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HUNTER CENTRE FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT AS FREEDOM: THE CASE OF WOMEN IN RURAL NEPAL

Submitted in fulfilment of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Carolyn Lesley McMillan

19th April 2017

ABSTRACT

It is widely recognised that top-down, donor conditionality-driven and outside-expert-led initiatives that characterised early approaches to poverty alleviation among the world's 'bottom billion' have largely failed. A new generation of development strategies, focused on entrepreneurship and small business ownership, are increasingly used to alleviate persistent poverty. This study explores the potential for entrepreneurship to act as a real and appropriate opportunity among rural Nepali women. Using the Capability Approach (CA) to define poverty and development, the thesis presents entrepreneurship as an opportunity that enables individuals to actively shape their lives and the lives of others to realise aspirations.

This research study is exploratory and adopts a qualitative research approach, drawing data from the remote Rapti Zone in Mid-West Nepal. In-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine established women entrepreneurs and seven nascent women entrepreneurs involved with an entrepreneurship enabling organisation. These were complemented by data drawn from eight local experts and a village hall meeting with 26 participants. This data collection strategy enabled the study to present a contextualised understanding of female entrepreneuring within a remote and impoverished community.

The results of the study contribute to ongoing debates regarding the relationship between entrepreneurship, capabilities and poverty as capability deprivation. The study contributes to a better understanding of the emancipatory impacts of

entrepreneurship; highlights the significance of context on entrepreneurial opportunity and the transformative value of entrepreneurship enabling organisations; and presents evidence to suggest that entrepreneurship (as a new opportunity) enables a departure from pre-existing constraints through the extension of gender roles. Finally, the study indicates that, through collective agency, entrepreneurship has the potential to indirectly emancipate other women and girls within their context, contributing to a true departure from the intellectual, psychological, economic, social, institutional or cultural constraints that have, over the years, inhibited the actions of Nepali women.

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GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

AfDB	African Development Bank
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ANWA-R	All Nepalese Women's Association (Revolutionary)
AUSAid	Australia Agency for International Development
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CA	Capability Approach
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CPN-M	Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)
CSIDB	Cottage and Small Industry Development Board
DDC	District Development Committee
DFID	Department for International Development
EEO	Entrepreneurship Enabling Organisation
GAD	Gender and Development
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GGGI/R	Global Gender Gap Index/ Report
HDI/R	Human Development Index/ Report
IADB	InterAmerican Development Bank Group
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMR	Infant Mortality Rate
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MED	Micro Enterprise Development
MEDEP	Micro Enterprise Development Programme
MEDPA	Micro Enterprise Development for Poverty Alleviation
MWCSW	Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare
NGO	Nongovernmental Organisation
NPC	National Planning Commission
NZAID	New Zealand Agency for International Development
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PT	Principal Translator
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAid	US Aid
VAWG	Violence against Women and Girls
VDC	Village Development Committee
WID	Women in Development

GLOSSARY OF NEPALI WORDS

Boxi	Accusations of witchcraft
Brahmin	High caste, priest
Chaudhary	Common indigenous Terai surname
Chhaupadi	Banishment of menstruating women to cowsheds or huts
Chhetri	Warrior Caste
Dalit	Former Untouchable
Gurung	Ethnic Group
Ijaat	Family honour
Janjati	Indigenous to the Terai
Jhankri	Witch doctor
Magar	Ethnic group
Newar	Original inhabitants of the Kathmandu Valley
Oi-lani	Government owned land
Ramro	Positive adjective (good, tasty, nice, pleasant)

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

This thesis explores the potential for entrepreneurship to act as a real and appropriate opportunity to help individuals pursue the kind of lives they have reason to value. This chapter introduces the context of this study by considering the persistence of poverty and the importance of developing alternative approaches to poverty alleviation before the research aim and objectives are presented with the unique contributions of this study. The chapter concludes with an overview of the structure of the thesis.

While the potential impact of entrepreneurship on economic growth was emphasised 80 years ago (Schumpeter, 1936), only in recent years have the claims regarding the potential for entrepreneurship to act as a mechanism for growth and development increased remarkably (Bruton et al., 2008, McMullen, 2011, Bruton et al., 2013, Tobias et al., 2013, Bruton et al., 2015). It is argued that true integration of entrepreneurship into the discipline of development, with particular reference to developing countries, is 'long-postponed' (Naudé, 2010, p.1). In recent years, development economists have argued that entrepreneurship could act as a vehicle for 'endogenous transformation' (McMullen, 2011, p.186). Indeed, since inception in 2002, findings from the World Bank's Doing Business project, an initiative focused

on assessing the formal institutions and regulations which impact upon the life cycles of small and medium enterprises, have influenced policy changes across the globe (World Bank, 2012, World Bank, 2014), indicating the potential significance of entrepreneurship on development and growth.

At the same time, recent calls have been made to broaden the perspectives of what comprises entrepreneurship. Welter et al. (2016) argue that too much emphasis is placed on the ‘extraordinarily rare’ (Welter et al., 2016, p.2) Silicon Valley model of entrepreneurship: the high-growth, technology-led and venture capital-backed outlier entrepreneurship that produces the gazelles or unicorns of the domain. In doing so, the diversity of ‘everyday’ entrepreneurship is commonly overlooked and even disregarded as less valuable when it may, in fact, be ‘more theoretically interesting and more practically important’ (Welter et al., 2016, p.3) than its noticeable absence may suggest. Further, Welter et al. (2016) question who research should serve and indicate that entrepreneurship research can be valuable to more than academia and the wealthy and successful. In particular, Welter et al. (2016, p.6) provide an example of useful research: the importance of gaining a ‘deeper and engaged understanding of how impoverished female entrepreneurs starting informal ventures in contexts of deep cultural misogyny can improve their chances of survival and generate some degree of autonomy’.

Limited research has considered the relationship between entrepreneurship and individual or community development (Tobias et al., 2013). Instead, a focus is

predominantly placed on national economic objectives (Bruton et al., 2015). Finally, research by Zahra (2007), Welter (2011) and Baker and Powell (2016) has drawn attention to the importance of acknowledging that entrepreneurial activity is embedded within dimensions of contexts that constrain and encourage behaviour, define opportunity and the rules of the game. To understand the 'nature, richness and dynamics' of entrepreneurial behaviour (Zahra, 2007, p.451), it must be considered in context. In this research, a focus is placed on the lives of remote women entrepreneurs in rural Nepal – whose entrepreneurship constitutes the 'everyday' entrepreneurship absent from the literature (Welter et al., 2016) and whose lives have been defined by absolute poverty – and seeks to understand the effect that entrepreneurship has on their lives.

Nepal was selected as the research area for three distinct reasons. First, the government of Nepal places a significant focus on micro enterprise development as a contributor to employment generation and poverty alleviation. Second, the perpetuation of feudal Brahminical rule (Yami, 2007) has created a country with far reaching, deep-rooted and structured social discriminations and inequalities (NPC, 2003). When this is considered alongside the recent People's War (Thapa, 2012), Nepal provides a unique context. Finally, despite this, entrepreneurship and poverty in Nepal is under-researched. Indeed, between 2000 and 2015, no articles were published in the Financial Times' top business journals that focused on poverty in Nepal (Bruton et al., 2015).

1.2. The Persistence of Poverty

It has been estimated that between 1.2 and 2.9 billion people lived in poverty in 2015 (Hulme, 2015). Whichever indicators are adopted, that 58 million primary school-aged children do not attend school, that 800 million people are estimated to be chronically undernourished (FAO et al., 2014), that 700 million people across the globe do not have access to safe drinking water (World Health Organisation, 2014), or that access to high-quality, affordable health care remains a concern for millions across the globe (Elvidge et al., 2009), demonstrates the significant impacts of poverty. While these indicators are, in the most part, unique to developing countries, the incidence of child poverty has increased in developed countries (Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission, 2014, Smeeding and Thevenot, 2016). The persistence and volatility of poverty is a global problem (Sumner, 2010, Chandy and Gertz, 2011) and, as a result, a wide range of non-governmental organisations, businesses, religious organisations, philanthropists, charities, public figures and development banks focus on addressing poverty across the world (Zuckerman, 2002, Sachs, 2005, Samman et al., 2009, Sumner, 2010, Peterson, 2015, World Bank, 2015a).

1.3. Seeking New Approaches to Poverty Alleviation

In recognition of the failures of top-down, trickle-down, donor conditionality-driven and outside-expert-led initiatives that typified early approaches to poverty alleviation, a new generation of development strategies are being sought to alleviate poverty amongst the bottom billion (Collier, 2007, Saad-Filho, 2010). In recent years entrepreneurship has been proposed as a tool to address multiple aspects of poverty

including social inequality (Yunus, 2010, Welter et al., 2016), act as a vehicle for endogenous transformation (McMullen, 2011), facilitate empowerment and emancipation (Rindova et al., 2009, Al-Dajani and Marlow, 2015), foster agency (Sen, 1999) and alleviate forms of poverty (Tobias et al., 2013, Powell and McGrath, 2014). However, according to Welter et al. (2016), further research is required to understand such perspectives on entrepreneurship including 'everyday', contextualised entrepreneurship that is frequently ignored but is both theoretically interesting to the domain of entrepreneurship and practically important.

While contemporary perspectives define poverty as a multi-dimensional concept related to well-being deprivation, economic measures, including international absolute poverty lines, are frequently adopted in research and development initiatives (Ravallion et al., 2008), perhaps because where poverty is defined by income it is 'more easily quantified and can clearly be addressed' (Bruton et al., 2015, p.5). However, Amartya Sen, founder of the Capability Approach to development and poverty alleviation argues that income is in inadequate indicator of poverty, not least because it is instrumentally, rather than intrinsically, significant (Sen, 1999). Instead, the Capability Approach defines poverty as the deprivation of an individual's ability to achieve and available opportunities – their capability set.

1.4. The Research Project

The overarching aim of the study is to better understand the potential for entrepreneurship to act as a real and appropriate opportunity to facilitate in the

expansion of the capability sets of rural Nepali women in order for them to be able to live the lives they have reason to value. This aim will be addressed through three objectives:

1. To gain an understanding of how and to what extent context affects women and women entrepreneurs in a region of rural Nepal.
2. To understand the role and transformative value of the Micro Enterprise Development Programme (MEDEP), as an entrepreneurship enabling organisation, in the lives of nascent and established ordinary entrepreneurs and to assess whether, through the proliferation of expert venture scripts (action-based field specific knowledge structures (Mitchell et al., 2000)), the established women entrepreneurs have been sufficiently equipped to act independently of MEDEP.
3. To understand the impact of entrepreneurship on the lives of the women entrepreneurs; to understand whether their involvement allows them to develop and exercise agency and whether their involvement allows them to identify and pursue a life they have reason to value.

