2010	Social practice/ embeddedness
9	The embedded entrepreneur – Micheal S. Dahl, Olav Sorenson – 2009	Social practice/ embeddedness
10	The embedded entrepreneur: recognizing the strength of ethnic social ties – Ed Chung, Kim Whalen – 2006	Social practice/ embedded
11	Entrepreneurial ecosystems and regional policy: a sympathetic critique – Erik Stam – 2015	Entrepreneurial ecosystem
12	'It takes a village' to support entrepreneurship: intersecting economic and community dynamics in small town entrepreneurial ecosystems – Philip T. Roundy – 2018	Entrepreneurial ecosystem
13	A critical review of academic entrepreneurial ecosystem in developing countries: The case of Algeria – Mohamed Chohra – 2019	Entrepreneurial ecosystem
<b>Amos:</b>		
14	Accelerators as start-up infrastructure for entrepreneurial clusters – Martin Bliemel, Ricardo Flores, Saskia De Klerk, Morgan P. Miles – 2018	Entrepreneurial ecosystem
15	Time and the dynamics of entrepreneurial ecosystem – David Audretsch, Colin Mason, Morgan P. Miles, Allan O'Connor – 2020	Entrepreneurial ecosystem
<b>Domenico:</b>		
16	The effects of embeddedness on the entrepreneurial process – Sarah L. Jack, Alistair R. Anderson - 2002	Social embeddedness
17	Farming beyond food: Effect of embeddedness and governance structures on farmers' role in rural development – Jennie Cederholm Björklund, Jeaneth Johansson – 2020	Social embeddedness

18	Social embeddedness in entrepreneurship research: the importance of context and community – Edward Mckeever, Alistair R. Anderson, Sarah Jack – 2014	Social embeddedness
19	The lighthouse effect: How successful entrepreneurs influence the sustainability-orientation of entrepreneurial ecosystems – Sarah Tiba, Frank J. van Rijnsoever, Marko P. Hekkert – 2020	Entrepreneurial ecosystem
20	Enterprise as socially situated in a rural poor fishing community – Alistair R. Anderson, Bernard A. Obeng – 2016	Social practice/ embeddedness
21	The diffusion of climate-smart agricultural innovations: System level factors that inhibit sustainable entrepreneurial action – Thomas B. Long, Vincent Blok, Ingrid Coninx – 2019	Entrepreneurial ecosystem
22	Family, community, and ethnic capital as entrepreneurial resources: Toward an integrated model – Leo-Paul Dana, Calin Gurau, Ivan Light, Nabeel Muhammad – 2019	Social practice/ embeddedness
<b>Scopus:</b>		
23	Network location or embedded resources? The effects of entrepreneurs' social networks on informal enterprise performance in Ethiopia – Getahun Fenta Kebede - 2017	Social practice/ embedded
24	Mixed embeddedness and entrepreneurial activities of rural migrants in the host region: the case of Yuguan city, China – Huasheng Zhu, Junwei Feng, Fenghua Pan – 2019	Social practice/ embedded
25	Unbalanced embeddedness of ethnic entrepreneurship, the Israeli Arab case – Izhak Schnell, Michael Sofer – 2002	Social practice/ embedded
26	Reaching and Acquiring Valuable Resources: The Entrepreneur's Use of Brokerage, Cohesion, and Embeddedness – Sahil Zeki Ozdemir, Peter Moran, Xing Zhong, Martin J. Bliemel – 2016	Social practice/ embedded
27	Social franchising as rural entrepreneurial ecosystem development: The case of Krishi Utsho in Bangladesh – Kevin McKague, Jennifer Wong, Narual Siddiquee – 2017	Entrepreneurial ecosystem
<b>From systematic review on entrepreneurial practice theory</b>		
28	Towards an entrepreneurial theory of practice; emerging ideas for emerging economies – Alistair Anderson, Sébastien Ronteau – 2017	Social practice/ embedded
29	Towards a practice theory of entrepreneuring – Bengt Johannisson – 2011	Social practice/ embedded
30	Towards a perspective of entrepreneurship – entrepreneurial legitimacy as habitus – Dirk de Clercq, Maxim Voronov – 2009	Social practice/ embedded

