

ANALYZE SOCIOLOGICAL DAILY SELF-EXPERIENCE IN AN ENTREPRENEURIAL ENVIRONMENT A REVIEW OF ENTREPRENEUR BIOGRAPHIES

Hossein Moghimi Esfandabadi, University of Tehran

Zahra Sarafrazi Esfandabadi, University of Yazd

Yasmin Mollaie, University of Tehran

Abolfazl Moghimi Esfandabadi, University of Yazd

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to investigate analyze sociological process of daily self-experience and entrepreneurial environment with a focus on the review of entrepreneur biographies. The theoretical framework for the study based on sociological theory focusing on Mead's (1934) and Blumer's continuous action (1969) in entrepreneurial process. The methodology was designed based on practical purpose and information collection with an emphasis on narrative analysis of entrepreneur biographies. The statistical population of the study includes interviews with the entrepreneurs in recent years. The researcher analyzed the interviews through content analysis. The results indicate that entrepreneurs possess procedural characteristics from birth to adulthood. Through reasoning and perception, an entrepreneur achieves trust during daily activities. Being different and effective is a dream for entrepreneurs from birth to adulthood. The nature of entrepreneurship starts from an entrepreneur's self through which entrepreneur's experiences shape.

Keywords: Self, Daily Experience, Entrepreneurial Environment, Narrative Analysis.

INTRODUCTION

What is entrepreneurship? In other words, what does it mean to be an entrepreneur? Entrepreneurship is a temporal experience. Many studies have dealt with the nature of being an entrepreneur in the society (Hervieux & Voltan, 2018). Each has focused on an aspect of entrepreneurship. The question is, anyone with enough financial and facilities could become an entrepreneur? If yes, then definition that entrepreneurship is building "something from practically nothing" is challenged. The entrepreneur is an event of practical that it creates a creative action that leads into a new product, service or system. Entrepreneurs have a field of experience and action exactly. For example, Schumpeter (1934) expresses that the entrepreneur is a creative destruction. Creative destruction is a process from imbalance to balance. Therefore, entrepreneurship has dimensions linked from one end to economy and from the other end to sociology and psychology. Moreover, the nature of entrepreneurship, according to Sarasvathy's definition (2003) could be constant and creative. However, for an entrepreneur to achieve stable creativity, focus on creative approach is also needed.

The research tries to show who is entrepreneur? On the studies, entrepreneurs are evolving through different times and places (Baron & Shane, 2008). However, entrepreneurial growth is a growing diagram towards stability. Entrepreneurial stability in a firm, depends on R&D and if the firm fails to carry our R&D, it will not be able to achieve innovative and creative approaches in developing sustainable products and services.

What is main problem? In addition to dealing with resources and status of his business, an entrepreneur needs to consider personal factors. That is, the origin of an idea or entrepreneurial intention is reflexivity the society and self by the entrepreneur; the meaning of reflexivity is internal dialog (Archer, 2012).

In a process, reflexivity is the self and daily experience of an individual in a community. Handled in equilibrium, reflexivity can lead into creative action in a particular environment. More reflexivity is needed over an action which depends upon the reflexivity equilibrium between the individual and the construct. This will enhance innovative action to satisfy a society's needs. Therefore, this study aims at examining the relationship between self, daily experience, and entrepreneur in entrepreneurship.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Self and Entrepreneurship

The process of self, daily experience and entrepreneurial environment has internal and external origins which need theoretical explanation through delving into sociological theories. The symbolic interaction school in sociology is among the theories which emphasizes the socializing process of an individual in an environment. Therefore, in this section, three stages of self, daily experience and society are discussed using sociology theories.

In sociology, Mead (1934) defines self in his article "*Mind, self and society*". According to Mead, self consists of "*I*" and "*Me*". Mead focuses on the motivation of an individual in action.

Social self is a process that it begins with individual mind and learn by interaction language and attitude. Type of self is including: entrepreneurship self-efficacy (Ghani et al., 2013; Hadizadeh et al., 2015; Lacap et al., 2018) entrepreneurship self-regulatory. The main dimension is self- efficacy that it defines individual capacity to action (Bandura, 1997). Indexes are including: experiments Vicarious, performance accomplishment, Verbal Persuasion and Emotion State (Hadizadeh et al., 2015). Self-efficacy is a main dimension for evaluation and select entrepreneur to performance of entrepreneurship intent as well.