This thesis makes three unique contributions. Firstly, and directly related to Gries and Naudé's (2011) argument that entrepreneurship scholars place a focus on the who, what and how of entrepreneurship rather than the impact, or effect, of entrepreneurship, this research places a focus on the effect, or impact, that entrepreneurship has upon individual lives. Secondly, through the application of institutional theory (North, 1990, Scott, 2005) and Welter's (2011) dimensions of context, this research is deeply embedded and answers calls to better understand 'nature, richness and dynamics' of entrepreneurial behaviour (Zahra, 2007, p.451).

Finally, this research identifies an alternative approach to poverty alleviation; that is, entrepreneurship as an adequate opportunity to facilitate in the expansion of capability sets, contributing to dialogue on international development initiatives and poverty alleviation.

The study took place in the Rapti Zone in Mid-Western Development Region of Nepal. The sample comprised 16 women entrepreneurs from an enterprise development programme (nine established women entrepreneurs and seven nascent women entrepreneurs). Eight local experts from development agencies, NGOs and government ministries were also interviewed gain a better understanding of the dimensions of context wherein the women entrepreneurs operate. There were three motivations behind selecting an exploratory qualitative methodology with participatory elements utilising in-depth semi structured interviews (individual and group) and a village hall meeting. Firstly, a qualitative methodological approach is apposite in exploratory research. Secondly, in recognition of low literacy levels and high workloads in the Rapti Zone, particularly among women, interviews were more appropriate. Thirdly, to satisfy an element of participatory approaches to research, the semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed the entrepreneurs to discuss issues that they felt were important to them.

1.5. Structure of the Thesis

Following this introductory chapter, three chapters review the literature relevant to the research aim and objectives. Chapter Two presents the concept of poverty from

historical and contemporary perspectives, discusses the significance of context and introduces the Capability Approach as an alternative approach to defining and understanding poverty. Chapter Three considers the relationship between entrepreneurship and poverty alleviation and applies institutional theory to understand women entrepreneurs and women entrepreneurs in South Asia before the concept of entrepreneurship enabling organisations are discussed. Chapter Three concludes by highlighting the gaps in the literature that guide the methodological approach and field work aims. Chapter Four presents the conceptual framework of the study, introduces the context of the research, the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, and considers the historical, business, spatial, institutional and social contexts of Nepal as a whole. Further, institutional theory is applied to better understand the regulative and normative institutions that influence the behaviour of women.

Chapter Five presents the philosophical foundations and methodological approach adopted in the study. The research approach, sampling design, data collection techniques and analytical approach are detailed before specific rhetorical and ethical considerations are presented. Chapters Six, Seven and Eight present the results and analysis of the three research objectives detailed above. Chapter Six applies dimensions of context to understand the lives of nascent and established women entrepreneurs and understand their entrepreneurial behaviour. Again, institutional theory was applied to better understand the regulative and normative institutions that constrain and promote behaviours. Chapter Seven introduces the results and analysis of the second objective: to better understand the role and transformative value of entrepreneurship enabling organisations in the lives of the nascent and established

women entrepreneurs. Chapter Eight, the final analysis chapter, draws on findings from Chapters Six and Seven and considers further aspects of the Capability Approach to poverty alleviation in relation to the established and nascent women entrepreneurs. Chapter Eight discusses whether their involvement in entrepreneurship allows the entrepreneurs to develop and exercise agency and whether their involvement allows them to identify and pursue a life they have reason to value. Chapter Nine presents the conclusions of the study and introduces the implications of the study, the theoretical, methodological and empirical contributions, study limitations and proposed future research directions.

Six technical appendices are attached. Appendix 5.1 presents pilot interview schedule. Appendices 5.2 and 5.3 present the general overviews utilised by the principal translator during interviews with entrepreneurs. Appendix 5.4 provides the summary of the research provided to the local experts. Appendix 5.5 presents an excerpt from the research diary and, finally, at Appendix 5.6, a full listing of raw data for one thematic category is presented.

CHAPTER TWO

POVERTY IN CONTEXT

2.1. Introduction

Chapter One has highlighted the persistence of poverty and the importance of developing targeted programmes to alleviate the poverty experienced by the bottom billion (Collier, 2007). This chapter develops the understanding of poverty by presenting the concept of poverty from historical and contemporary perspectives, discusses the significance of the institutional dimension of context and introduces the Capability Approach (CA) as an alternative approach to defining and understanding poverty. Finally, the relationship between gender and poverty is discussed before conclusions are made regarding the requirement of real and appropriate opportunities as part of the CA.

2.2. Historical Perspectives on Poverty

The following section presents a history of the development industry and poverty to understand the origins and motivations of today's multibillion dollar development industry (Ravallion, 2015) and to understand why a new generation of development strategies are being sought to alleviate poverty amongst the bottom billion (Collier, 2007, Saad-Filho, 2010).

The modern study of poverty can be traced back to Victorian social reformer and empirical sociologist, Benjamin Seebohm Rowntree, and his 'pioneering and highly influential' (Atkinson et al., 1981, p.59) surveys of York in 1899 and 1936 (Sen, 1983). The Victorian and Interwar studies, which argued that the living standards of York 'might be taken as fairly representative of the conditions existing in many, if not most, of our provincial towns' (Rowntree, 1901, p. xvii), focused upon working class populations and established the terms 'primary' and 'secondary' poverty: while primary poverty occurred in families whose 'total earnings are insufficient to obtain the minimum necessaries for the maintenance of merely physical efficiency', secondary poverty occurred in families whose 'total earnings would be sufficient for the maintenance of merely physical efficiency were it not that some portion of it is absorbed by other expenditure, either useful or wasteful' (Rowntree, 1901, p.86-87).

In order to establish the 'minimum necessaries for the maintenance of merely physical efficiency', Rowntree translated the estimated nutritional needs of adults and children into food and money, adding minimum sums for fuel, clothes and household sundries. Using the above expenditure classifications, Rowntree concluded that a family of five people were in primary poverty if their weekly income was lower than 17s 8d after rent had been paid. In addition, Rowntree established a detailed list of criteria to further determine whether a family were living in primary poverty. Rowntree described his detailed list as 'nothing must be bought but that which is absolutely necessary for the maintenance of physical health, and what is bought must be of plainest and most economical description' (Rowntree, 1901, p.134). As such, families living in poverty were not, for example, able to save money, join a union, contribute financially to their

church, buy 'pretty' clothes, consume alcohol, smoke tobacco or purchase halfpenny newspapers. If ill, children must be seen by parish doctors and, in the event of their death, they must only be buried by the parish (Rowntree, 1901). Clearly Rowntree's definitions of poverty are embedded in context.

By comparing household incomes with his set of minimum needs, Rowntree argued that over 27.8 percent of the population of York were living in primary or secondary poverty in 1899 (Rowntree, 1901). In discussing his findings, Rowntree suggested that a large proportion of the population were living in poverty because of factors beyond their control. His conclusion was that primary poverty, in particular, was not a result of individual irresponsibility but rather that poverty existed as a result of the system, a fault in the operation of society. As a result, Rowntree advocated the introduction of national welfare support policies. In response, the British government appointed a Royal Commission to study the Poor Laws and related aspects of social policy (Briggs, 2006). By 1918 Rowntree had developed a 'human needs' poverty line which took into account food, clothing, personal sundries, fuel, light and household sundries. The poverty line was further adapted in 1936 to allow for some non-essential items, including a radio, daily newspaper and an allowance for tobacco and alcohol (Freeman, 2011).

Further surveys of the population of York in 1936 and 1950 (Blackwood and Lynch, 1994) using Rowntree's human needs poverty line suggested an overall decrease in poverty and, as a result, conclusions were made that linked the reduction in poverty to

improved employment and social services for the working class populations of the city (Freeman, 2011). Although the accuracy of the final survey was questioned by Townsend (1954), the Labour government of the day were quick to claim that their policies, including the National Insurance Act which established a system of social security (Robson, 1947), were delivering desired results. In the UK and in the wider world, this claim led to 'premature optimism' related to the elimination of poverty in wealthier countries (Sen, 1983, p.154). Within the UK at least, the publication of Rowntree's reports brought about an awareness of poverty and the environmental factors that cause an individual or family to be in poverty. While poverty reduction is now central to the efforts of a range of non-governmental organisations, businesses, religious organisations, philanthropists, charities, individuals and multilateral development banks, this was not always the case. In fact, shifting priorities, fixations of the West and a lack of understanding have, over time, exacerbated poverty levels across the globe. To understand the situation today requires a brief history of poverty in the context of development studies.

The effects of World War II were felt far beyond the countries involved in the conflict. On all sides of the conflict, resources were redirected toward wartime activities, trade patterns were dislocated and global empires collapsed (Ingham and Simmons, 1981), resulting in a post war period of uncertainty, instability and change (Sen, 1997a). With Western Europe in need of reconstruction and recovery, the Bretton Woods agreement was signed by 44 nations in July 1944 (Mele, 2012). Fuelled by a desire to ensure post-war prosperity through economic cooperation, the agreements outlined the financial and trade parameters that would guide American economic diplomacy and nurture a

peaceful world. Central to the meetings were two key issues: the establishment of a stable system of exchange rates and how the reconstruction of war-damaged European economies would be funded (Cooper, 2014).

As a result of discussions, two inter-governmental bodies, permitted only to work through governments of politically independent nations, were established (Lipscy, 2015). Firstly, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was designed to ensure the stability of the international financial system through the enforcement of a set of fixed exchange rates. Secondly, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), one of five institutions that today comprise the World Bank Group, was established to guarantee European borrowing in North American markets to aid post World War Two recovery (Mason and Asher, 1973). Ultimately, however, reconstruction funding did not originate from the IBRD. Instead, grants were provided through The Marshall Plan, or European Recovery Program (Mason and Asher, 1973), which entailed the grant transfer of billions of American dollars and tonnes of American products to Western Europe (Kunz, 1997). As a result of the European Recovery Program, in the period between 1948 and 1973, economic growth in Europe achieved record heights (De Long and Eichengreen, 1991). It has been argued that this agreement between Western Europe and the United States helped establish the economic and political foundation of the Cold War alliances (Kunz, 1997). In time, the mandate of the IBRD was revised and focused on the provision of low interest loans to developing, or 'underdeveloped', countries (Mason and Asher, 1973). The focus however, was not upon poverty reduction as such. There were two linked factors behind the decision to establish the IBRD: the perceived growing threat of communism

and the recent enlightened self-interest and independence of nation states (Fried, 1990, Peffley and Sigelman, 1990).