## Appendix II: EE describing entrepreneurship

<p><b>Entrepreneurship as driver for development</b></p>
<p>'Regional-level studies are also important to researchers since entrepreneurial activity has been recognized as one of the most important drivers of regional economic growth' (Acs &amp; Armington, 2004; Audretsch &amp; Keilback, 2004, in Erina, Shatrevich, &amp; Gaile-Sarkane, 2017, p. 756).</p> <p>'Rural entrepreneurship that contributed to greater agricultural productivity and economic growth is an essential pathway out of poverty and food insecurity for the world's 'bottom billion'' (Baumol, 1990; Collier, 2008, in McKague, Wong &amp; Siddiquee, 2017, p. 47).</p> <p>'Entrepreneurship, the pursuit of innovative opportunities to create value, is increasingly recognized as a mechanism for economic and community advancement' (Acs, 2006; Nissan et al., 2011; Seelos and Mair, 2005; Shane and Venkataraman, 2000, in Roundy, 2019, p. 1443)</p> <p>Policy-makers in small towns promote entrepreneurship as a means of fostering economic growth based on the belief that 'successful [local] businesses can enhance rural and small community development'' (Miller et al., 2001, in Roundy, 2019, p. 1446).</p>
<p><b>Entrepreneurship as recognizing and exploiting opportunities</b></p>
<p>'... exploit market opportunity' (Ferrante, 2005, as cited in Xu &amp; Dobson, 2019, p. 410)</p> <p>'... an entrepreneur is an actor who innovates by recognizing market opportunity' (Filion, 2011, in Pillai &amp; Ahamat, 2018, p. 233).</p> <p>'Sustainable entrepreneurship is the process of discovery, creation, and exploitation of opportunities. . .' (Stepherd and Patzelt, 2011, as cited Long, Blok, &amp; Coninx, 2019, p. 993).</p> <p>'A process in which opportunities for creating new goods and services are explored, evaluated and exploited' (Shane &amp; Venkataram, 2000, in Stam, 2015, p. 1761)</p> <p>'Entrepreneurship, the pursuit of innovative opportunities' (Acs, 2006; Nissan et al., 2011; Seelos and Mair, 2005; Shane and Venkataraman, 2000, in Roundy, 2019, p. 1443).</p>
<p><b>The role of the outside environment on entrepreneurship</b></p>
<p>'Grappling with the 'how' question means acknowledging that entrepreneurship, as new venture creation, is influenced by factor beyond any particular entrepreneur. . .' (Audretsch, Mason, Miles, &amp; O'Connor, 2018, p. 10).</p> <p>'... the emergence of productive entrepreneurship as a result of interconnected actors and factors within a focal territory' (Acs, Autio, &amp; Szerb, 2014, in Szerb, Lafuente, Horváth, Páger, 2018, p. 1309).</p>

## Appendix III: SEP describing entrepreneurship

<p><b>Entrepreneurship as driver for development</b></p> <p>'In Africa, the role that entrepreneurship and small business could play for poverty reduction, job creation, and income has been widely recognised and embraced by policy makers' (McPherson, 1996; Trulsson, 2002; Chipika and Wilson, 2006, in Anderson &amp; Obeng, 2017, p. 25)</p>
<p><b>Entrepreneurship as recognizing and exploiting opportunities</b></p> <p>'Entrepreneurs organize efforts needed to create and/or discover and exploit new opportunities' (Ozdemir, Moran, Zhong &amp; Bliemel, 2016, p. 51)</p>
<p><b>The role of the outside environment on entrepreneurship</b></p> <p>'Some researchers thus challenge the dominant assumption that entrepreneurship is an intrinsic property of an individual and point to interconnections of entrepreneurial practices with gendered and broader societal and cultural images of entrepreneurs' (Chell, 2007; Czarniawska-Joerges and Wolff, 1991; Bruni et al., 2004; Nicholson and Anderson, 2005; Peterson and Meckler, 2001, in De Clercq &amp; Voronov, 2009, p. 395).</p> <p>'... entrepreneurs depend more than most other economic actors upon their network of social relations as a crucial source of valuable resources' (Anderson, Park &amp; Jack, 2007; Bates, 1997; Kim &amp; Aldrich, 2005, in Ozdemir, Moran, Zhong &amp; Bliemel, 2016, p. 51)</p> <p>'To wit, firms' competitiveness and growth, and the resulting regional growth, requires firms' embeddedness in concrete ongoing (local, regional and/or national) systems of social relations' (Grabher, 1993 in Schnell &amp; Sofer, 2002, p. 57)</p> <p>'While entrepreneurship has been described as the creation and extraction of value from an environment, it has also been described as a process that draws from the social context, and which shapes and forms entrepreneurial outcomes.' (Anderson, 2000; Jack and Anderson, 2002, in McKeever, Anderson &amp; Jack, 2014, p. 228)</p>
<p><b>Entrepreneurship is not individualistic and not purely economic</b></p> <p>'These empirical findings are clearly in contrast to the image of entrepreneurship as an intentionally planned and dramatically staged activity that characterized rationalistic approaches to entrepreneurship' (Johannisson, 2011, p. 136)</p> <p>'Though the entrepreneurial process is a value creation process, it cannot be treated so in a purely isolated economic sense' (Zhu, Feng &amp; Pan, 2019, p. 391)</p> <p>'However, some recent studies question the validity of this individualistic orientation, outlining the strong connection between entrepreneurial success and social capital' (Dyer et al., 2014; Kwon et al., 2013; Light and Dana, 2013; McKeever et al., 2014, in Dana, Gurau, Light &amp; Muhammad, 2019, p.1)</p> <p>'Is the typical entrepreneur more a local, embedded in the community, or more a nomad in search of oases of economic opportunity? At first blush, the evidence seems to favour the former.' (Dahl &amp; Sorenson, 2009, p. 172)</p> <p>'Social factors weigh in more than four times as heavily as economic ones in entrepreneur's location decision.' (Dahl &amp; Sorenson, 2009, p. 173)</p> <p>'Our answer to these questions is that entrepreneurs appear to be embedded in their community. The economic attractiveness of regions matters, but its importance pales relative to proximity to family and friends in determining where entrepreneurs locate their ventures.' (Dahl &amp; Sorenson, 2009, p. 179)</p> <p>'We need to move away from considering the entrepreneur in isolation and look at the entrepreneurial process' (Jack &amp; Anderson, 2002, p. 467).</p> <p>'Our findings show that farmer's endeavours are socially situated in rural collective practice. Their activities are deeply embedded in local rural culture, which affects the sustainability of their society' (Björklund &amp; Johansson, 2020, p. 3).</p> <p>'Enterprise in the village is not individualistic economic maximisation, or even optimisation, in any conventional sense. Rather it is about subsistence, security, sustainability and communal survival within this rural place' (Anderson &amp; Obeng, 2017, p. 24).</p>

