

Bricolage as an Entrepreneurial Process of Innovation: A Case Study of Bicycle-Based Delivery Service in Townships

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Abstract

The primary objective of this study is to gain insight into the utilization of bricolage as a method of innovation within resource-scarce environments, specifically focusing on the context of limited delivery services. Previous entrepreneurship studies have underscored the importance of bricolage, particularly in emerging markets, as a means to mobilize resources. However, there has been a notable absence of attention given to bricolage within the South African small and medium-sized entrepreneur context, particularly in relation to delivery services and constraints brought by it.

To address this research gap, the study examines the innovation processes of a young entrepreneur who creatively utilized bicycles for delivery services. Several bricolage aspects are identified in this investigation, including the entrepreneurial mindset and age of the entrepreneurs, resourcefulness in the face of limited resources, and improvisation as a means of venture creation.

By analysing these case studies, this research contributes empirical evidence that sheds light on the utilization of bricolage throughout various stages of the innovation process. The findings of this study make a contribution to the ongoing discussion surrounding the scarcity of delivery services in township areas and the role of youth entrepreneurship within a developing market.

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1. Introduction

Promoting innovations and nurturing entrepreneurial ecosystems are crucial elements in the fight against poverty (Littlewood, Ciambotti, Holt, & Steinfield, 2022). For emerging economies to achieve inclusive and sustainable growth, innovations are needed across various socio-economic and environmental domains (Sachin, 2010; Kansheba, 2020). However, in the case of South Africa, the development of innovation capacity within markets has been inadequate. The country still relies heavily on industrially advanced economies, which often offer solutions ill-suited to the needs of low-income individuals and resource-constrained operating environments. Frequently, the institutions responsible for development struggle to find appropriate solutions for highly localised problems faced by people in specific regions. Instead, it is grassroots-level innovations, emerging from communities or individuals, that tend to address these challenges (Pathak, 2008). Consequently, urgent policy attention should be given to fostering efficient and context-appropriate innovation processes in low-income developing countries (Kaplinsky, Chataway, Clark, Hanlin, Kale, Muraguri, Papaioannou, Robbins, & Wamae, 2009). The application of innovation policies akin to those used in developed countries may not be suitable. Instead, innovation ecosystems should be locally developed to effectively tackle the unique obstacles present in each country's environment, while also drawing insights from experiences in other countries (Sachin, 2010).

In recent times, researchers have demonstrated a growing interest in exploring market opportunities in resource-scarce markets (Littlewood et al., 2022). In developing markets, resource scarcity result in entrepreneurs usually engaging in entrepreneurial bricolage (Shepherd, Parida, & Wincent, 2020). Bricolage being the approach of making do, through a creative combination of resources 'at hand', creativity and experimentation, and refusing to be constrained by limitations (Fisher, 2012). Thus, bricolage is a valuable tool used to identify new opportunities (Shepherd et al., 2020). This perspective presents these low-income individuals as untapped business prospects and recognizes their active role as consumers and entrepreneurs (Prahalad, 2005; Hart, 2005). In addition to highlighting market opportunities for companies, studies are now advocating for a comprehensive approach to viewing the bricolage as a source of innovation. Previous research has primarily focused on multinational corporations, with limited attention given to the potential of developing economies (Chavan & Pradhu, 2011).

The aim of this study is to present insights onto how to design financially viable solutions for the resource-scarce markets. This research is based on studying a case of South African young business innovator who founded a delivery business using used bicycles in a township. The focus of analysis is the innovation process, which is regarded as a business model development: how the delivery services solution is created into profitable business. The more specific questions are: i) how a limited delivery

services influence opportunity recognition and exploitation ii) how is bricolage used by developing markets entrepreneurs to develop market-based innovations and be sustainable?

The aim of this paper is to make a valuable contribution to the ongoing discourse surrounding entrepreneurial innovation in resource-scarce environments. Further, the central theme of the paper revolves around the concept of “bricolage”, which has been previously employed in entrepreneurship studies to depict how small-scale entrepreneurs navigate resource limitations by creatively utilizing the scarce resources readily available to them. The paper is structured as follows. First, it explains the background and contextualises the theme; second, we give a through explanation of the problem statement; third, the research aim; fourth, the literature review and theoretical underpinnings; and finally research methodology and then findings and proceed with a discussion.