2.3. The Red Menace and the Enlightened Self Interest of the West

In the post war period, the influence of communism spread from Eastern Europe to China and Korea (Howard, 2003). This resulted in an environment of fear of the expansion of Soviet power, the ‘Red Menace’ (Fried, 1990, p.194), particularly in the USA. This fear was manifest in the surge of ‘focused intolerance’ (Peffley and Sigelman, 1990, p.95) fixed on ‘communists, socialists, and atheists - the bogeymen of the McCarthy era’ (Peffley and Sigelman, 1990, p.93). The growing feeling of fear of Russia and of intolerance towards the Soviet regime is best illustrated in the *Long Telegram* of 1946. Commonly believed to have been authored by American adviser and diplomat, George Kennan[1], the article was reproduced in Foreign Affairs as ‘The Sources of Soviet Conduct’. In the document, it is argued that the United States ‘must continue to regard the Soviet Union as a rival, not a partner, in the political arena. It must continue to expect that Soviet policies will reflect no abstract love of peace and stability, no real faith in the possibility of a permanent happy coexistence of the Socialist and Capitalist worlds, but rather a cautious, persistent pressure toward the disruption and weakening of all rival influence and rival power’ ("X", 1947, p.580).

[1] Although it is believed that The Long Telegram was authored by Keenan, this has not been proven and, as such, the author is always referred to as ‘X’.

In this context, when post-war Britain was unable to sustain military support to Greece in 1947, US President Truman, fearing communist subversion by the National Liberation Front, answered the appeal of the Greek government by securing a $250 million loan for military and economic aid (Kunz, 1997). Addressing congress, Truman argued that the containment of Communism was the responsibility of America stating that 'it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures' (Truman, 1947, p.76). This intolerance of, and hostility towards Communism and Communists was fuelled by the so-called Domino Theory which argued that if one nation state 'fell' to communism, it would act as a trigger causing other nations to 'fall', thus creating a real threat to democracy and to the USA in particular (Ninkovich, 1994). To avoid the 'misery and want' that provided nurture to the 'seeds of totalitarian regimes', Truman argued that 'immediate and resolute action' (Truman, 1947, p.76) in the form of a US$150 million loan, must be given to support Turkey, the close neighbour of Greece. The foreign policy of US governments was that providing support to Western Europe to mute 'the communist sirens' (Kunz, 1997, p.163) was imperative to securing American national security (Kunz, 1997). The direct link between poverty reduction and opposing communism had been made through the perception on Western enlightened self-interest.

The political force of the fear of communism was strengthened by the emergence of newly independent states after World War Two. During the war, colonial powers including UK, France, the Netherlands, Japan and Italy, redirected resources towards the war effort (Ninkovich, 1994, Head et al., 2010). In many cases, the colonies of

countries participating in the war were sold or neglected. In the immediate aftermath of the war, former colonies, emerging as new nation states sought new ways to maintain independence, to develop economically and to ensure stability. In the aftermath of the war the colonial powers were unable to provide such support (Head et al., 2010). In line with Domino Theory, fears grew in North American and European governments that the newly independent nations would turn to the Soviet Union for guidance and assistance. In order to limit the influence of the Red Menace, Western governments sought to understand and meet the aid requirements of 'The Third World' in terms of economic growth, stability and political independence. It is clear that the aim of such policies and development assistance was the management of the Red Menace rather than poverty reduction as such. To ensure the correct focus of social scientists studying the development issues, the US government and private organisations provided the necessary funding and, by the 1950s, modernisation theory, a comprehensive theory of development with an explicit anti-communist agenda, was established (Berger, 2003).

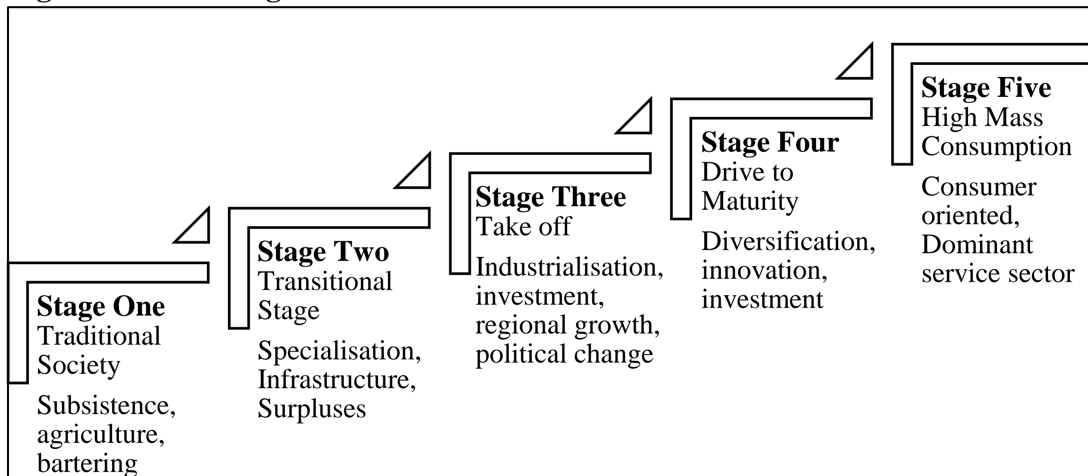
2.4. Development as Modernisation (1945-1973)

Development as modernisation economics emerged from the post-war social and political 'intellectual environment' (Ingham, 1993, p.1803). Scholars argued the core of development was economic growth (Saad-Filho, 2010) and that development should create economic growth by way of a replication of the process of industrialisation which occurred in the US, France, Germany, Japan and Britain. This economics-driven theory of development is based on three key assumptions: that economies evolve from

agrarian to industrial (Rostow, 1960), that economic growth results in higher standards of living and that individuals operate through enlightened self-interest and are economically rational (Peredo et al., 2004). Before these are discussed below, it is important to note that these assumptions are solely based on the economic and social history of the 'first world' and fail to consider context, culture and cross-cultural differences (Leys, 2006).

At the heart of the theory of modernisation is a belief that, for economic growth to occur, countries must follow an evolutionary path typified by movements from agriculture to industry by way of advances in science and technology, movements from rural to urban living and movements from traditional to modern values (Harrison, 2005). The assumption is that only this evolutionary path stimulates economic growth. The mechanism that allows this process to occur is increased savings and capital accumulation as a country moves towards a growing industrial and shrinking agricultural sector (Harrison, 2005). This assumption of evolution is most clearly expressed in Rostow's Five Stages of Growth model (Figure 2.1) which places all societies on one of five categories: traditional society, preconditions for take-off, take-off, drive to maturity and the age of mass-consumption (Rostow, 1960).

Figure 2.1 Five Stages of Growth Model



Source: Rostow (1960)

The first stage, traditional society, is typified by an economy based on agriculture and a hierarchical social structure based on families and clans. Power is held by landowners, little upward mobility is possible, individuals and families have roles in society and little changes from generation to generation. The second stage is a transitional stage where the preconditions for take-off are established. To advance from stage one, the economy requires new methods and functions for agriculture and industry. New markets and competitors are established and economic progress becomes a necessity because the population desire progress and profit and have welfare concerns. The third stage, take-off, is often referred to as industrialisation. During take-off, as industries expand rapidly, new entrepreneurs act, resources are exploited, new techniques are adopted and, as a result, profits are reinvested. The structure of the economy and social and political institutions undergo transformation to ensure sustainable growth.

The fourth stage, drive to maturity, is typified by progress and the establishment of institutions that support growth. As techniques improve, new industries are established, exports increase and goods formerly imported are produced internally. At maturity, economies demonstrate the entrepreneurial skills and technological ability to produce only desired goods and services. Rostow's final stage, age of high mass-consumption, involves a shift towards consumer goods and services: the population is able, willing and anxious to consume beyond basic needs of food, clothing and shelter. Further, the workforce is urban and skilled. Rostow (1960) argued that Europe and Japan approaches the age of high-mass consumption in the 1950s. It is important to note that there was an assumption that because the economies of UK, Europe and Japan had followed an evolutionary path to development in line with Rostow's model, this was the only route to development and that replication was essential (Harrison, 2005).

The second belief underpinning the modernisation approach to development is that through economic growth, improvements will be made to the quality of life of all individuals in a country. In particular, it is believed that individual incomes rise as a result of economic growth. Poverty reduction then is an indirect outcome of economic growth, delivered by way of a 'trickle-down' effect (Saad-Filho, 2010). Indeed, it was expected that there would be a spontaneous reduction in poverty because of economic growth (Saad-Filho, 2010) and, where there would be a reduced tendency for the trickle-down effect to reach the poor, governments of developing countries would take 'corrective action' (Hicks and Streeten, 1979, p.567).

Proponents of the trickle-down approach make assumptions regarding the process of development (Deneulin & Shahani 2009): that a high gross domestic product (GDP) is necessary for human development; that households with a high income will also measure high in other dimensions (including literacy and health); that overall economic growth automatically results in a reduction of other forms of poverty (for example, malnutrition); that income and expenditure data are more reliable indicators of development; that promoting economic growth is less difficult than promoting human development; and, finally, that sustaining economic growth does not rely on the improvement of the well-being of the population. The trickle-down effect is referenced throughout this chapter. Where it is, these assumptions, as detailed by Deneulin and Shahani (2009), are applicable.

Finally, for the process of modernisation, it was believed that all human beings would be driven by self-interest and engage in economically rational behaviour (Peredo et al. 2004). The argument was that where rational self-interest has not yet occurred, assimilating and replicating the development processes of Europe, internal conditions, such as poverty, culture and social norms, constitute 'barriers to progress' (Peredo et al., 2004). In this way, the breakdown of traditional social relations, such as family, kinship and community, were considered a pre-requisite to economic growth and development. It was only through assimilation that efficient and effective economic growth could be achieved (Peredo et al., 2004).