According to Mead, self is introduced through imitation. In other words, Mead focuses on psychological analysis; the "*I*" is evolved into "*me*". There is a fundamental gap in Mead's theory (1934) which is the lack of a link between imitation and "*I*" With an interpretive perspective, Weber pays great attention to perception before action. Self is an internal reality which tries to show itself in society. All social actions begin with self as the personal identity and results in the mass self or "*me*". However, according to, self is shaping continuously with the daily experiences of an individual. Daily experience could be objective (Garfinkel, 1967; Ghalwash et al., (2016). Self is in dynamic formation through experience and is created through objective and subjective experiences.

Every action of a human being has roots in his/her self. Attention to self and its formation in action, in sociology and particularly in Mead's theory (1934), is the "*I*", which is awareness to

an action, i.e., awareness to the fact that the individual acts according to his “I”. According to Mead, “I” shapes identity that is a nature individual as well. Nature of entrepreneurs are including identity (Pan et al., 2019) and personality (Irengün & Arıkbog, 2015).

The formation of “I” in the mind is a trend or a process the continuation of which shapes the identity of the individual. However, Mead (1934) assumes “me” as socializing or external forces affecting the individual in a way or another. Me entrepreneur is an environment of family that individual have socialization as well. Therefore, self-entrepreneur is a process that it is including: internal (I) and external (Me). Internal environment is identity and personality entrepreneur. External environment is socialization of entrepreneur that it shapes entrepreneur self as well.

Daily Experience

Experience is measuring and testing and it is one of the most debate words in the history of science). Experience is two dimension including: (a) primary experience and (b) secondary experience. Primary experience is action side of experience taking entrepreneurial action as well. Secondary experience is reflection side of experience understanding entrepreneurial action. Experience is a social process that it interacts between personal and social environment as well. According to Schutz, the issue of sociological investigation deals with methods used by human beings to create their “daily lives”. The daily experiences of individuals include sustainable social experiences which are the major roots to awareness. “*The world of common sense*”, “*the world of everyday life*” and “*daily mundane life*” are expressions used by Schutz to relate the social world to social science methodology and phenomenology of social reality.

According to Goffman, individuals tend to present an ideal image of themselves on the scene, and therefore, try to conceal numerous realities from others during role-play. During role-play, social actors often assume an aura around themselves to get respect in the eyes of the audience through distancing themselves from the audience. “*The roles and expectations from our behavior in specific conditions are like scripts we play later on*”.

Therefore, through daily experiencing, self and daily experience shape, interact, reproduce and reinforce each other. The self is being shaped through daily experience and the continuity of this shaping process, ends in their interaction.

Entrepreneurship Environment

The social nature of human life and his multi-directional interaction with different social factors and variables, leads into a social trend which is referred to as socialization. In fact, socialization is a process which teaches human beings the ways of living and interacting in society and extends his capabilities to do personal tasks as the member of a society.

With respect to socialization of an individual one can consider social variables such as family, education and training, mass media, organization and structural characteristics of a social environment. The major issue in socialization in social environment is that it is a spectrum of “I” and “me”.

According to Blumer (1969), human being and social institutions are valid only when “I” overcomes “me”. In other words, when “I” dominates the self, a person can interpret his situation and act based on pragmatic analysis of the ends of each alternative.

The territory of an individual in society is like Blumer’s continuous action. Continuous action refers to bigger mass action forms which is made of people participating in it. Samples of

continuous action include commercial transactions, a family gathering for dining, marriage ceremonies etc. In this step which, according to Mead (1934) and Blumer (1969), is considered the society, environmental implications are formed and a vast process of engaging interactions are shaped Dennis (2011).

The Theoretical Framework

The primary purpose of this article is to analyze the nature or evolution of the self and its effects on daily experience vice versa with entrepreneurship environment. This article discusses the sociological theories of Mead, Schutz and Garfinkel to analyze the relationship between self, experience and entrepreneurship experience. This study analyzes the entrepreneur biographies in Iran to find out the relationship between self and daily experience in entrepreneurial environment.

Each action or event requires the individual himself in the formation of a social process. Self is a good example to show the social process an individual goes through. In other words, self-starts from the mind, is processed in the mind to be incarnated in the environment and playing in it. The growth of self does not occur easily. It is rather intertwined with the daily experience of an individual in environmental and personal conditions and is shaped along with the experiences an individual goes through. We might claim that the socialization process is something obvious. However, its evolution is an interactive process which requires empirical experience in each step.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology of the research was designed based on practical purpose and data was collected based on corpus-narrative information. As for methodology, the primary purpose of the study is analyzing the link between self, daily experience, and social environment based on sociological theories with a focus on entrepreneur biographies.