1.1. Background

According to the latest rankings from the United Nations' Country Human Development Indicator Profile, South Africa is positioned at 114th out of 189 countries, indicating a medium level of human development. However, the current official unemployment rate in South Africa stands at 32.9% as reported by STATSSA. This alarming increase in unemployment has led many individuals to turn to both informal and formal entrepreneurship as a means of addressing the socio-economic challenges and unfortunate circumstances brought about by joblessness, ultimately leading to poverty. There is a prevailing assumption among researchers that the black population residing in small towns and townships lacks the entrepreneurial spirit, impetus, and overall entrepreneurial culture (Klemz, Boshoff, & Mazibuko, 2006; Preisendörfer, Bitz, & Bezuidenhout, 2012).

As stated by Preisendörfer, Perks, and Bezuidenhout (2014), the entrepreneurial spirit and culture are not solely determined by the resources and acceptable risks that an entrepreneur brings to the table. It can also be influenced by socio-economic challenges, cherished values, limited opportunities, and a positive mindset. Furthermore, when examining entrepreneurial spirit, it is important to consider unregistered and informal businesses, particularly in South Africa's small towns and townships (Woodward, Rolfe, Ligthelm & Guimaraes, 2011). These businesses, although small in scale and operating in volatile environments with modest profits, require individual initiative, self-discipline, and some degree of entrepreneurial drive (Preisendörfer et al., 2014). Some of these ventures have even grown into promising and successful formal enterprises. Therefore, when exploring the entrepreneurial prerequisites of small-town and township businesses, it raises the question of whether the concept of resources and acceptable losses as prerequisites for entrepreneurial spirit (Sarasvathy, 2001) still hold true in these specific contexts.

It is important to exercise caution when drawing conclusions about entrepreneurship in small towns and townships in South Africa, as there are concerns about the validity of the available empirical data (Preisendörfer et al., 2014). Our understanding of the intricacies of these environments is limited, and

comprehensive research in this area is still lacking. Buekens (2014) defines an entrepreneur as an individual who assumes direct responsibility for transforming ideas into profitable products or services through risk-taking and innovation.

However, when examining entrepreneurs in small towns and townships, the factors of risk-taking and innovation may be influenced by conditions of uncertainty (Metallo, Agrifoglio, Briganti, Mercurio & Ferrara, 2020). These uncertainties could arise from concerns about meeting basic needs, such as wondering where the next meal will come from. Consequently, individuals may engage in entrepreneurship primarily as a means of survival, without fully realizing the potential positive impact of their small-scale initiatives. While researchers have predominantly focused on entrepreneurial traits like innovativeness, creativity, and vision (Aina & Solikin, 2020; Gustafsson, 2006), the perspectives of bricolage and entrepreneurial cognition are relatively new and have not received sufficient research attention (Kwong, Cheung, Manzoor & Rashid, 2019; Langevang & Namatovu, 2019).

1.2. Problem Statement

Developing countries have placed more emphasis on poverty reduction and wealth creation through SMMEs as a vehicle for economic development (Ayyagari, Demircuc-Kunt, & Maksimovic, 2014; Haltiwanger, Jarmin, & Miranda, 2013). These include uplifting communities in an inclusive manner through opportunities creation, social entrepreneurship and business incubation programmes (Cho & Honorati, 2014; Grimm, Knorringa, & Lay, 2012; Verrest, 2013). What has been key to emerging markets governments has been, how limited resources could be sufficiently utilized to support small and medium enterprises to become successful business entities? (Cho & Honorati, 2014). However, empirical and theoretical issues exist with regard to venture creation and development (Grimm & Paffhausen, 2015). Practical questions relate to the empirical evidence on how entrepreneurial journey plays out and how growth happens (Cho & Honorati, 2014), the integration of bricolage (Baker & Nelson, 2005) and the contribution to job creation by these business ventures.