The three-belief model of development as a process of modernisation was adopted uncritically and universally and enjoyed a prominent position in development thinking. As a result of this acceptance, the multilateral banks, which provide assistance to developing countries through loans or grants, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank Group (IADB), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) increased lending throughout the 1970s to support consistent growth in less developed countries and to aid their modernisation process (Husain and Diwan, 1989). However, coinciding with the increased lending, the price of crude oil rose sharply and, as a result, the demand for loans from non-oil producing developing countries rose to meet their obligations (Frieden, 1991). Because the ever-increasing bank deposits of oil exporting countries were in dollars, the international banks were able to continually meet the demand for loans from developing countries[2]. The debt of developing countries spiralled. In Latin America, for example, debt increased significantly from $28.6 million in 1970 to $291.1million in 1981 (FDIC, 1997). While a collaboration between the Institute of Development Studies and the World Bank proposed a redistributive approach in 1974 which recommended the transfer of assets and land to the poor, promoted education and infrastructure and encouraged labour-intensive industries, because of continued over-borrowing, developing countries were forced to redirect the vast majority of their scarce resources towards reducing debt rather than supporting redistribution with growth (FDIC, 1997).

[2] From 1972- 1974, annual oil revenues of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) increased from US14 billion to almost US$70 billion. By 1977, annual oil revenues were $128 billion (FDIC, 1997)

Criticisms of the modernisation approach soon surfaced. It was argued that the 'naively optimistic model' (Leys, 2006, p.110) was authority based, expert driven, non-negotiable and 'characterised by a particular form of Western ethnocentrism' (Leys, 2006, p.136) that focused on quelling communism (Gendzier, 1985). Indeed, modernisation was often linked with US foreign policy aims; the CIA often debriefed US scholars returning from fieldwork (Leys, 2006). Because of the priority placed upon defeating communism, the model and the approach were not designed to deliver real results to developing countries and consequently, even after 100 years of independence, Latin America had yet to 'modernise' (Leys, 2006). Further, it has been noted that after decades of development initiatives, poverty persisted (Saad-Filho, 2010) while the gap between the rich and poor in many African states had widened (Collier, 2007). In an extreme form, criticism of development work has argued that the actions of the developed world were the basic and continuing cause of underdevelopment. Colonialism and economic exploitation under other names (Collier, 2007). Criticisms of this type are the underlying premise of Dependency Theory.

2.5. Foreign Direct Investment and Dependency Theory

By the early 1970s, a Dependency Theory of development was gaining momentum in the academic environments of Europe and of Third World nations (Leys, 2006). Eventually, the international development community and the International Financial Institutions began to adopt elements of the theory. Dependency Theory emerged as a critique of the failure of the theory of modernisation to deliver development outcomes

and in response to the perception of the advent of a new form of colonialism, or neo-colonialism (Peredo et al., 2004). While the modernisation school claimed that it was the internal conditions within developing countries that prevented modernisation from occurring, dependency theorists claimed that modernisation itself had failed due to a 'class struggle... played out on a global scale' (Hanson, 1998, p.233). Specifically, dependency theory argued that the world consists of core and periphery nations. The core nations were defined as the capitalist powers, often represented by development organisations, such as the World Bank and the IMF, who were cast as 'villains' in the development piece (Peredo et al., 2004, p.8), while the periphery nations were the underdeveloped or developing countries.

Most notably, dependency theorists reject the modernisation argument that all nations – developed and developing – are on a 'linear path towards development' with the developed world helping developing nations with foreign direct investment and international trade (Lacher and Nepal, 2010, p.950). While dependency theory is still used today to assess power relations at local, regional and international scales, particularly within tourism research (Khan, 1997, Manyara and Jones, 2007 , Scheyvens, 2011), it has been argued that as a theory it is only a critique of modernisation and has little underlying contribution to the understanding of development processes and poverty reduction (Lacher and Nepal, 2010). For example, to address the 'neo-colonial' outcomes of modernisation, dependency theorists proposed the introduction of import substitution programmes to strengthen internal resources although this proved unsuccessful (Kuhnen, 1987).

2.6. The Washington Consensus

The Washington Consensus, produced by John Williamson in 1989, contained a list of what ought to occur to establish an environment that fosters development (Rodrik, 2006) and was considered to be a 'dramatic right-wing reaction' against previous development consensus (Saad-Filho, 2010, p.4). McCleery and De Paolis (2008) have subcategorised the Washington Consensus into three groups. Firstly, two preconditions for economic growth that remain relevant to economic growth today (Hall and Lawson, 2014): the provision of secure property rights and fiscal discipline in relation to budget deficits. Secondly, four policies that are historically and geographically contextual to Latin America in the 1980s (Marangos, 2009) that relate to public expenditure priorities, exchange rate policies, foreign direct investment and tax reform. The blind implementation of these policies from the consensus without the consideration of context, alternative policies and the need for complementary institutions may not, it is argued, drive economic growth (McCleery and De Paolis, 2008). Finally, four remaining factors that, if implemented without consideration of context, institutions, training, phasing, assistance and proper sequencing, would have a negative impact on economies (McCleery and De Paolis, 2008). These factors relate to trade liberalisation, complete privatisation of state owned enterprises, financial liberalisation and the abolition of regulations that impede competition and the entry of new firms (McCleery and De Paolis, 2008).

Essentially, the list has been summarised into 'stabilise, privatise, liberalise' (Rodrik 2006, p.3) and is often referred to as a 'market-oriented development approach' which

adopted central planning and was ‘top-down, donor conditionality-driven and outside-expert led’ (Gore, 2000, p.795). Because the Washington Consensus essentially required state institutions to transfer control to markets, poverty reduction was never the priority. Improving the living standards of the poor would once again rely on the supposed trickle-down effect (Saad-Filho, 2010). Further, while the Washington Consensus influenced the terms and conditions associated with development bank loans, guided international development policy (McCleery and De Paolis, 2008) and was accepted as ‘common wisdom’ on development and growth policies (Marangos 2009, p.197), the ten policy instruments were, in fact, historically and geographically specific to Latin America in the 1980s (Marangos, 2009).

The Washington Consensus attracted criticism from a range of sources and disciplines (Stiglitz, 2005, Rodrik, 2012). From an empirical perspective, the real life actions, priorities and policies of the Asian ‘tigers’ in the 1960s and 1970s failed to align with the tenets of the Washington Consensus (Fine, 2001); experts in culture and development perceived their cultures to be ‘anti-developmental’ (Paldam, 2003, p.457) and, as late as 1955, the economies of South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore were comparable to African nations (Paldam, 2003). Despite these judgements, poverty in Singapore had ‘all but disappeared’ by 1994 (Huff, 1995, p.1421). While attempts to explain their ‘miraculous’ growth are ongoing, economists have argued that the considerable role of the state was crucial in the development of the Asian tigers (Huff, 1995).

It is argued that the strong interventionist policies of the state, including control of financial systems, the mobilisation of domestic capital and trade policies, control of international trade and control of the process of investment, can explain the growth of South Korea and Taiwan (Levi-Faur, 1998, Paldam, 2003). Further, while the governments of Singapore and Hong Kong placed a key focus on trade and the implementation of liberal policies that encouraged private enterprise, the role of the state remained considerable (Huff, 1995). Indeed, according to Krause (1988, p.62), the government of Singapore was 'very intrusive in both the economy and the society'; despite a liberal approach, interventionism in the domestic sector of the economy, including the labour market, taxation and fiscal incentives, allowed the state to direct the entire domestic economy without affecting international trade (Huff, 1995). While both Hong Kong and Singapore were liberal in terms of finance and trade – principles, in line with the Washington Consensus, state intervention in all four economies directly contradicts with the tenets of the Washington Consensus that required a reduced state role with control transferred to markets (McCleery and De Paolis, 2008).

A secondary criticism of the Washington Consensus relates to the human costs of the consensus. While it was recognised that the consensus would introduce stability and encourage growth, it is argued that the process of adjustment was placing a disproportionate burden on those living in poverty (Kuczynski, 2003). Indeed, as many economies introduced policies in line with the consensus, poverty continued to rise (Saad-Filho, 2010). In response, the World Bank claimed that the policies associated with the consensus were sound; instead, it was poor implementation, implying corruption and poor governance was to blame for weak results (McCleery and De

Paolis, 2008). Immediately following the circulation of the Washington Consensus, two practical advancements took place. Firstly, the appointment of Stiglitz as Chief Economist of the World Bank and, secondly, the introduction of the Human Development Report.

In 1997, Joseph Stiglitz was appointed as the World Bank's chief economist and, soon after, there was a marked shift in the stance of the Bank (Gilbert and Vines, 2006). Discussions, post Washington Consensus, shifted the focus onto the institutional environment of economic activity and questioned the stabilisation policies and continued opposition to state intervention of the Washington Consensus (Gilbert and Vines, 2006). Indeed, Stiglitz represented one of the most vocal critics of the consensus: 'If there is a consensus today about what strategies are most likely to promote the development of the poorest countries in the world, it is this: there is no consensus except that the Washington consensus did not provide the answer. Its recipes were neither necessary nor sufficient for successful growth, though each of its policies made sense for particular countries at particular times' (Stiglitz, 2005, p.1).

Stiglitz argued that development occurs within contexts with strong formal and informal institutions, including social relations, property rights, patterns of work and family and that macroeconomic analysis is unable to acknowledge these crucial influencing factors (Rodrik, 2005). In summary, the Stiglitz-driven post-Washington Consensus called for the following (Rodrik, 2005):

- Independent central bank
- Financial codes and standards
- Prudent capital account opening
- Non-intermediate exchange rate regimes
- Anti-corruption policies and practices
- Targeted poverty reduction
- Corporate governance
- Social safety nets
- WTO agreements
- Flexible labour markets

It is, according to Stiglitz, the combined interaction of these factors which underpins development (Rodrik, 2005). In response to these new policy directions on the part of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund acknowledged that a wide range of factors are required to deliver economic stability and stated that the rigid market management called for by the Washington Consensus would not encourage poverty reduction (Easterly, 2002). By the late 1990s, it was acknowledged that governments, development agencies and non-governmental organisations could not rely upon growth, rebalanced or improved macroeconomic policies, or improved governance to directly target poverty reduction (Williamson, 2000). Instead, to address poverty, targeted economic and social policy tools were required (Easterly, 2007).

The second advancement following the Washington Consensus was the publication of the first Human Development Report (HDR) which adopted the theme of 'Adjustment with a Human Face' originally published by UNICEF in 1987 (Gore 2000). The HDR, produced by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), was an important challenge to the Washington Consensus. The HDR challenged the assumptions regarding the trickle-down effect and took a very different view of the purpose of

development. While previous development theories, including the Washington Consensus, adopted a market-oriented approach typified by top down, external donor expertise, the HDR advocated a new set of values and suggested that ‘the ultimate test of development practice is that it should improve the nature of people’s lives’ (Gore, 2000, p.795).