The data collection tools were the corpus gathered from books and interviews with top entrepreneurs. The researcher tries to review the entrepreneur biographies to analyze the link between self, experience and social life.

The statistical population includes all books and interviews about the lives of entrepreneurs from 2011 to 2015. However, given the time limitation, the researcher analyzed the biographies of well-known entrepreneurs using purposeful sampling. Given the scale of the work, only a portion of evidences are explained in the objective of the research.

FINDINGS

Self

Mind is an information processor evolving through time in different conditions. A fundamental area in mind is self. The first stage of self, drawing upon Weber's interpretive theory, is perception before action. In other words, sociological theories, like Weber (interpretive human cognition) and Schutz (mind as a construct) have paid considerable attention to internal human cognition. To become an entrepreneur, one needs to achieve a self-interpretation in the first place

“As a child, the atmosphere was good for our daydreaming, so...I always heard from my instructors that I had high reasoning capabilities and a sense of understanding details.... The advice from people around me was on good intention and I had full self-confidence.... This made me decide to enter the world of working”.

In this step, the imagination of an entrepreneur plays a key role in the evolution of “*I*”. With reasoning and perception from within, entrepreneurs achieve confidence during the daily activities. The presence of imagination among entrepreneurship indicates their distinction from the others. To launch their business, most entrepreneurs refer to themselves. The first aspect in entrepreneurship is being efficient and effective. An entrepreneur biography reads as follows:

“In my boyhood dreams and myths, my ideals and my favourite characters were Arash Kamangir, Darius etc. When I thought how they could change the course of history through victories, the feeling of being effective and distinctive was reinforced in me”.

The first step in entrepreneurship is George Herbert Mead’s “*I*” (George, 2011). The identity of an entrepreneur is defined through a feeling of being effective and distinctive in society. Biographies of two entrepreneurs show that being different and effective is a dream for entrepreneurs from birth to adulthood. During this period, the individual deals only with his wishes and dreams which shapes the primary “*I*”. In other words, imaginations and ideals are formed when the individual has not found his identity but are ready to reveal his identity.

The second step is the other aspect of self among entrepreneurs is the nature of working human. Marx was interested in human nature and socialization through working. Entrepreneurship originates from an entrepreneur’s self.

“I decided to work and study simultaneously. Since my father was a religious and strict person with respect to me working outside home... In the end, when I insisted on my decision and told my father I had to work for my major, he was convinced”.

The continuity of the mind of entrepreneurs is shaped within themselves, although social conditions, such as family, have a fundamental role. “*I*” as the identity of an individual which is shaped in childhood, is evolving through his adulthood.

“The atmosphere dominant in our home and our family, gave us a particular discipline and decisiveness to our lives. These issues were like unwritten duties we had to execute”.

The living conditions of entrepreneurs shapes their identity during their live time. It also affects another self which is “*me*”.

“I started working with my university courses and... Sometimes I worked 12 to 14 hours a day and... I got a fairly good income which motivated me to make money during my early career”.

Daily Experience

The first step in the shaping of an entrepreneur is self. In this step, self, including “*I*” and “*me*”, is shaping in the entrepreneur. However, the stability of an entrepreneur’s self depends on his daily experience during his lifetime. Albeit, acquiring experience in this step does not mean the elimination of entrepreneur’s self. Entrepreneur seeks to achieve social, emotional and social needs through social diversity. Daily experience leads to the added value for the entrepreneur.

...I really hated unemployment and waste of time and believed that one does not have to do other jobs to make a living and...

Experience might be shaped academically, or through daily activities in the career path of an entrepreneur. Most entrepreneurs who had been active in academic environments have emphasized the above fact.

"I used to plan my day for working and studying... To work and study at the same time, I selected my courses, during the first year of university, such that I had to go to the university only three days a week".

The early entrepreneurial experience makes them ready for new activities and links their experience to their courses at university. During their early career, entrepreneurs learn from academic and working experiences. Drawing upon the ethnographic methodology, one can reach a reflexive approach between academic and working experiences of the entrepreneurs. Nevertheless, the narrative analysis of entrepreneur biographies shows that entrepreneurs acquire massive experience during his early lifetime.