Research has contended lack of entrepreneurial skills and competencies are major challenges faced by entrepreneurs in these underdeveloped markets (London, Anupindi, & Sheth, 2010; Mano, Iddrisu, Yoshino, & Sonobe, 2012). The theoretical problem in these instances is that entrepreneurship dynamics that lead to business venture creations are common. However, as past research has shown entrepreneurship should be contextualised and is an individualistic and goal-oriented process (Venkataraman, 1997). Thus, the processes by which entrepreneurial journeys begin and evolve in South African resource-scarce markets have not been theoretically and empirically examined. Kiss, Danis and Cavusgil (2012) has alluded to the need to understand the underlying dynamics of entrepreneurship in developing markets is imperative.

1.3. Research aim

The research aims improve the understanding of the entrepreneurial process of young entrepreneurs in resource-scarce with a focus on in small deliveries business.

2. Literature Review

Provide a detailed literature review, citing references in the reference list. Ensure you provide a literature background for the study.

2.1. Township resource-scarcity as a setting for innovating solutions

The prevailing focus in entrepreneurship literature centres on resource-driven thinking in relation to venture creation and innovation, often suggesting that it is the exclusive path to becoming an entrepreneur (Linna, 2013). However, this perspective mistakenly overlooks the potential for breakthrough innovations in resource-scarce environments, where opportunities may be hidden (Gibbert, Hoegl & Välikangaset, 2007). The availability of resources can be assessed from various angles, depending on the formal or informal structural settings, leading to even or uneven distribution. In this study, the researcher specifically examines a resource-scarce environment, a township in South Africa, as a catalyst for entrepreneurial innovation in creating new ventures. It is important to note that this research does not deny the impact of resource scarcity on innovation, which can hinder some entrepreneurs from gaining much-needed leverage at the bottom of the pyramid (BOP).

Partnerships have been emphasized by researchers as a valuable means of overcoming resource scarcity and the lack of suitable capabilities (London & Sheth, 2010). Contrarily, some argue that resource-scarce settings can actually drive innovation, leading to indigenous product designs that are more affordable, user-friendly, and require less infrastructure (Kaplinsky et al., 2009). Also, in a township innovator level, resource scarcity can fuel innovations, with individuals resorting to social strategies rather than purely economic ones to create ventures (Gibbert et al., 2007). Leveraging social resources has proven crucial in developing local community business capacity, facilitating learning and innovation processes (Torri, 2010). Consequently, entrepreneurs in resource-scarce environments may heavily rely on the social dimensions of entrepreneurship (Diomande, 1990). Social capital, as a collective resource, exists in the connections between people and enhances their productive activity by providing access to other resources, such as knowledge and capital (Gibbert et al., 2007).

Nonetheless, even social resources are not free; they are created, differentially applied and spread by people, institutions and technologies. Existing resources can be also seen as not glaring assets. They do exist, but may not yet be seen as openly known on how to utilize them. These not so visible assets may be, community members' themselves and their indigenous knowledge not yet known in scientific settings. These kinds of knowledge, skills and experiences are more like practical knowledge about concrete, everyday life or relevant only in a local context (Agrawal, 1995). There is a need to make

visible these kinds of variety of skills, talents, knowledge and experience of individuals, as well as the communities' capacities.

Previous studies on innovation in market-based solutions for BOP markets have emphasized the paramount importance of affordability (Anderson & Billou, 2007). Achieving affordability for low-income individuals necessitates recognizing and utilizing locally available resources. These resources could include overlooked physical assets present in a given area, such as vacant land, energy, and waste resources (McKnight & Kretzmann, 1996). In the context of community-based business development, a practical approach would involve initially mapping out various assets and subsequently exploring ways to transform them into productive resources. By leveraging these locally available resources, innovative solutions can become more accessible and relevant to the needs of the bottom of the pyramid markets.