Essentially, the HDR asserted that while economic growth is the means of development, the purpose of development is human development and that in addition to improvements in average income, development should be measured by increases in life expectancy, adult literacy and access to primary, secondary and tertiary education (Ravallion, 2012). Further, the HDR advised that rather than emphasising the judgement and expertise of international experts, development should involve an equal partnership between donors and recipients (Gore, 2000). While the HDR proposed this new purpose of development, a focus continued to be placed on the trickle-down effect resulting from economic growth. However, by the late 1990s, it was acknowledged that growth, improvements in macroeconomic policies and better governance would not inevitably result in poverty reduction and aid human development (Saad-Filho, 2010). Instead, it was argued that specific targeted economic and social policy tools should be developed and implemented to encourage ‘pro poor growth’ (Saad-Filho, 2010). While the true definition of pro poor growth has been debated (see Kakwani and Pernia (2000) and Ravallion and Chen (2003)), there was a general consensus that the ultimate goal of development initiatives should be poverty reduction (Saad-Filho, 2010). Further, the debate introduced the importance of income distribution, argued that poverty and inequality were inter-related and claimed that only through inclusive

growth would poverty and inequality be addressed (Saad-Filho, 2010). The inclusive growth paradigm, which was developed inductively from ‘successful growth experiences’ (Saad-Filho, 2010, p.14), offered ten policies designed to reduce poverty and inequality:

- Competitive environment
- “Good policies”
- Public sector investment
- International integration
- Social safety nets
- Government commitment to growth
- Labour market deregulation
- Employment and productivity growth
- Exchange rate management
- “Prudent” capital account opening

Criticisms of the inclusive growth paradigm argue that these policies are directly comparable to the post-Washington Consensus and that successful outcomes and impacts of these policies are extremely uncommon (Saad-Filho, 2010). In summarising the insufficient policies, Saad-Filho argues that the inclusive growth paradigm represented the ‘moral and conceptual high ground’ (2010, p.17) but failed to offer anything new. In spite of the limitations of the inclusive growth paradigm, over a relatively short period of time, the focus and related mandates of development agencies, non-governmental organisations and multi-lateral banks, changed markedly. In 2005, The World Bank published a document critiquing past actions, stating that ‘there is no unique universal set of rules… we need to get away from formulae and the search for ‘best practices’ (2005, p.xiii).

The statements of the World Bank contradicted the post-Washington Consensus and emphasised the importance of experience, learning-by-doing, and not working with blueprints for development. It was acknowledged that the changes displayed in the 1990s do not conform to any theory and summarise the period in terms of ‘disappointments’ and ‘pleasant surprises’ (World Bank, 2005, p.29). Further, with regards to the multidimensionality of poverty, they argue that four key lessons have been learned from the 1990s (World Bank, 2005): the importance of sustained growth, the multidimensionality of poverty, the importance of acknowledging inequality and, finally, the significance and importance of access to services.

Firstly, the activities of the 1990s demonstrated that poverty is a lack of opportunities and reduction requires sustained growth over decades, not some years. Poverty lines should be relative to their context; as growth occurs, lines should be adjusted. Secondly, poverty is multidimensional and its definition should go beyond consumption expenditure to include measures of health, education, well-being, vulnerability and powerlessness. Thirdly, it is argued that development in the 1990s raised the importance of acknowledging inequality as ‘visible issue’ (World Bank, 2005, p.126) that requires conceptual clarity; Bourguignon (2004) claims there is a poverty-growth-inequality triangle: an equal society with no growth results in low poverty reduction where as a society with rapid growth and decreasing poverty results in an increase in inequality. Evidence suggests that equal societies are more efficient: reducing crime, allocating resources, provision of public goods (Wilkinson, 2002). This is in contrast with development thinking in the 1970s that argued that

concentrating income among the rich increases savings which leads to growth (Saad-Filho, 2010).

The final lesson learned by the World Bank from the 1990s relates to access to services, context and the role of the government. Specifically, it was argued that the role of the government in any economy should be focused on health, infrastructure, including water, public transport and roads, education and the development of markets to improve income-earning opportunities. It was neoliberal logic that argued for markets with little government restriction (Deneulin, 2009). Essentially, neoliberalism argued that governments should adopt a laissez-faire approach to the economy (Scheyvens, 2009), allowing the more efficient private sector (with support from the government, community and NGOs) to assume responsibility (Miraftab, 2004). This economic ideology quickly guided donor funding as financial aid was conditional on national governments introducing policies that favoured freedom of markets (Miraftab, 2004). Further, it is argued that development in the 1990s ascertained the importance of implementing growth-promoting policies and supportive institutions to encourage targeted poverty reduction that consider context. Essentially, the lessons define the significance of context and the crucial role of the government and extends the definition of poverty to include education, well-being, health and powerlessness. As such, the influence of the HDR on the future of development practice is clear.

Today, the aims, missions or mandates of the multilateral development banks that work with developing countries all make reference to poverty reduction, adopting

multidimensional definitions of poverty (ADB, 2014, Bicaba et al., 2015, World Bank, 2015c).

2.7. Contemporary Perspectives on Poverty

Acknowledging the persistence of global poverty, 147 heads of state gathered in 2000 to discuss the dimensions of extreme poverty and, as a result, the Millennium Declaration was established. The declaration was described as a global pledge to 'uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity, and free the world from extreme poverty' (United Nations, 2014, p. 3). Described as 'the world's biggest promise' (Hulme and Scott, 2010, p.15), the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), which addressed income poverty, hunger, disease, lack of shelter, exclusion, poor education, gender inequality and environmental sustainability (Sachs and McArthur, 2005) with quantitative, measurable time-bound targets, provided an outline from which governments and development institutions would work to meet the needs of the world's poorest (Hulme and Scott, 2010, United Nations, 2014). The first goal, to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, was considered 'one of the main challenges of our time, and is a major concern of the international community' (United Nations, 2008, p.2). The goal incorporated three targets: halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than US$1.25 a day; achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people; and, finally, halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger (United Nations, 2000).

According to the World Bank (2015a), due predominantly to targeted poverty reduction initiatives in China and India, the percentage of people living in poverty has decreased from 28 percent to 12 percent between 2000 and 2011 – a reduction of over half a billion people. In China alone, over 750 million people moved above the $1.25/ day threshold and, as such, this accounts for most of the decline in global extreme poverty up to 2011 (World Bank, 2015a). This achievement, however, is not consistent across the globe; in all parts of South Asia (with the exception of India) and in Sub-Saharan Africa, poverty levels have persisted (World Bank, 2015a). While China has seen a dramatic reduction in poverty from 1990-2005, over the same period, inequality has increased; the income of the highest 20 percent of the population increased from 40.73 percent to 47.09 percent while the income of the lowest 20 percent of the population decreased from 8.04 percent to 4.67 percent (World Bank, 2015a). However, because the MDGs adopt a definition of poverty that allows for no elasticity (i.e. absolute poverty), a reduction in poverty in recorded.

Development literature makes a distinction between absolute and relative poverty (Hagenaars, 1986, Sachs, 2005, Fritzell et al., 2015). Defined as severe deprivation of human needs (Gordon et al., 2000), the absolute poor are hungry, have no access to safe drinking water, have poor sanitation, are unable to access good healthcare, lack sufficient shelter and cannot afford to educate their children. This form of 'extreme' poverty (Sachs, 2005, p.20) is found only in developing countries. It is noteworthy that the primary poverty described in Rowntree's study is comparable to the definition of absolute poverty. To provide a measure, in 1985 the international absolute poverty line was set at US$1 per day per capita. This was increased to $1.08 in 1993 (Kassie et al.,

2014). In 2008, World Bank economists Ravallion, Chen and Sangraula (2008) suggested an international poverty line of $1.25 based upon 2005 data (based on the mean per capita consumption of the poorest 15 countries in the world[3]). It is important to note that absolute poverty has no elasticity: that is, where absolute poverty is adopted as the measure, the relative wealth of the nation has no influence on poverty statistics. As such, poverty measured through the adoption of an absolute line can only be reduced through economic growth of the poor (Hagenaars, 1986). The abolition of absolute poverty is, according to Sachs, an economic possibility of 'our time' (2005, p.25).

Where the basic needs of an individual or family are only just met, this is referred to as moderate poverty (Sachs, 2005). Those in moderate poverty have to forgo education and healthcare and are at most at risk of the volatility of poverty: being pushed into absolute poverty through the loss of a job, extreme weather or a health issue (Boyle and Boguslaw, 2007). Again, the definition of moderate poverty is comparable to Rowntree's secondary poverty. In defining poverty for their initiatives, the Grameen Bank, a micro-finance organisation and community development bank, adopt indicators directly related to absolute poverty[4] (Table 2.1).

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[3] Chad, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Tajikistan and Uganda (Ravillion et al., 2008)

[4] These indicators are part of a larger list that are used to assess whether a family are living in poverty. The list also takes into account the ability to save money and repay loans and the ability to maintain additional sources of income such as vegetable plots to mitigate against the volatility of poverty (Yunus, 2003; Yunus and Weber, 2007).

Table 2.1 Indicators of Absolute Poverty Adopted by the Grameen Bank

Hunger	The member is unable to feed her family three square meals a day.
Unsafe drinking water	Family members do not have access to purified water
Poor sanitation	Family members do not have access to a hygienic and sanitary latrine
Poor healthcare	Family members are not conscious of their health, they cannot take action for treatment and are unable to meet medical bills.
Sufficient shelter	The member's home is not tin-roofed or has a value below 25,000 Taka (£215). Family members sleep on the floor rather than on a bed. Family members do not have sufficient clothing to meet daily needs (including winter clothes, blankets, and mosquito netting)
Education for children	Children over the age of six do not attend school

Source: Yunus, 2003; Yunus and Weber, 2007

The definition of relative poverty originates from the 'revulsion' of academics and campaigners in the 1960s against the claims that the welfare state had fully eliminated poverty in the UK (Beresford et al., 1999). It was argued that 'individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary… in the societies to which they belong' (Townsend, 1979, p.31). It could be argued that these amenities are comparable to the non-essential items Rowntree added to the human needs poverty line in 1936 (Freeman, 2011).