## Appendix IV: describing the concept of EE

<p><b>Geographically bound</b></p> <p>'... in a local geographical community' (Cohen, 2006, as cited in Xu &amp; Dobson, 2019, p. 410).</p> <p>'... within a region. . .' (Audretsch, Mason, Miles &amp; O'Connor, 2018, p. 1).</p> <p>'... geographically bounded . . .' (Audretsch and Belitski's, 2017, in Miles &amp; Morrison, 2018, p. 933).</p> <p>'... [an entrepreneurial ecosystem] is regionally bounded . . .'(Scheidgen, 2020, p.3).</p> <p>'... geographical agglomerations. . .' (Pitelis, 2012, as cited in Bliemel, Flores, De Klerk, &amp; Miles, 2018, p. 3).</p> <p>'... in a particular territory. . .' (Stam and Spigel, 2017, in Tiba, van Rijnsoever, &amp; Hekkert, 2020, p.1).</p> <p>'... locally embedded knowledge transmission' (Qian, 2018, in Szerb, Lafuente, Horváth, &amp; Páger, 2018).</p> <p>'... regional innovation systems . . .' (Asheim and Isaken, 2002, in Harima, Harima, &amp; Freiling, 2020, p. 3).</p>
<p><b>Entrepreneur at the centre of the EE</b></p> <p>'Entrepreneurship is at the core of the entrepreneurship ecosystem. . .' (Xu &amp; Dobson, 2019, p. 410).</p> <p>'Entrepreneurs and their activities are the focal point of the entire system' (Harima, Harima, Freiling, 2020, p. 3).</p> <p>'... we draw on literature that places the entrepreneur at the centre of the system' (Stam, 2015, in Long, Block &amp; Coninx, 2019, p. 995)</p>
<p><b>Interconnected or relational actors</b></p> <p>'... an interconnected group of actors' (Cohen, 2006, as cited in Xu &amp; Dobson, 2019, p. 410).</p> <p>'In brief, the relational dynamics between the actors, organizations, institutions and entrepreneurial process are significant and critical for the successful functioning of the entrepreneurial ecosystem. . .' (Pillai &amp; Ahamat, 2018, p. 234)</p> <p>'Ecosystem principles suggests that entrepreneurial entities and environments coexist and reciprocally co-evolve together. . .' (Lewin &amp; Volberda, 1999; Porter, 2006; Tsai, Hsieh, Fang &amp; Ling, 2009, in Erina, Shatrevich, &amp; Gaile-Sarkane, 2017, p. 756).</p> <p>'... agglomerations of firms exhibiting horizontal, vertical, intra- and/or inter-sectoral linkages, embedded in a supportive socio-institutional setting. . .' (Pitelis, 2012, as cited in Bliemel, Flores, De Klerk, &amp; Miles, 2018, p. 3).</p> <p>'... a set of interdependent actors and factors. . .' (Stam and Spigel, 2017, in Tiba, van Rijnsoever, &amp; Hekkert, 2020, p.2)</p> <p>'EE adopts a multi-context perspective that highlights the self-reinforcing forces, interdependencies, supporting effects, and forwards and backward linkages among components' (Cooke, 2016; Malecki, 2018; Stam, 2015, in Szerb, Lafuente, Horváth, &amp; Páger, 2018).</p> <p>'The entrepreneurial ecosystem concept emphasized that entrepreneurship takes place in a community of interdependent actors' (Stam, 2015, p. 1761).</p> <p>'... there is a high degree of interaction and coordination among these key elements' (Chohra, 2019, p. 249).</p> <p>'The focus on system of interconnected forces stems from viewing entrepreneurship as a socially-embedded, relational activity. . .' (Thornton, 1999; Welter, 2011, in Roundy, 2019, p. 1444).</p> <p>'An ecosystem of mutually beneficial exchanges of information and capital between various market actors' (Mason and Brown, 2014, in McKague, Wong, &amp; Siddiquee, 2017, p. 47).</p>
<p><b>Entrepreneurs influencing the EE</b></p>

'Successful entrepreneurs become leaders, or lighthouses. These leaders create and shape the various cultural, social, and material factors that make up an EE' (Tiba, van Rijnsoever, & Hekkert, 2020, p. 2).

'Particularly successful start-ups are in an ideal position to have an impact on their context and create conditions in which they will further flourish as they enjoy a higher level of legitimacy and recognition' (Feld, 2012; Harper-Anderson, 2018, in Tiba, van Rijnsoever, & Hekkert, 2020, p. 4)

'Ecosystem principles suggest that entrepreneurial entities and environments coexist and reciprocally co-evolve together, not that the companies simply adapt to their environment. . .' (Lewin & Volberda, 1999; Porter, 2006; Tsai, Hsieh, Fang & Lin, 2009, in Erina, Shatrevich, & Gaile-Sarkane, p. 756)

' . . . EE adopts a multi-context perspective that highlights the self-reinforcing forces. . .' (Cooke, 2016; Malecki, 2018; Stam, 2015, in Szerb, Lafuente, Horváth, & Páger, 2018, p. 1309).