BOP entrepreneurs often have limited formal education when it comes to technological innovations. However, their close ties to the community enable them to understand and address specific community needs (Pansera & Sarkar, 2016). Various researchers have highlighted the significance of individual entrepreneurs within BOP communities (George, McGahan, & Prabhu, 2012; Ramani & Mukherjee, 2014). These entrepreneurs demonstrate resilience and creativity in their environments, being motivated by social objectives rather than seeking personal gain (Prahalad, 2004; Seyfang & Longhurst, 2016). Their innovations are geared towards inclusivity, aiming to create opportunities that improve the social and economic well-being of marginalized communities (George, McGahan, & Prabhu, 2012). Additionally, in such environments, one can find necessity-type entrepreneurs (Lippmann, Davis, & Aldrich 2005), who are mainly self-employed and driven by societal push factors (Carsrud & Brännback 2011; Fayolle 2011).

2.2. Innovating under resource-scarcity: a focus on bricolage

According to Baker and Nelson (2005:33), bricolage is defined as the act of "making do by applying combinations of resources already at hand to new problems and opportunities." The concept of bricolage is built upon the notion that organizations can derive multiple benefits from the same resources, utilizing recombined resources to address novel challenges due to resource scarcity in the prevailing context (Desa & Basu, 2013). Bricolage becomes particularly crucial when the institutional environment lacks support for business ventures or when tangible resources are scarce, leading to high business costs, labour shortages, and fierce competition for resources, characteristic of emerging economies (Sunduramurthy, Zheng, Musteen, Francis, & Rhyne, 2016).

Bricoleurs, commonly associated with market-driven entrepreneurship, also seek to create social and community benefits (Di Domenico, Haugh, & Tracey, 2010). In environments characterized by resource scarcity, such as townships, these bricoleurs resort to "making do" and improvisation to prioritize social value creation, aligning their formal articles of association, policies, and procedures accordingly (Di

Domenico et al., 2010). This stands in contrast to the bricolage approach of private enterprises (Baker & Nelson, 2005). Through this process, bricoleurs establish legitimacy by fostering close relationships with stakeholders and dynamically negotiating and renegotiating access to resources, including expertise (Di Domenico et al., 2010). In emerging economies, informal businesses play a vital role in filling the voids that are typically non-existent in developed economies (Desa, 2012). However, in the context of the Base of the Pyramid (BOP), the prevalence of constraining informal institutions hinders full market participation and inhibits the emergence of more innovative business practices. This phenomenon is evident in South Africa's townships and rural areas, where local communities endure less than desirable living conditions. The underlying cause lies in the inefficiencies of stakeholder-based governance structures (Di Domenico et al., 2010; Sunduramurthy et al., 2016).

In addition to being recognized as an entrepreneurial process within resource-scarce environments (Garud & Karnøe, 2003), bricolage also signifies an entrepreneurial inclination to reject or transcend the constraints imposed by institutional voids (Linna, 2013). This notion is particularly relevant in the context of environmentally non-munificent emerging economies, where there is a dearth of materials, established practices, and standardized procedures (Di Domenico et al., 2010). Consequently, bricolage can give rise to a path-dependent trajectory that is primarily shaped by the combination of existing resources rather than a clearly defined vision or meticulous a priori planning (Baker & Nelson, 2005).

This research focuses on the application of bricolage in the context of township entrepreneurship, with particular emphasis on youth involved in business ventures (Gras & Lumpkin, 2012). Despite the challenges posed by resource scarcity in these environments, the literature highlights that in emerging economies, such scarcity can serve as a driver for entrepreneurship. The inability to access external resources compels entrepreneurs to rely on the maximization of available resources (Mair & Marti, 2009; Mair, Martí, & Ventresca, 2012). This reliance on available resources is motivated by a higher degree of structural embeddedness, which fosters trust. However, the ultimate outcome is largely influenced by prior experience in a specific geographical location.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Selection of cases

The initial motivation for this study stemmed from a desire to investigate the innovation processes employed by young small deliveries entrepreneur in a black township characterized high unemployment rate and limited resources. As the research progressed, the focus shifted to exploring the utilization of bricolage as a strategy for establishing new ventures. Within South Africa, this particular research field is still relatively young, and gaining a comprehensive understanding of it necessitated adopting a case study approach. The objective was to identify practical business examples that met specific inclusion criteria: i) innovative business ventures initiated by young South African entrepreneurs, ii) business that is still in its infancy but progressing, and iii) business that is already operating profitably.