While absolute poverty is inelastic, relative poverty is an elastic concept: relative poverty gauges poverty levels in relation to a national average or criterion such as

national distribution of income or consumption (Coudouel et al., 2002). As such, regardless of economic growth or reduction, where inequality is present, poverty cannot be abolished. (Hagenaars, 1986). This clearly has implications for policy making in developing countries in particular where the relative poor are often not a political priority simply because their situation is relative to those not in poverty and those who are extremely or moderately poor. As such, the main political concern is often with those in the worst situation: the absolute poor (Boyle and Boguslaw, 2007).

While absolute poverty is unique to developing countries, in developed countries where the incidence of the absolute poor is less significant, concern often lies with the relatively poor. In Scotland, for example, 14 percent of the population were living in relative poverty in 2012-2013, an increase of 15.5 percent from the previous year (Scottish Affairs Committee, 2007). Individuals or groups living in relative poverty may have household incomes below the average income of the general population. The relatively poor in high-income countries, argues Sachs (2005), lack access to good quality health care, entertainment, recreation and education – all prerequisites for upward social mobility.

From this review, it is apparent that poverty is a multi-dimensional concept related to well-being deprivation; that development initiatives have, in the past, relied on assumptions related to the economies of the West; that a focus has been placed on economic growth (and related trickle-down effect), which, as argued by Saad-Filho (2010), does not inevitably result in poverty reduction; and, that, as a result of these

findings, alternatives to top-down, donor driven, outside-expert led development initiatives must be sought. If the abolition of absolute poverty is to be achieved, it is clear that a 'new generation of pro-poor development strategies' are developed (Saad-Filho, 2010, p.17). Here, the Capability Approach (CA) is presented as an alternative strategy for endogenous development.

2.8. Poverty as Capability Deprivation

The CA emerged as a contribution to the human development paradigm (Fukuda-Parr, 2003), which argued that human development, measured by increases in life expectancy, adult literacy, access to primary, secondary and tertiary education, as well as people's average income, was the purpose of development initiatives (Ravallion, 2012). The CA is in direct contrast with traditional top-down, trickle-down approaches to development that typified the earlier initiatives and actions of aid agencies and development bodies. Instead, by taking a multidimensional view (Naudé, 2010) development is seen as a process of expanding human freedoms and relies on 'the removal of major sources of unfreedoms' (Sen, 1999, p.3) including poverty, tyranny, social deprivation, substandard public facilities and intolerance (Sen, 1999).

Within the CA, development is freedom. According to Sen (1999), there are five distinct, yet also inter-related, freedoms. These are political freedom which involves the opportunity to choose between, criticise and support authoritative figures while engaging in uncensored political expression; access to economic facilities which involves the freedom of individuals to utilise economic resources for consumption,

production or exchange (inclusive of credit); social opportunities which relate to access to healthcare and education; the freedom to trust in transparency guarantees, which involves financial responsibility, a non-corrupt environment and guarantees of disclosure and lucidity while dealing with groups or individuals; and, finally, the opportunity to live within an environment which delivers protective security to the vulnerable within society.

While the achievement of these freedoms should, Sen (1999) argues, constitute the real end of development, unlike the human development paradigm, they are also the principle means of development. Specifically, the CA offers a framework for the evaluation of individual well-being, social arrangements and social policy design and change (Robeyns, 2006) and has gained recognition in recent years through its adoption by a range of individuals and organisations to evaluate, but not explain, a diverse range of social issues (Chiappero-Martinetti and Venkatapurnam, 2014, Powell and McGrath, 2014, Tiwari, 2014). The approach is concerned with what individuals, as the reference unit of the approach (Comim, 2001), are able to do and be, what they value, their aspirations and the freedoms to achieve them (Deneulin and Shahani, 2009).

The CA views poverty as deprivation of basic capabilities and criticises approaches that view poverty as lowness of income for three reasons (Sen, 1999): income is instrumentally significant rather than intrinsically important in that it is a means and not an end, income is only one of a range of influences on capability deprivation and,

finally, the impact of income differs between communities, families and individuals. Sen (1999) argues that the final issue is particularly significant in terms of designing a poverty reduction strategy for the following reasons: income and individual differences, converting income into capability and distribution within the family. In terms of individual differences, Sen (1999) argues that the relationship between income and capability achievement or deprivation is affected by the age of the individual, their gender, their roles within society and the household, their geographical location (periphery or centre, proneness to drought or crime, for example) and all other contextual factors over which they have no control including the epidemiology of their environment, access and infrastructure. Further, an individual's ability to convert income into capability is affected by a number of factors including age, illness and disability; a more able bodied, younger individual may need less income to achieve the same as a disabled elderly person, for example.

In addition, an individual's position in the household may affect the potential for converting income into capability; because of sex bias (Echavarri and Husillos, 2016), there is often systematic boy preference as girls leave the family home once married. Finally, defining poverty as lowness of income fails to consider relative deprivation and the elasticity of poverty; relative deprivation in developed countries often means absolute deprivation in terms of capabilities because more income is required to achieve, for example, social inclusion and participation in communities where facilities such as internet and mobile phones are essentially universal.

Essentially, therefore, the CA places an emphasis on understanding the nature and causes of poverty by focusing on the lives that people want to live and their freedom to do so rather than focusing exclusively on the means (usually income poverty). Indeed, Sen (1999) argues that there is a real 'danger' in viewing poverty in the narrow terms of income deprivation because it only allows for the measurement of one unreliable indicator. While poverty defined by income is used because it is 'more easily quantified and can clearly be addressed' (Bruton et al., 2015, p.5), it is argued here that the adoption of the less straightforward definition of poverty as capability deprivation may produce research that is of real value to the bottom billion (Collier, 2007), an important consideration for 'useful' research (Welter et al., 2016). Central to the CA are an individual's capabilities and functionings and the importance of agency.

2.8.1. Capabilities

A person's capabilities are 'notions of freedom': their ability to achieve (Sen, 1987, p.36) and the real opportunities an individual has (Robeyns, 2000). A capability set, therefore, defines an individual's freedom to live the life they have reason to value. In terms of capability definition, Robeyns (2000) argues that there is an intrinsic importance in differentiating between basic capabilities and fundamental capabilities. Basic capabilities are a subset of all capabilities and relate to the freedom to do basic things. Their definition is required because it allows for a decision on 'a cut-off point for the purpose of assessing poverty and deprivation' (Sen 1987, p.109). As such, basic capabilities and their identification are considered crucial for poverty analysis. Fundamental capabilities are 'deeper, foundational, more abstract' (Robeyns, 2000,

p.9). Consisting of a range of basic capabilities, fundamental capabilities can include housing, education, health and physiological well-being, emotional and psychological well-being, safety and bodily integrity (Robeyns, 2000). As an example, Robeyns (2000) discusses the difference – and relationship – between basic health capabilities and fundamental capability of health and well-being. As such, to achieve the fundamental capability of health and physiological well-being, an individual must have achieved the following basic capabilities: having access to safe drinking water, being sufficiently nourished, being able to avoid premature death and the achievement of a sufficient standard of living. If an individual has achieved all but one of these basic capabilities, it is argued that they have not have not achieved the fundamental capability of being healthy and well (Robeyns, 2005).

While Sen (1999) does not advocate for the publication of a list of universal capabilities because of the significance of 'social embedding' (Robeyns, 2000, p.15), individual differences and bias, following cross-cultural discussions, Nussbaum produced a list of central human capabilities that are grounded in the 'modern world' (Nussbaum 2001, p.77), not timeless and represents a 'decent social minimum in a variety of areas' (Nussbaum 2001, p.75) (Table 2.2). Nussbaum argues that it is crucial that these central human capabilities are considered as a list of distinct components. They are, posits Nussbaum, all of equal importance and improving one of the components will not necessarily result in the improvement of others.

Table 2.2 List of Central Capabilities

Life	Being able to live a life of normal length and not dying prematurely
Bodily health	Being able to have good health, including reproductive health Being able to have adequate shelter and be adequately nourished
Bodily integrity	Being able to move freely where one chooses Having bodily boundaries treated as sovereign (being able to secure against assault – including sexual, child abuse, domestic violence) Having opportunities for sexual satisfaction and reproductive choice
Senses, Imagination and Thought	Being able to use the senses to imagine, reason and think in an way informed by education (including literacy, mathematical and scientific) Being able to use imagination and thought in a self-expressive way Being able to use thought and imagination in ways protected by guarantees of freedom of expression (freedom of political and artistic speech and freedom of religious exercise) Being able to search for the meaning of life Being able to have enjoyable experiences and avoid unnecessary pain
Emotions	Being able to have attachment to things and people Being able to love, grieve, longing, gratitude, justified anger Not having one's emotional development suppressed by fear or anxiety or by traumatic events of abuse or neglect.
Practical Reason	Being able to form a conception of good and engage in the critical reflection about the planning of life.
Affiliation	Being able to live with and towards others Being able to recognise and show concern for others and engage in various forms of social interaction To be able to imagine and be compassionate for the situation of others To have the capability for justice and friendship. Having the social bases of self-respect and non-humiliation Being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others. This entails, at a minimum, protection against discrimination on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, caste, ethnicity, or national origin. In work, being able to work as a human being, exercising practical reason and entering into mutual relationships of mutual recognition with other workers.
Other species	Being able to live with concern for and in relation to other species
Play	Be able to laugh, play and enjoy recreational activities.
Control over one's environment (Political)	Being able to participate effectively in political choices that govern one's life Having the right of political participation, protections of free speech and association
Control over one's environment (Material)	Being able to hold property Having property rights on an equal basis with others Having the right to seek employment on an equal basis with others Having the freedom from unwanted search and seizure

Source: Nussbaum, 2001

The often contested list (Robeyns, 2000) is re-created here to provide some examples of capabilities rather than as a list to be adopted as part of the research design because of the importance of considering context (Welter, 2011, Welter et al., 2016). Overall, Robeyns argues that capability expansion, as the underpinning focus of the CA, is demonstrated by improved life quality, the removal of obstacles in life and what people are able to do and be. Indeed, the overarching focus of CA evaluations should focus on whether individuals 'have more freedom to live the kind of life that, upon reflection, they have reason to value' (Robeyns, 2005, p.94).