' . . . we draw on literature that places entrepreneurs at the centre of the system (Stam, 2015), and sees the system as one that can be influenced by the same entrepreneur' (Stam, 2015, in Long, Blok, & Coninx, 2019, p. 995).

#### **Elements, factors, domains or attributes to categorize what an EE should include**

'Combinations of social, political, economic, and cultural elements. . .' (Spigel, 2017, as cited in Audretsch, Mason, Miles, & O'Connor, 2018, p. 1)

' . . . institutional and organizational as well as other systemic factors. . .' (Miles & Morrison, 2018, p. 399)

'According to Isenberg (2011), an entrepreneurial ecosystem consists of elements that can be grouped in six domains: a conducive culture (e.g. tolerance of risk and mistakes and positive social status of entrepreneur); facilitating policies and leadership (e.g. regulatory framework incentives and existence of public research institutes); availability of dedicated finance (e.g. business angels, venture capital and micro loans); relevant human capital (e.g. skilled and unskilled labour, serial entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship training programmes); venture-friendly markets for products (e.g. early adopters for prototypes and reference customers) and a wide set of institutional and infrastructure supports (e.g. legal and accounting advisers, telecommunications and transportation infrastructure and entrepreneurship promoting company networks' (Erina, Shatrevich, & Gaile-Sarkane, 2017, p. 761-762)

'Several elements that support entrepreneurship have been identified, such as risk capital, universities, policies, support organizations, worker talents and a supportive culture' (Spigel, 2017; Alvedalen and Boschma, 2017; Isenberg, 2011, in Scheidgen, 2020, p. 1).

' . . . entrepreneurial infrastructure: proprietary functions such as marketing, new product development, R&D and financial support, public resource endowments such as culture, financial resources, human capital and social capital and institutional arrangements including regulations, technology and marketing standards' (Van de Ven, 1993, in Bliemel, Flores, De Klerk, & Miles, 2018, p. 2).

'These leaders create and shape the various cultural, social and material factors that make up an EE' (Tiba, van Rijnsoever, & Hekkert, 2020, p. 2)

' . . . key attributes such as accessible markets, human capital, funding and finance, support systems, government and regulatory frameworks, education and training, major universities, cultural support' (WEF, 2013, in Long, Blok, & Coninx, 2019, p. 995).

'Isenberg (2011) lists six distinct domains of the ecosystem: policy, finance, culture, support, human capital and markets' (Isenberg, 2011, in Stam, 2015 p. 1763).

' . . . that depends on a complex set of stakeholders, cultural values, institutions, and infrastructure' (Thornton, 1999; Welter, 2011, in Roundy, 2019, p. 1444).

'Components of an entrepreneurial ecosystem include entrepreneurs (identifying opportunities, mobilizing resources, and taking risks), technology, human capital, finance, and infrastructure' (Lee and Phan, 2008, in McKague, Wong, & Siddiquee, 2017, p. 47)

#### **Actors or stakeholders that should be involved**

'First there are various actors and resources involved in the ecosystem such as entrepreneurs, customers, firms, venture capitals, universities, culture and market' (Xu & Dobson, 2019, p. 410).

'In brief, the relational dynamics between the actors, organizations, institutions and entrepreneurial process are significant and critical for successful functioning of the entrepreneurial ecosystem' (Pillai & Ahamat, 2018, p. 234).

'Government policy and institutions are critical in the development of rural ecosystem by facilitating strategic partnership with industry both within and outside the region, research institutions, and universities. . .' (Miles & Morrison, 2018, p. 943).

'We found a positive impact for interaction between company-university-government, the impact effect is greater for high university network regions than for the less' (Erina, Shatrevich, & Gaile-Sarkane, 2017, p. 768).

'Particularly successful start-ups are in an ideal position to have an impact on their context and create conditions. . .' (Feld, 2012; Harper-Anderson, 2018, in Tiba, van Rijnsoever, & Hekkert, 2020, p. 4).

'Such a system, or eco-system, describes the stakeholders who have an interest and effect on entrepreneurial success and can include a wide range of organisations and actors from government or universities through investors and other businesses' (Cohen, 2006; Adner and Kapoor, 2010; Boutillier et al., 2016, in Long, Blok & Coninx, 2019, p. 995)

'. . . for example, new ventures, as well as large established companies, are often important when establishing success ecosystems' (Zahra and Nambisan, in Long & Blok & Coninx 2012, p. 995)

'According to UNCTAD, each ecosystem must include large and small businesses, policy-makers and public and private educational institutions as key factors to develop and entrepreneurship education' (Chohra, 2019, p. 249).