Considering these specific criteria, the researcher initiated a quest for appropriate empirical case within and metropolitan municipality in South Africa. The decision to focus specifically on this metropolitan cities was influenced by a televised news segment highlighting one of the featured entrepreneurs. Through an extensive and comprehensive background research process, the researcher discovered such business fitting the criteria. While a larger number of cases would have provided a more robust foundation for the research, the utilization of at least one case enabled in-depth understanding meaningful findings. The subsequent section briefly outlines the case's history.

3.1.1. Cloudy Deliveries: Takeaways and groceries being delivered using bicycles

The Cloudy Deliveries enterprise was established in late 2019 by a young (25 years) Langa resident in Cape Town, South Africa. Currently, it employs more than 20 permanent cycling workers mostly between the ages of 15 and 19 years of age. The idea behind starting this business was to make deliveries to people at a fee. The founder was working for a large financial institution as a student and saved for the whole of the year 2019. At the start of 2020, they bought second hand bicycles and started the business. Later, after three months, the business received a donation of more bicycles from a non-governmental organisation. When the business started, it had servicing the elderly with delivery services.

The main service the business is deliveries of takeaways and groceries to local communities at a fee of ZAR10 (USD0.55). Fortunately, their business started just before the start of Covid-19 and the business started on a positive note as people needed such a service during lockdown. The business use bicycles to do deliveries and employs locals in that township. The enterprise's clientele includes both households and small business in the township to fetch items for them at a fee.

3.2. Data collection and analysis

The researcher opted for a qualitative approach, implementing a case study design. The empirical data collection took place in late 2022. To facilitate this process, the researcher enlisted the assistance of a third-party external data collection service. Through this service, unstructured interviews and informal

discussions were conducted with the business owner and representatives from other parties associated with 'Cloud Deliveries' in the township of Langa. These insightful discussions, supplemented by field notes, yielded valuable data pertaining to the research phenomenon at hand. In total, seven informants participated in the data collection process.

The primary informant for this research was the entrepreneur, accompanied by a select group of individuals who either worked for the business or were customers. Moreover, supplementary secondary data was gathered from media reports specifically related to the chosen case. Throughout the lockdown period, the selected case was closely monitored through social networks, enabling the research to capture valuable insights.

The researcher made the decision to utilize data analysis rooted in the principles of the general inductive approach, a systematic method for analysing qualitative data guided by pre-established themes aligned with specific research objectives. By adopting this inductive approach, the primary aim was to allow research findings to organically emerge from the raw data, free from the constraints of rigid methodologies (Silverman, 2000; Miles & Huberman, 1994). To initiate the analysis, the transcripts underwent meticulous and repeated review, with the objective of identifying themes relevant to the existing literature on bricolage.

Building upon this foundation, an Atlas.ti software coding frame was developed, and the transcripts were systematically coded. The purpose of this coding process was to conceptually categorize the activities of the entrepreneurs. Throughout the analysis, the selected case was consistently compared to similar cases found in the existing literature, facilitating valuable inter-case comparisons (Amal & Filho, 2010). This iterative process allowed the researcher to develop codes, which were subsequently refined and organized into broader themes, contributing to a deeper understanding of the research topic.

4. Findings: Engagement with bricolage during business development phase

The purpose of this paper was to analyse how bricolage is used by township youth entrepreneurs in a developing market with limited resources, among the low-income communities. To answer this question, it is necessary to shed light both on the bricolage aspect of the innovation process and business development carried on by the founders of the venture in this research. Bricolage mindset and business development occurred more or less simultaneously so one cannot distinguish between them. In both these aspects the innovator was also an entrepreneur and took sole responsibility for the whole value chain: from sourcing the bicycles that were used for deliveries to finding young locals who would do the actual deliveries. And from piloting among local communities to commercialising the idea.

The section is divided into three themes: i) opportunity recognition, ii) designing solutions on local resources and iii) business development. To illustrate the meanings, quotes from the interviews are used occasionally.