Reflective perspective among entrepreneurs such as:

"I quitted a shipping company to my company and started an independent business. The previous company declined and closed after a while. When I was there it followed exemplar discipline, but after I quitted it closed.

Entrepreneurial experience features discipline, legitimacy, paying attention to needs of the community, being affected by work environment and the like. The experience is not limited to work experience or daily activities of the individual during his daily career tasks, but is a reflection of childhood experiences, imaginations and childhood and adolescent dreams which accompanies him to his adulthood.

In addition to academic and career experiences, there is another experience stream for entrepreneurs. Drawing upon Schutz's phenomenology theory, experience is direct or indirect both of which reproduce the daily activities of the entrepreneur.

Direct or face-to-face entrepreneurship experience is acquired with entrepreneur entering a career for the first time. An example is:

"My experience in the company I worked for, was a good successful one and I learned lessons. I worked with people who had positive perspective toward me and my job and always motivated me. In that environment, not only my knowledge was improved, but also I learned lessons about human relations".

Most entrepreneurs had direct experience of working with other individuals or companies, other than their own companies for the first time. Therefore, entrepreneurs came to new ideas and innovation in service during their careers. Drawing upon Schutz's perspective about indirect experience and Garfinkel's perspective on the reflective, individuals learn experiences during daily activities. That is, the experience an individual acquires during his lifetime is classified into early and cumulative experiences.

Society

Action process in an environment is done in society, i.e., the outcome of self and daily experience is the society in which the individual lives. According to symbolic interaction, society is the medium for interaction between individuals. Symbolic interaction emphasizes society and society is evolution process from self to daily experience. According to Bourdieu's formative

action theory, a back-and-forth process occurs from the individual to the society. Here is an example for the reproduction perspective in an entrepreneur:

“I was firm at the environment. Each time I heard no, I was more firm and followed up harder. Maybe it was from that time that entrepreneurship was shaped in me.... Maybe it was the kind of my education that made me not give up soon”.

The external environment of an entrepreneur depends on the process of self and daily experience during his career path. This is the reproduction process between the mind and social environment which is confirmed in the theories of symbolic interaction, Giddens’ structuration and Bourdieu’s formative action.

“I had set a goal from the early start and I had designed a framework. When faced with hardships, I would give myself a change and time to resolve them. This would sometimes take a few days and kept my mind engaged, but in the end I would get up, pulled myself together and start from the beginning”.

In addition to the procedural nature of self and the environment an entrepreneur lives in, an individual reproduces himself and the society at any point in time. That is, based on Giddens’ structuration (1984); Bourdieu’s formative action (1973), there is a social reproduction system between the inner and outer self of an individual. The continuity of reflexivity self and entrepreneurial environment leads into innovative action. The entrepreneurship process is shaped between self and daily experience which is not back-and-forth but it is rather an innovative process in the social reproduction system.

“That was how I started my work with minimum human resources and maximum personal effort. During my career activities, I was beside the customers and drivers which changed their view towards me. The customers knew me and my business, so they would trust and come to my company”.

The most important part of starting an activity is previous experience. Previous experience is Blumer’s continuous action which starts from primary to secondary interaction action and results in new relation action after the occurrence of agency. This process starts from early childhood and continues to adulthood. Another point in starting an entrepreneurial activity is inter-personal trust. Inter-personal trust is both an internal and external factor.

The daily experiences of entrepreneurs during their career depends only on their education and experience prior to business launch. An entrepreneur always tries to comply with the current rules in society, respect company regulations, and adapt with conditions internal or external to the company.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The primary purpose of this study was investigating the interaction between the self, daily experience and entrepreneurial environment. The researcher analyzed entrepreneurship biographies to explain the interaction between each of the processes using sociology theories.

The results reveal that an entrepreneur has mostly creative and innovative childhoods. An entrepreneur also pays great attention to being efficient in his/her community. Most of the biographies of the entrepreneurs revealed that being efficient is the main condition for becoming an entrepreneur.

The most important factor in starting entrepreneurship is the entrepreneur. Mead's theory (1934) shows that, during social process or in social environments, entrepreneurs show an “P” identity. The narrative biographies revealed that there is a linear relationship between the processes of self, experience and entrepreneurship environment. There is a fundamental approach among entrepreneurs which is reproduction, i.e. the back-and-forth flow between the entrepreneur and his self, and his daily experience during his career path. The continuity of the flow depends on the daily experience type and self which is referred by to Blumer (1969) as continuous action.