## Appendix V: Criticism on the EE concept

<p><b>Static, not including time</b></p> <p>'... there are other critical aspects that those models do not sufficiently consider. For instance, how do various factors influence the development of the ecosystem over time?' (Xu &amp; Dobson, 2019, p. 412).</p> <p>'One of the glaring limitations of the extant literature is that entrepreneurial ecosystems have generally been analysed from a static perspective' (Stam and van de Ven, 2019; Bhawe and Zahra, 2019, in Audretsch, Mason, Miles, &amp; O'Connor, 2018, p. 1) .</p> <p>'However, while these perspectives deal with the dynamics imposed by time at different levels of analysis, little has been done in the EE domain to reconcile the multi-level implications of variations in time perspectives and the influence of such variations on entrepreneurship using the analytical lens of an EE. Indeed, the uncertainty of how to deal with time is raised when we consider the analysis of history. . .' (Audretsch, Mason, Miles, &amp; O'Connor, 2018, p. 3).</p> <p>'Extant research largely focuses on identifying common mechanisms to determine the nature and performance of EEs (Baron and Freiling, 2019; Spigel and Harrison, 2018), comparatively neglecting evolutionary perspectives' (Baron and Freiling, 2019; Spigel and Harrison, 2018, in Harima, Harima, &amp; Freiling, 2020, p. 1).</p> <p>'EEs are evolving systems – and yet, extant research tends to describe ecosystems as static phenomena, neglecting entrepreneurial dynamics and governance mechanisms relevant to EEs'(Cavallo, Ghezzi, and Balocco, 2018, Spigel and Harrison, 2018, in Harima, Harima, &amp; Freiling, 2020, p. 3).</p>
<p><b>Under-theorized</b></p> <p>'Despite some progress, the concept is under-theorized' (Acs et al. 2017b, in Audretsch, Mason, Miles, &amp; O'Connor, 2018, p. 1).</p> <p>'... it remains unclear how entrepreneurial ecosystems bring about distinctive performances over time from other concepts that seek to explain the geographical concentration of entrepreneurial activity (e.g. clusters, learning regions, regional innovation systems.)' (Audretsch, Mason, Miles, &amp; O'Connor, 2018, p. 1).</p> <p>'Much of the literature comprises 'superficial generalisation . . . rather than rigorous social science research' (Stam and Spigel, 2017, as cited in Audretsch, Mason, Miles &amp; O'Connor, 2018, p. 2).</p> <p>'First, the concept of EE lacks a strong theoretical foundation and a theory of how the elements of EEs interact' (Spigel and Harrison, 2018; Malecki, 2017; Alvedalen and Boschma, 2017, Scheidgen, 2020, p. 1)</p> <p>'... it is subject to criticism that it lacks conceptual and theoretical depth' (Stam, 2015). For instance, while access to markets and finances are highlighted as key success factors, there is little explanation as to why or how this is the case' (Stam, 2015, in Long, Blok, &amp; Coninx, 2019, p. 995).</p> <p>'Scholars often treat the 'entrepreneurial ecosystem' concept as a theoretical lens. However, the idea that regional entrepreneurship is dependent on an interconnected system of forces does not meet the criteria of a theory (Sutton and Staw, 1995) nor does it explain the specific mechanisms through which entrepreneurial activity (in small or large cities) is promoted, sustained, or thwarted' (Roundy, 2019, p. 1462).</p>
<p><b>Different definitions of EE</b></p> <p>'There is no consensus on one definition of entrepreneurial ecosystems that offers a consistent set of objectives, the scale of analysis, attributes, actors, or processes' (Malecki, 2018, in Miles &amp; Morrison, 2018, p. 933)</p> <p>'The great diversity in terminology in itself points to a lack of theoretical foundation and cohesion' (Scheidgen, 2020, p. 3).</p> <p>'... ecosystems have a 'fuzzy' nature (Brown and Mason, 2017, in Harima, Harima, Freiling, 2020, p. 3).</p>

‘. . . the complex phenomena with multiple interdependent dimension and complementarities, leads to different understandings of EEs’ (Malecki, 2018; Cavallo, Ghezzi, and Balocco, 2018, in Harima, Harima, Freiling, 2020, p. 3).

‘And third, it is not clear which level of analysis this approach is targeting. Geographically, it could be a city, a region or a country. It can also be other systems, less strictly defined in space, such as sectors or corporations’ (Stam, 2015, p. 1764)

#### **EE focussed on one type of context and entrepreneur**

‘First and foremost, EE research has emphasized heterogeneity across regions yet implicitly treated each EE as a homogenous environment for entrepreneurship within a region’ (Scheidgen, 2020, p. 4-5)

‘. . . research on entrepreneurial ecosystem focuses almost exclusively on a single context: established entrepreneurial communities in large cities’ (Roundy, 2019, p. 1444).

‘Second, a few studies have focused on a specific EE that has emerged around one type of entrepreneur, implicitly raising, yet failing to address, the question whether there are also other types in the same region who operate within the context of their own EEs, and how these might relate to each other’ (Scheidgen, 2020, p. 5).

‘. . . the findings suggest prior research may also be overemphasizing new business creation and not acknowledging the other types of entrepreneurship that occur in ecosystems of all sizes’ (Roundy, 2019, p. 1462).

‘The entrepreneurial ecosystem approach often narrows this entrepreneurship down to ‘high-growth start-ups’, claiming that this type of entrepreneurship is an important source of innovation, productivity growth and employment’ (Mason & Brown, 2014; World Economic Forum, 2013, in Stam, 2015, p. 1761).