4.1 Recognising opportunities for innovation: Identifying societal needs and possibilities

Entrepreneurs operating within township environments confront various constraints arising from resource scarcity, such as limited access to startup capital, underdeveloped road infrastructure, a shortage of skilled labour, and challenges in finding suitable facilities to establish their businesses (Sriram & Mersha, 2010). However, the case under examination in this study demonstrates a distinct approach where the entrepreneur refused to accept these local limitations as insurmountable barriers.

The founder of Cloudy Deliveries displayed a profound awareness of the constrained resources but remained undeterred by such circumstances. A significant impetus for action was driven by a personal passion to serve his own home township, reflecting a specific mindset characterized by a determination to address the challenges faced within these local communities. In this regard, similar to the findings of DiDomencio et al. (2010) in their research on social entrepreneurs, the pursuit of "social value creation" emerged as a primary value proposition for the founder of Cloudy Deliveries, serving as a compelling motivation to initiate transformative changes within the existing system.

“On a particular day I was studying, and I wanted something from the shop, but I couldn’t go to the shops because I didn’t have the time to go out. I realised how necessary it would be to develop a service where people can get what they need without having to leave the comfort of their homes. Also to assist the elderly to collect medicine for people who are sick from the clinic”— Colin Mkosi.

The founder was knowledgeable enough to figure out how deliveries problems within the community could be solved by designing simple solutions; that is, using bicycles for deliveries. The use of bicycles for deliveries appears to be an example of one of those creative and practical skill-talented people who could be easily ignored by the formal education system.

“Our vision for Cloudy Deliveries is ... to be a reliable alternative to the way we do shopping, or the way the exchange of money and goods take place between vendors and customers in black communities, while also having an impact on the lives of young boys in our townships”— a group of cyclers at Cloudy Deliveries.

4.1.1. Designing a solution based on locally available resources

During the initial phases of the business, Cloudy Deliveries utilized aging bicycles for its operations, coupled with inadequate road conditions, leading to frequent repairs and operational delays. However, the founder adopted a continuous improvement approach throughout the service development process by integrating social media and technology into their business operations. Recognizing the abundance of relevant information available, the founder perceived the key challenge as accessing and synthesizing this knowledge effectively. As a result, he actively sought ways to gain access to pertinent information and skilfully amalgamate the acquired knowledge to enhance the business operations.

“Customers can place on an order by giving their address via a WhatsApp message or call to Cloudy Deliveries. A delivery rider when then be sent to the address, where they will receive a list of the goods they'll need to collect, along with the cash necessary for the purchases. He also said...that social media had helped the business secure new bicycles. This was after the business development award of R400,000 from the SAB Foundation's Social Innovation Awards.”— Colin Mkosi.

4.1.2. Business venturing: The willingness to improvise

The entrepreneur initiating this business directed his initial efforts towards the comprehensive development of both technical and intangible solutions, aimed at ensuring seamless operations of the venture. Concurrently, he allocated ample time for meticulous strategic planning. In this context, it can be observed that the processes of creation and execution unfolded in parallel, with significant overlap between the two.

“The only challenge we have now is space, as our container is surrounded by shacks and we do not have space big enough to expand our operations and cover more areas surrounding Langa”— Colin Mkosi.

In the existing body of literature on bricolage, the concept of "making do" is examined from multiple perspectives, all of which align with the viewpoint expressed by Baker and Nelson (2005). According to their interpretation, "making do" involves two key aspects: (i) a proactive response to resource limitations, characterized by a bias towards taking action and actively addressing challenges or opportunities, rather than getting stuck in contemplating the feasibility of achieving a viable outcome; and (ii) a willingness to challenge socially constructed constraints by exploring innovative solutions. Consequently, the researcher adopts a constructivist stance, perceiving "making do" as a deliberate act of resistance against any impediments, encompassing both scarcity of resources and prevailing societal norms.

5. Managerial Implications

Policy-makers play a crucial role in comprehending how township enterprises contribute value to local communities, as the delivery of value to customers not only enhances their performance but also drives economic advancement. Consequently, understanding the significance of delivering value to customers in an innovative and affordable manner becomes imperative for BoP business owners operating in resource-constrained environments.