The first step in the shaping of an entrepreneur is self. In this step, self, including “P” and “me”, is shaping in the entrepreneur. However, the stability of an entrepreneur’s self depends on his daily experience during his lifetime. Albeit, acquiring experience in this step does not mean the elimination of entrepreneur’s self. Entrepreneur seeks to achieve social, emotional and social needs through social diversity. Daily experience leads to the added value for the entrepreneur.

In the second step, entrepreneurial experience features discipline, legitimacy, paying attention to needs of the community, being affected by work environment and the like. The experience is not limited to work experience or daily activities of the individual during his daily career tasks, but is a reflection of childhood experiences, imaginations and childhood and adolescent dreams which accompanies him to his adulthood.

Finally, the action process in the environment ends in the society. In other words, the outcome of self and daily experience is the society in which an individual life. According to symbolic interaction, society is the medium for interaction between individuals. Symbolic interaction emphasizes society and society is evolution process from self to daily experience. According to Bourdieu's formative theory, a back-and-forth process occurs from the individual to the society.

REFERENCES

- Archer, M.S. (2012). [The Reflexive Imperative in Late Modernity](#). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Baron, R. A., & Shane, S. A. (2008). [Entrepreneurship: process perspective \(2nd ed.\)](#). London: South Western [Thomson Learning distributor].
- Bandura, A. (1997). [Self-efficacy: The exercise of control](#). New York: W.H. Freeman.
- Blumer, G. H. (1969). [Symbolic Interactionism: perspective and Method. N.J: practice – Hall Inc](#).
- Dennis, A. (2011). [Symbolic Interactionism and Ethnomethodology](#). *Journal Symbolic Interaction*, 34(3), 349-56.
- Hadizadeh. E., Mobaraki. M.H., Zyia, B. & Moghimi Esfandabadi, H. (2015). [The Effect of Self-efficacy on Entrepreneurial Passion with the Conscious Mind as the Mediator](#). *International Journal of Research in Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management*, 3(1), 26-36.
- Hervieux. C., & Voltan. A (2018). [Framing social problem in social entrepreneurship](#). *Journal Business Ethics*, 151 (2): 279-293.
- Ghani, M., Moghimi Esfandabadi, A., Mobaraki, M.H & Moghimi Esfandabadi, H. (2013) [The Effect of entrepreneurial self-efficacy on University of Tehran Students' Entrepreneurial Intention](#). *Asian Journal of Research in Business Economics and Management*, 3(8), 34-44.
- Garfinkel, H. (1967). [What is Ethnomethodology? Studies in Ethnomethodology](#). Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice - Hall: 1-35.
- Ghalwash, S., Tolba, A & Ayman, I. (2016) [What motives social entrepreneurship to start social ventures?](#) *Social Enterprise Journal*, 13(3): 268-98.
- Irengün, O. & Arikboga, S. (2015). [The effect of personality traits on social entrepreneurship intentions: a field research](#). *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 195:1186-95.
- Lacap, G.P., Mulyaningsih, H.D & Ramadani, V. (2018). [The mediating effects of social entrepreneurial antecedents on the relationship between prior experience and social entrepreneurial intent: The case of Filipino and Indonesian university students](#). *Journal of Science and Technology Policy Management*, 19, 12.

- Mead, G.H. (1934). [Mind, Self, and Society from the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist](#). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Pan, N.D., Gruber, M. & Binder, J. (2019). [Painting with All the Colors: The Value of Social Identity Theory for Understanding Social Entrepreneurship](#). *Academy of Management Review*, 44(1), 213-26.
- George, R. (2011). [Sociological theory, publication of Mc Grill Hill, 8 Edith](#).
- Schumpeter, J.A. (1934). [The theory of economic development](#). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.
- Webster New Twentieth Century Dictionary: Unabridged. (1979). [William Collins Publication, Inc.](#)

Received: 10-June-2022, Manuscript No. AEJ-22-12196; **Editor assigned:** 13-June-2022, PreQC No. AEJ-22-12196(PQ); **Reviewed:** 27-June-2022, QC No. AEJ-22-12196; **Revised:** 09-July-2022, Manuscript No. AEJ-22-12196(R); **Published:** 12-July-2022