#### **Lack of insight in relation between EE and the community**

‘There is little consideration of the context in which entrepreneurial ecosystems emerge’ (Mack and Meyer, 2016, in Audretsch, Mason, Miles, & O’Connor, 2018, p. 2)

‘The network of interaction of individual elements in the EEs has not been sufficiently explored’ (Motoyama and Watkind, 2014, in Audretsch, Mason, Miles, & O’Connor, 2018, p. 2).

‘. . . entrepreneurial ecosystem approach does not operate in a static or a vacuum condition but takes place in a community of interdependent actors’ (Freeman and Audia, 2006 in Pillai & Ahamat, 2018, p. 236).

‘However, there remains a gap in research that explicitly considers how different processes at the level of the community might affect the effectiveness of the cluster as a whole’ (Bliemel, Flores, De Klerk, & Miles, 2018, p. 3).

‘The relationship between entrepreneurs and their communities is a relatively neglected topic in entrepreneurship literature. The actions of entrepreneurs can have both productive (e.g. job and wealth creation) and unproductive (e.g. unhealthy competition and environmental degradation) impact on communities. Similarly, the policies and initiative adopted by communities can be both helpful (e.g. infrastructure provision and maintenance, financial and nonfinancial programs to assist entrepreneurs) and detrimental (e.g. ill-conceived regulation and well-meaning but poorly designed market intervention) to entrepreneurs’ (Lyons et al., 2012 as cited in Bliemel, Flores, De Klerk, & Miles, 2018, p. 5).

#### **Successful entrepreneurship and strong EEs – tautological**

‘Entrepreneurial ecosystems are defined as those that demonstrate successful entrepreneurship, and where successful entrepreneurship is apparent, there must be a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem. This statement indicates the lack of knowledge how EEs can emerge in regions without a critical mass of entrepreneurial resources from its inception’ (Harima, Harima, Freiling, 2020, p. 4).

‘The phenomenon at first appears rather tautological: entrepreneurial ecosystems are system that produce successful entrepreneurship, and where there is a lot of successful entrepreneurship, there is apparently a good entrepreneurial ecosystem’ (Stam, 2015, p. 1764).

## Appendix VI: Defining the SEP concept

<p><b>Ties</b></p> <p>'Essentially, the embeddedness approach argues that the nature, depth, and extent of an individual's ties into the environment are configuring elements of businesses.' (Aldrich and Zimmer 1986; Carsrud and Johnson, 1989; Whittington, 1992; Uzzi, 1997; Dacin et al., 1999 in Wang &amp; Altinay, 2010, p. 7)</p> <p>Embeddedness, identified as the nature, depth, and extent of an individual's ties into the environment, has recently been commented upon as a configuring element of general business process' (Whittington, 1992; Uzzi, 1997; Dacin et al., 1999 in Jack &amp; Anderson, 2002, p. 468).</p> <p>'... the nature, depth and extent of an individual's ties into an environment, community or society, can be understood as a configuring element of general economic process, which indicates a direct link to entrepreneurship.' (Whittington, 1992; Uzzi, 1997; Anderson and Miller, 2003 in McKeever, Anderson &amp; Jack, 2014, p. 222).</p> <p>'It considers the entrepreneur's participation in the social context through ongoing social relations, networks, and deeper bonds' (Anderson and Gaddefors, 2016; Granovetter, 1985; Jack and Anderson, 2002; Korsgaard, Müller and Tanvig, 2015; McKeever, Jack, and Anderson, 2015; McManus et al., 2012 in Björklund &amp; Johansson, 2020, p. 4).</p>
<p><b>Granovetter and Polanyi's theory of strong and weak ties</b></p> <p>'The strength of a tie is defined by Granovetter as 'a (probably linear) combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services which characterize the ties'' (Granovetter, 1973, as cited in Kebede, 2020, p. 635).</p> <p>'Strong ties contain great emotional investment and exist among individuals that have frequent emotional contact such as family and close friends (Granovetter 1983). In contrast, weak ties tend to exist among individuals who have infrequent and generally non-affective relationship. The main premise of Granovetter is that strong ties create close networks whereas weak ties enable access to other social circles beyond the actors' own direct network. Weak ties then play a role in the flow of and access to new information' (Granovetter, 1995, in Kebede, 2020, p. 635).</p> <p>'Central to this social perspective is the idea that people are 'embedded' in social relationships. In offering his argument of embeddedness, Granovetter (1985, p. 482, as cited in Chung &amp; Whalen, 2006, p. 52) notes, '... the behaviour and institutions to be analysed are so constrained by ongoing social relations that to construe them as independent is a grievous misunderstanding''.</p> <p>'In turn, Granovetter's work is close to Polanyi's (1957) conceptualisations of embeddedness as combining the economic and non-economic' (Polanyi, 1957, in Anderson &amp; Ronteau, 2017, p. 114).</p> <p>'Strength of the tie is posited to be a function of the level, frequency, and emotional intensity of interactions between them' (Granovetter, 1973, in Ozdemir, Moran, Zhong &amp; Bliemel, 2016, p. 54).</p> <p>'At the core of one prominent stream of research is Granovetter's (1985) strength of weak ties argument and Burt's (1992, 2005) structural holes theory' (Ozdemir, Moran, Zhong &amp; Bliemel, 2016, p. 50).</p> <p>'The notion of embeddedness can be traced back to Polanyi and its subsequent revitalization by Granovetter. Polanyi had put forward the concept of embeddedness to show that economic systems are embedded in social relations and institutions. Granovetter later differentiated between relational embeddedness and structural embeddedness' (Granovetter, 1985; Polanyi, 1944, in Zhu, Fen &amp; Pan, 2019, p. 391-392).</p> <p>'The relationships that matter, moreover have been acquaintances rather than family and friends' (Granovetter, 1974, in Dahl &amp; Sorenson, 2009, p. 177).</p> <p>'In parallel to the above advancement of ethnic entrepreneurship, the concept of embeddedness first formulated by Polanyi (1957) was revived by Mark Granovetter (1985) in the economic sociology literature' (Polanyi, 1957; Granovetter, 1985 in Wang &amp; Altinay, 2010, p. 7).</p> <p>'In principle, the point about embeddedness is that actors are said to be embedded in concrete, ongoing systems of social relations. Granovetter (1985) argued that behaviour is so constrained by</p>