To effectively optimize their limited resource base for product or service innovation, BoP business owners can adopt a strategic focus on bolstering their social networking capabilities. As a result, recruiting employees with strong ties to the local communities becomes pivotal, as it enables these enterprises to better connect with their target market and align their offerings to meet the unique needs and preferences of their customers.

Based on the findings of this study, it is evident that establishing close collaboration with local stakeholders plays a crucial role in gaining access to valuable market insights. This enables enterprises to effectively monitor and respond to any changes in consumption patterns, thus enhancing their adaptive capacity. Additionally, fostering both formal and informal connections with local institutions, regardless of their size, emerges as a significant factor in the success of businesses operating in BoP markets. These relationships often underpin business success in such contexts.

Consequently, business owners are advised to implement appropriate control mechanisms to effectively manage their interactions with these local institutions. This strategic approach helps in maintaining harmonious relationships and avoiding potential hostilities that could otherwise disrupt the operational processes of their businesses.

6. Conclusions, Limitations and Future Research

In contrast to previous research conducted by Shane and Venkataraman (2000), the current study reveals that innovators within townships demonstrate a dual interest in business development, alongside possessing significant innovative capabilities. Their entrepreneurial endeavours are driven by a genuine desire to serve impoverished communities within their vicinity. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that in such contexts, the distinction between innovation and business development may not always be clear-cut, as these processes often occur concurrently. In the context of resource-scarce environments, it becomes imperative to adopt a broader perspective of entrepreneurship, viewing it as a means to create social change in a profound and socially embedded manner. This approach aligns with the notion of entrepreneurship as a catalyst for radical social transformation (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000).

For entrepreneurs operating within the Base of the Pyramid (BoP) markets, the pursuit of opportunities may not follow a systematic approach. Instead, it often involves the design of much-needed solutions to address challenges prevalent in their own communities. As Ardichvili, Cardozo, and Ray (2003) argue, entrepreneurial opportunities demand creativity from the entrepreneur, not merely in identifying these opportunities, but also in transforming them into viable business ventures. Securing sufficient financial, physical, and human capital from external sources constitutes a vital and challenging task for entrepreneurs, particularly for start-ups (Martens, Jennings, & Jennings, 2007). This challenge intensifies when entrepreneurs actively engage in this process within a resource-scarce environment such as a township. In such settings, entrepreneurs adopt a range of unconventional approaches to create and sustain their businesses (Diomande, 1990).

Furthermore, these entrepreneurs exhibit characteristics akin to those observed in social entrepreneurs (Mair & Marti, 2006), who are driven by a strong dedication to addressing poverty-related issues through entrepreneurial initiatives. This social mindset manifests in their fervent desire to devise practical and affordable solutions that cater to the specific needs of their local communities, with which

they have been intimately familiar since their childhood. The pursuit of social value creation propels these entrepreneurs to diligently develop high-quality yet affordable solutions for individuals with low incomes. Notably, financial profit is not their primary motivator; instead, both employees and founders in this study received relatively modest incentives, suggestive of a sacrificial disposition. Prior research (Halme, Lindeman, & Linna, 2012) has recognized such a mindset as being reflective of bricolage, whereby entrepreneurs resourcefully utilize their knowledge base to navigate the challenges presented in their context. For these entrepreneurs, their repertoire of intimate knowledge about local needs, coupled with certain personality traits such as passion, energy, persistence, and determination, play vital roles in driving their pursuits in the uncertain environments present in townships in South Africa (Sriram & Mersha, 2010).

This research presents a promising and captivating direction for further investigation into the concept of bricoleurs within the context of South Africa, particularly focusing on BoP communities. It is noteworthy that previous studies on entrepreneurship and innovations in South African townships have been constrained, despite the recognition of entrepreneurship and innovation as significant economic drivers by both industry practitioners and academic scholars. In order to cultivate a conducive environment for fostering innovation, it becomes imperative not only to identify and understand the prevailing obstacles but also to unveil the latent opportunities and untapped assets that might remain unnoticed within current policies and legislations. By exploring the role and characteristics of bricoleurs in this unique setting, this research seeks to shed light on potential avenues for innovation and entrepreneurship in BoP communities, offering valuable insights to inform policy and decision-making processes.

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