2.8.2. Functionings

Functionings are the valued beings and doings of an individual. They can be relatively basic, such as being well nourished and free from avoidable diseases, to more abstract, such as having self-respect (Zimmermann, 2006). An individual's combination of functions reflect their life choices and, as such, from a policy perspective focusing on poverty alleviation, an emphasis should be placed on capability expansion rather than functionings; capabilities reflect what people are able to do, functionings are what people choose to do through the application of their capability set. In other words, transition to achieved functionings from capabilities involves the process of choice (Robeyns, 2000). While starvation and fasting result in the same functioning (being hungry), the difference lies in choice: the individual fasting made the choice to be hungry (and can, of course, make the choice to eat). Individuals living in famine do not have this choice. What an individual chooses to do with their capability set is

immaterial; if they are able to choose the life they have reason to value, the overarching impact of this is freedom.

2.8.3. Agency

A final element of the CA is the development of agency; human development must enable individuals to be agents in their own lives and also their communities (Alkire and Deneulin, 2009). By taking a CA based, broad and agent-oriented view of development, individuals are no longer considered as recipients or beneficiaries of development programmes. Instead, with adequate opportunities (Clark, 2009) and an enabling environment, individuals are agents of change, effectively shaping their lives and the lives of others through action to realise aspirations (Sen, 1999, Frediani, 2006, Frediani, 2008). Individuals are at the core of the CA; the means and ends of development are human. Within the CA, agency is defined as 'what a person is free to do and achieve in pursuit of whatever goals or values he or she regards as important' (Gammage et al., 2016, p.4). While an agent is someone who 'acts and brings about change' (Sen, 1999, p.19), an individual without agency is often constrained, subjugated or passive (Alkire and Deneulin, 2009).

It is noteworthy that this view of active participation is often adopted where gender is a focus. A feminist perspective and the Gender and Development (GAD) approach views women as active participants (Moser, 1993, Aithal, 1999) in the process of change. Indeed, feminist authors, Alkire and Ibrahim, define empowerment as an expansion of agency (Gammage et al., 2016). In 1792, Wollstonecraft published 'A

Vindication of the Rights of Women' in response to the then-popular Natural-Rights-of-Man Theory (Sen, 1999). As the first to position a woman's agenda in the context of a broader, human rights theory (Fraser, 1999), Wollstonecraft went beyond claiming that the rights of women related to their wellbeing; she added that their free agency was critically important, questioning the integrity and sense of self of women and their 'general irresponsibility' towards themselves, their children and society (Fraser, 1999). Indeed, in developing agency, individuals often expand their concerns beyond individual well-being to wider groups (family, community and society, for example) (Alkire and Deneulin, 2009).

2.9. Context, Institutions and Poverty

Many of the functionings and elements of all freedoms can be constrained or enabled by exogenous forces (Robeyns, 2000) and, as such, context is an important consideration. Here, institutional theory is offered as a vehicle to understand the environment and the impact of forces present in the environment. Institutions are defined as culturally specific constraints that shape behaviour and interaction within a society (North, 1990). These constraints, which are socially embedded and can be regulative or normative, are designed to structure human behaviour in a specific way to reduce uncertainty (Hodgson and Calatrava, 2006) and have two distinct roles within society.

Firstly, regulative and normative institutions impact upon the opportunities and prospects of individuals, groups and organisations across societies by defining which

behaviours and actions are appropriate, inappropriate and desired (Sen, 1999). Discrimination, segregation and barriers to participation are all formed by institutions and, as such, it is institutions that limit the freedoms of all individuals in all societies. For example, where sex bias determines that girls need not attend school but should remain within the household, it is argued that this has knock on effects in terms of life expectancy, average number of children, age of marriage, health and future prospects (Moeller, 2014, Echavarri and Husillos, 2016). Therefore, institutions developed within a patriarchal society related to educating girls do impact upon the opportunities of the future generation of women. However, sex bias and prioritising the education of boys over their female siblings will offer the males increased opportunities in life (Echavarri and Husillos, 2016). As such, institutions do impact on different individuals, groups and organisations in varying ways.

Secondly, the constraints present within a society also determine the political, social and economic incentives involved in human interaction (Hasan et al., 2006, Douhan and Henrekson, 2010). As such, within their granted parameters, all individuals, groups and organisations pursue specific paths based on their associated incentives to do so. It is this incentive structure that determines whether individuals follow the ‘rules of the game’; if deviation from the rules results in a negative outcome, individuals are less likely to violate the system. North (1990) argues all institutions have a profound influence upon the incentive structures present across societies. The institutional environment comprises regulative institutions, normative institutions and their enforcement mechanisms. While regulative institutions include laws, constitutions and governing regulations which are enforced by courts, normative institutions, which

include conventions, customs, traditions and behaviour codes, are enforced by an individual's peers or others who impose costs if norms are not followed (Hodgson and Calatrava, 2006). While all institutions are defined as social structures that have attained a 'high degree of resilience' (Scott, 2001, p.48), rates of change do vary. Normative institutions, including cultural beliefs and practices, are much embedded in the environment and, as a result, their rate of change can be very gradual (Shirley, 2005).

The compilation of a full and formal list of institutions is complex and while some authors have focused on trust, social capital, property rights and the law with respect to their relationship with development and poverty reduction, there is little agreement on which institutions are essential for poverty reduction and economic development (Hare and Davis, 2006, Blaydes and Kayser, 2011). It is clear, however, that supportive and growth-promoting institutions are fundamental to economic growth (Hare and Davis, 2006) and not, argues Woolcock (1998), 'dysfunctional' or growth-constraining institutions. Indeed, growth promoting institutions should be cooperative, produce an efficient bureaucratic system, promote collective and individual freedom and have low levels of corruption (Woolcock, 1998). Conversely, growth constraining institutions lack transparency and accountability, are disconnected from the population, fail to guarantee that laws are followed and are corrupt; indeed, it is 'hardly surprising that… thoughtfully conceived development policies lead to early and frequent failure' when implemented in an environment free of adequate institutions (Woolcock, 1998, p.153).

The relationship between institutions, economic growth and poverty reduction is documented by Shirley (2005) where it is noted that there exists a significant correlation between institutional variables and growth. Further, where countries have failed to develop an institutional framework that supports a market economy and are instead typified by weak, missing or perverse institutions, their economies are often less developed. Indeed, it is argued that institutional weakness is often at the root of underdevelopment and failed development strategies in many countries across the world.

It is argued that two 'distinct and not necessarily complementary' (Shirley, 2005, p.611) institutional sets are required to foster a framework that encourages a market economy and foster development. Firstly, institutions which encourage trust and lower transaction costs are required. These include contracts and their enforcement mechanisms, commercial rules and norms, a belief regarding the importance of human capital accumulation, and a culture of favouring shared values and, secondly, to protect and not subjugate or sequester private property and the independence of persons, institutions must be developed to influence the powerful actors present within a society. To achieve this, institutions must include constitutions, electoral rules, laws related to education and speech, and shared norms that stimulate cooperation in terms of state monitoring and compliance with the law. In societies where the above institutional sets are not established, it is argued that the government are either too weak to protect individuals from property theft or they are overly strong and often responsible for threatening personal independence and property rights of the population. Either way, it is argued that neither condition support a market economy

(Shirley, 2005). However, as stated by the World Bank, 'there is no unique universal set of rules… we need to get away from formulae and the search for 'best practices'' (2005, p.xiii). Institutional Theory is adopted in this research to understand a dimension of context which explains the behaviour of women entrepreneurs. Further dimensions of context are discussed in Chapters Three and Four.

2.10. Gender and Poverty

Women are often regarded as the subordinated population within development literature (Drolet, 2010, Landig, 2011, Shah and Baporikar, 2013). The Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI), introduced in 2006 by the World Economic Forum, is a framework designed to define the scale and scope of disparities between genders (Hausmann et al., 2012). Providing country rankings, the GGGI takes into account economic participation and opportunity, political empowerment, educational attainment and health and survival sub-indexes to allow for cross country comparisons and progress. Within each sub index, data from a range of sources, including the International Labour Organisation, World Economic Forum and the UNDP, is utilised to test key variables (Hausmann et al., 2012). For example, the Economic Participation and Opportunity sub index for the 2010 GGGI utilised five variables to assess the gender gap: female and male labour force participation, wage equality, estimated female and male earned income, female and male legislators, senior officials and managers and female and male professional and technical workers (Hausmann et al., 2010). The results of the index are disseminated through the Global Gender Gap Report (GGGR). Over time, the magnitude of gender based disparities is measured and quantified.

Iceland has achieved the highest GGGI ranking every year since 2009. In 2015, Iceland ranked first with a score of 0.881:1 and represented the country where the scale and scope of gender disparities are minimal (World Economic Forum, 2015). However, the index results highlight the prevailing inequality between genders in all 140 economies considered in the reports (Hausmann et al., 2010, Hausmann et al., 2012, World Economic Forum, 2015). From explicit and discernible prejudices and discriminations to veiled inequities, a number of studies across academic disciplines support these findings and demonstrate the scale to which such inequalities exist (Sen, 1999, Chitsike, 2000, Bushell, 2008, Chant and Sweetman, 2012, Foynes et al., 2013, Rabbani and Chowdhury, 2013).

In developing countries, in particular, it is argued that inequality between genders results in the feminisation of poverty. First defined in the 1970s and endorsed by the Fourth United Nations Conference on Women in 1995 (Chant, 2014), the construct has resulted in gender being placed in an increasingly prominent place within poverty discourse (Chant, 2008). In particular, the concept has illustrated the number of women living in poverty and the impact macro-economic policies have on women, increased an awareness of the number and vulnerability of female headed households and, finally, called for the involvement and recognition of women in the development process (Wennerholm, 2002). Policy and literature make three, often unquestioned, assumptions about the feminisation of poverty: that the incidence of poverty is greater among women, that the poverty of women rises relative to men's poverty and, that women's poverty is more severe than men's (Wennerholm, 2002, Chant, 2014). While much of the literature on the feminisation of poverty relates to income, research by

Chant indicates that rather than there being a widening economic gender gap, there is a 'feminisation of responsibility and obligation' (2014, p.300) in households living in poverty. As such, because of social pressures in the institutional environment, women assume responsibility for facing the outcomes of poverty. Indeed, women have little choice; they have to assume greater liability and deal with poverty on a daily basis (Chant, 2014).

That women experience poverty differently from men is well documented (Sen, 1999, Chakraborty and Prasanthnagar, 2003, Bessell, 2015). However, where poverty is given a 'woman's face', this does not address the underlying influence of the institutional environment; poverty as a deprivation of basic capabilities and gender inequality are both outcomes of the institutional environment. As such, where poverty alleviation initiatives focus on women, without consideration of the institutional environment that limited their inclusion in the first place, through patriarchy, customs or religion, gender transformation is not addressed. As a result, women are illegitimately made responsible for household poverty alleviation and men are effectively excluded from responsibilities and because this threatens the male role, it is argued that this approach can sometimes exacerbate gender based violence (GBV) and drug and alcohol abuse (Chant, 2014).