ongoing social relations that to construe them as independent is a misunderstanding' (Granovetter, 1985, in Jack & Anderson, 2002, p. 471).

'Since the mid 1980s there has been a noticeable increase in the number of studies focussing on the social structures, processes and mechanisms through which economic actions take place and entrepreneurial outcomes are achieved' (Granovetter, 1985; Uzzi, 1997; Aldrich and Fiol, 1994, in McKeever, Anderson & Jack, 2014, p. 222).

'The concept of embeddedness explains the connection between social, economic, and local institutional contexts (McKeever, Jack, and Anderson, 2015), namely, the relationship between the individual entrepreneur and society' (Granovetter, 1985; Jack and Anderson, 2002, in Björklund & Johansson, 2020, p. 4).

### **Structuration theory by Giddens**

'Accordingly, Bourdieu's theory of practice aligns with Giddens's (1987) structuration theory , which acknowledges the close relationship between individual action and the social structure in which individuals are embedded' (Giddens, 1987, in De Clercq & Voronov, 2009, p. 398).

'It construes persons as neither deterministically manipulated by their institutional and societal context nor free and autonomous agents but rather as actors who artfully interpret and seek to navigate that context actively' (De Clercq & Voronov, 2009, p.397).

'It is argued here that to understand entrepreneurship, we must take account both structure and agency; we can then appreciate how societal influences shape entrepreneurial agency and how agency redefines or develops structure' (Jack & Anderson, 2002, p. 470).

Giddens's view of structuration is used as a theoretical framework to explore the link between the entrepreneur (as agent) and the context (as structure). (Jack & Anderson, 2002) (page 467)

'Embedding is the mechanism whereby an entrepreneur becomes part of the local structure' (Jack & Anderson, 2002, p. 467).

'Considered from a structuration theory lens (Giddens 1984), entrepreneurial embeddedness both enacts and maintains the community social capital and the local institutional context' (Giddens, 1984, in Dana, Gurau, Light & Muhammad, 2019, p. 4).

'In sum, embeddedness reflects the extent to which an entrepreneur becomes part of the opportunity structure and being embedded actually creates opportunity' (Jack and Anderson, 2002, in Wang & Altinay, 2010, p. 8).

'According to Jack and Anderson, the embedding process consist of understanding the nature of the structure, enacting the structure and maintaining both the link and the structure' (Jack & Anderson, 2002, in McKeever, Anderson & Jack, 2014, p. 227).

'The internal structures within which the community and actors function, and how this affects motives, expectations, and activities, form the context of embedded entrepreneurship' (Dacin, Ventresca, and Beal, 1999; Uzzi and Gillespie, 1999, Uzzi and Lancaster, 2003 in Björklund & Johansson, 2020, p. 5)

## Appendix VII: Advantages of being embedded

<p><b>Opportunities due to embeddedness</b></p> <p>'... social networks and interactions provide individual entrepreneurs access to value resources (i.e., money, advice, information, capabilities), facilitating the identification and exploitation of business opportunities' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, Galbraith et al., 2007, Nahapiet, 2009, in Dana, Gurau, Light 7 Muhammad, 2019, p. 13)</p> <p>'... embeddedness is found to be important for entrepreneurs to recognize and realize opportunities in a specific context' (Jack &amp; Anderson, 2002, in Zhu, Feng &amp; Pan, 2019, p. 391)</p> <p>'The value of being well connected in networks is that it provides increased opportunity to capitalize resources to enterprise start-up and get information on employment opportunities' (Kebede, 2020, p. 651).</p> <p>'Social embeddedness is relevant to entrepreneurship because it helps the entrepreneur identify social resources an essential step to founding organisations.' (Hansen, 1995, in Jack &amp; Anderson, 2002, p. 471)</p>
<p><b>Access to support, social and economic resources</b></p> <p>'Research adopting the socialised view of performance has found that being embedded within the social context means access to more support during the entrepreneurial process, and it may even increase the likelihood of entrepreneurial activity, including social entrepreneurship' (Schnell and Davig, 1981; Ostgaard and Birley, 1996; Anderson and Miller, 2003; Smith and Stevens, 2010, in McKeever, Anderson, &amp; Jack, 2014, p. 229).</p> <p>'Embedded entrepreneur: advantages of the local in terms of connections and private information, in the ability to raise funds, to recruit employees, to position products and services, and to sell to customers' (Dahl &amp; Sorenson, 2009, p. 172).</p> <p>'The extent to which an entrepreneur is socially embedded and how deeply he or she is embedded affect his or her ability to draw on social and economic resources, which thus will impact the entrepreneurial process and consequence' (Jack &amp; Anderson, 2002, in Zhu, Feng, &amp; Pan, 2019, p. 392).</p> <p>'Those entrepreneurs who have contacts from diverse social positions can better perform in their enterprises than those entrepreneurs having homogenous contact positions' (Kebede, 2020, p. 651).</p>

## Appendix VIII: Enabling and constraining effects of being embedded

### Embeddedness as enabler or constraint for entrepreneurs

'As a metaphor, theoretical lens and methodological tool, embeddedness has been described as an opportunity to form a deeper understanding of how membership of social groups at times facilitates, and at others constrains action' (Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993 in McKeever, Anderson, & Jack, 2014, p. 222)

'... embeddedness can also act as a constraint, even a retardant to entrepreneurship identified conditions when embeddedness can be turned into a liability' (Gedajlovic et al, 2013; Uzzi, 1997, in McKeever, Anderson & Jack, 2014, p. 229).

'Specifically, it enables the understanding of how broader socio-economic factors – structural, political, cognitive and cultural – promote or impede the entrepreneurial process' (Zuking and Dimaggio, 1990; Karlsson and Dahlberg, 2003, in Wang & Altinay, 2010, p. 7)

'Previous research also suggests that strong ties do not only facilitate but also hinder the behaviour of individuals due to pressure and normative expectations from family and kinship members' (Krackhardt, 1999, in Kebede, 2020, p. 649).

'Burt (1992) argues that overembeddedness can reduce the inflow of information into the local setting if there are few links to outsiders who can contribute new ideas' (Burt, 1992, in Anderson & Obeng, 2017, p. 29)

'However, embeddedness can also act as a constraint. Uzzi identified conditions when embeddedness can be turned into a liability, for example, the unforeseeable exit of a core network player; institutional forces rationalising markets; even overembeddedness stifling economic action when social aspects of exchange supersede economic imperatives' (Uzzi, 1997, in Jack & Anderson, 2002, p. 471).

'First, 'over-embeddedness', defined here as a case when entrepreneurs manoeuvred their kinship and community systems to support their entrepreneurship, and the resulting commitment, which impedes them from participating in inter-ethnic markets.' (Schnell & Sofer, 2002, p. 50)

'Second, 'under-embeddedness', defined as entrepreneurs' success in developing intensive and complex inter-ethnic networks, while failing to gain adequate evaluation capabilities of relevant of relevant business opportunities and enough power to translate the complex networks into economic growth and development' (Schnell & Sofer, 2002, p. 50)

'Since most of them [Arab entrepreneurs] opened their businesses with intensive support of the extended family and the home community, they feel indebted to their supporters once they have succeeded' (Schnell & Sofer, 2002, p. 61).

'It seems that this example describes the situation of many Arab entrepreneurs who feel obliged to support their relatives' (Schnell & Sofer, 2002, p. 61).

## Appendix IX: Criticism on embeddedness

### Multiple interpretations of embeddedness

'Our review of the brokerage, cohesion and embeddedness literatures yielded a growing number of, sometimes conflicting and confusing , observations and accounts regarding the networking behaviour of entrepreneurs' (Ozdemir, Moran, Zhong & Bliemel, 2016, p. 73).

'Considered as an umbrella concept (Hirsch and Levin, 1999) that 'means many things to many people'' (Narayan and Pritchett, 1999, as cited in Dana, Gurau, Light, & Muhammad, 2019, p. 1-2).

'Mark Granovetter commented that, '. . . it [embeddedness] has become almost meaningless, stretched to mean almost anything, so that is therefore means nothing' (Krippner et al., 2002, as cited in Wang & Altinay, 2010, p. 7).

'Yet despite optimism and progress made, Block (2001) feels that while embeddedness represents a famous contribution to social thoughts, the concept remains a source of enormous confusion. The confusion Gemici (2008) feels is evident in the number of interpretations that the concept of embeddedness has drawn over the last quarter of a century' (Reddy, 1984; Granovetter, 1985; Stanfield, 1986; Zukin and DiMaggio, 1990; Lie, 1991; Barber, 1995; Beckert, 1996; Krippner, 2001, Block, 2003; Krippner et al., 2004, in McKeever, Anderson, & Jack, 2014, p. 222).

'From an entrepreneurship perspective, this conceptual vagueness we feel renders embeddedness theoretically problematic' (Hirsch and Levin, 1999; Gemici, 2008, in McKeever, Anderson, & Jack, 2014, p. 222).

'Uzzi argued that Granovetter's work . . . suffers from 'a theoretical indefiniteness'. This indefiniteness, he feels, stems from attempting to combine quite specific economic propositions with broad statements about how social ties influence entrepreneurial actions' (Uzzi, 1997, in McKeever, Anderson & Jack, 2014, p. 226).