At the same time, however, the value in investing in women and girls is made clear by research including the Nike Foundation's global corporate social responsibility campaign, The Girl Effect (Gabrielson, 2010, Moeller, 2013, Moeller, 2014). The

campaign is based on a principle that investing in girls results in a powerful social and economic ripple effect within her immediate family, the local community and, eventually, at a national level (Moeller, 2013). While little academic research makes direct reference to the Girl Effect (Hayhurst, 2011, Wilson, 2011, Switzer, 2013), the campaign is acknowledged in global policy and media (Switzer, 2013) and the arguments made by the campaign – that the 250 million adolescent girls growing up in developing countries have a unique potential as the 'most powerful force' to end poverty for themselves and the world (de Carvalho and Schia, 2011, p.14) – are mirrored by academic research that claims that investing in girls' education is gaining momentum as a top priority (Hausmann et al., 2012) because of their potential as an 'under-utilised talent pool' (Sensoy and Marshall, 2010, p.300) to affect change in developing countries. Indeed, it is argued that investing in girls reduces infant mortality rates (Duflo, 2012), improves female participation in the labour force (Murphy and Carr, 2007), increases income potential (at individual, local and national levels) and reduces the rate of HIV/AIDS infection (Jellema and Phillips, 2004).

2.11. Conclusions

This chapter has highlighted a number of key issues related to defining, understanding and alleviating poverty. Over time, and since Rowntree's Victorian survey, it has been accepted that poverty, as a multidimensional concept, incorporates a number of indicators. Today, the alleviation of poverty is central to the efforts of development initiatives across the globe. In response to criticisms regarding traditional top-down approaches to development that rely on the trickle-down effect and are donor led,

alternative contextualised strategies to alleviate poverty have been sought. This thesis adopts the CA's definitions of poverty and development. That is, development is a process of expanding human freedoms and relies on 'the removal of major sourced of unfreedoms' (Sen, 1999, p.3) including poverty, tyranny, social deprivation, substandard public facilities and intolerance (Sen, 1999). Rather than viewing poverty as not having the a sufficient income to live (Rowntree, 1901, Atkinson et al., 1981, Ravallion and Chen, 2003, Ravallion et al., 2008), poverty is a deprivation of basic capabilities: an inability to live the life an individual has reason to value (Sen, 1997a, Sen, 1999, Robeyns, 2000, Nussbaum, 2001, Chakraborty and Prasanthnagar, 2003).

This chapter has also highlighted that women experience poverty differently from men because of their subordinated position in society and that investing in women and girls results in a powerful ripple effect within her immediate family, the local community and, eventually, at a national level. According to the CA, poverty is a deprivation of basic capabilities. It is only through the development of capabilities that will facilitate achievement of valued functionings and aspirations. However, it is argued that in the absence of linkages to real and appropriate opportunities, and without the development of agency, individuals will not be able to achieve their aspirations (Sen, 1999, Frediani, 2006, Frediani, 2008). The subsequent section discusses the potential for entrepreneurship to act as a real and appropriate opportunity to aid in the expansion of capabilities, the achievement of valued functions and allow individuals the opportunity to live the life they have reason to value.

CHAPTER THREE

ENTREPRENEURSHIP, INSTITUTIONAL THEORY AND DEVELOPMENT

3.1. Introduction

Chapter Two further highlighted the persistence of global poverty and identified the continued failing of traditional, top-down approaches to development. In recognition of these failures, a range of organisations, academics, aid organisations and governments are seeking alternative approaches to poverty reduction (Acs and Szerb, 2007, Bruton, 2010, Bruton et al., 2013, Smith et al., 2016). Entrepreneurship has been identified as an important contributor to the development of nations across the world (World Bank, 2014) and, as such, it is, according to Naudé, 'of great practical importance' (2010, p.1) to understand the relationship between entrepreneurship and poverty reduction with particular reference to developing countries. Further, Welter et al. (2016, p.7) identify entrepreneurship as a 'tool for shaping social and economic equity, construed to include not only issues of structural inequality but also empowerment and emancipation more broadly'. In this chapter, entrepreneurship is considered through the application of institutional theory, with particular reference to women entrepreneurs and women entrepreneurs in South Asia. Further, the literature relating to institutional voids and the emergence of entrepreneurship enabling organisations (EEOs) is reviewed before the relationship between entrepreneurship,

economic development and poverty alleviation is discussed. Finally, this chapter presents the gaps in the literature that will guide the methodological approach and the field work aims.

3.2. Context, Institutional Theory and Entrepreneurship

Contextualising entrepreneurship through the assessment of institutions is crucial to understand the 'nature, richness and dynamics' of entrepreneurial behaviour (Zahra, 2007, p.451). Welter (2011) argues that the 'where' in terms of context can be considered in terms of four dimensions (Table 3.1). The business context considers how industries and markets impact on and influence entrepreneurship and considers competition, industry life cycles and the economy as a whole. The spatial context considers geography and, when considered with social contexts, defines social boundaries and facilitates an understanding of power relations within the distribution of society (Welter, 2011). The spatial context also considers the influence of gendered space and legitimacy for women entrepreneurs in particular. The institutional context incorporates the previously discussed regulative and normative institutions that define the rules of the game and also who can play the game. The final context dimension, the social context, considers the networks that entrepreneurs utilise to access resources and gain support from friends and family. It is argued that these networks are particularly important for entrepreneurs operating in hostile environments, women entrepreneurs and traditionally excluded groups.

Table 3.1. 'Where' Dimensions of Context for Entrepreneurship

Dimension of Context	Examples
Business (Industry; Market)	Life cycle stages of industry and markets; competitors; economy
Spatial (Geographical: country; region, districts; cluster; community and neighbourhood)	Infrastructure (geographic and business); characteristics of geographic locations and business location
Institutional (Regulative; normative)	Laws, bills, acts, regulations, policy and support; culture, attitudes, norms
Social (Networks; household; family)	Network structures; family composition; roles

Source: Welter, 2011

Entrepreneurship occurs within these 'intertwined' contexts (Welter, 2011, p.174) that are constantly changing. While sections of Chapter Four considers these dimensions in relation to the context of this research, Nepal, the following section presents the relationship between entrepreneurship and the institutional dimension of context through the application of institutional theory and considers the effect of institutions on entrepreneurial behaviour in general and then in reference to women entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship in South Asia. Criticisms are made related to research carried out in developing countries that apply theories and models developed in and for the Western world without question (Athreye, 2010, Bruton et al., 2013) and, as such, understanding the environment and related forces is crucial. Institutional Theory, a lens through which researchers are able to understand the relationship between human behaviour, entrepreneurial behaviour and context, is considered below.

All behaviour, including entrepreneurship, is socially embedded (Brush et al., 2009). Institutional theory, a sociological approach to the study of interactions between

institutions and society (Amine and Staub, 2009), is used to assess issues such as culture, history, tradition, the legal environment and economic incentives in relation to entrepreneurship (Bruton et al., 2010). Unlike alternative approaches to entrepreneurship research, institutional theory takes into account social forces present within a context. Institutions are, according to Scott (2001, p.48), 'comprised of regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life'. They require 'intentional human effort' to provide structure (Shirley, 2005, p.615) and establish the rules of the game (Fuenfschilling and Truffer, 2014). Indeed, North defines all institutions as 'any form of constraint that human beings devise to shape human interaction' (1990, p.3). With the development of institutional theory, these constraints were categorised them into three pillars of institutional forces: regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive (Scott, 2001). In more recent work by Scott (2005, 2008), it was acknowledged that the normative and cultural-cognitive pillars overlap and therefore, for the purpose of this thesis, the normative and the cultural-cognitive pillar will be considered as one and referred to as normative institutions. Regulative and normative institutions are discussed below in relation to entrepreneurship.

Regulative Institutions and Entrepreneurship

Regulative or formal institutions are manifest in an environment through rules, laws and sanctions that are enforced by the state (Beckfield et al., 2015). While these institutions constrain social behaviour and demand conformity (Scott, 2001), they can also enable action and empower (potential) entrepreneurs within the environment by providing an incentive structure which encourages individual effort and investment in

human and physical capital and technology (North, 1990). For entrepreneurship, in particular, regulative institutions provide guidelines for new entrepreneurs to ensure compliance with the law, provide incentives to act and legitimise entrepreneurial behaviour (Beckfield et al., 2015). Without a supportive regulative environment, the propensity for entrepreneurs to exploit discovered opportunities is reduced. Further to this, regulative institutions and their enforcement mechanisms within an environment also determine the allocation of entrepreneurial talent among productive, unproductive or destructive activities (Baumol, 1990): 'If the rules are such to impede the earning of much wealth via activity A, or are such as to impose social disgrace on those who engage in it, then, other things being equal, entrepreneurs' efforts will tend to be channelled to other activities, call them B. But if B contributed less to production or welfare than A, the consequences for society may be considerable' (Baumol, 1990, p.898).

While productive entrepreneurship, activity A in Baumol's example, entails the fundamental source of value/ wealth creation and economic growth though production, innovation and learning, unproductive entrepreneurship, activity B, entails the redistribution of wealth and value through political and legal processes (Baumol, 1990, Dias and McDermott, 2006, Sobel, 2008); unproductive entrepreneurship does not produce new value. Finally, destructive entrepreneurship involves the redistribution and the reduction of wealth and value. In developed economies, distinguishing the difference between unproductive and destructive entrepreneurship is not straightforward (Desai et al., 2010). As the actor primarily responsible for the development of an environment that supports functioning markets and channels

entrepreneurship towards value creating activities (Baumol, 1990, North, 1990), the role of the government is crucially important.

In 2002, the World Bank launched the Doing Business Project, an initiative focused on assessing the formal institutions and regulations which impact upon the life cycles of SMEs from starting a business to resolving insolvency. Utilising data from 189 economies, Doing Business highlights the obstacles to growth and ranks the business sectors and investment environments of a range of countries through the adoption of eleven indicators sets (Table 3.2).

The Doing Business report argues that focusing on these 11 indicators to create contexts that are conducive to entrepreneurship and creativity allows individuals to realise their potential, improve lives and contribute to the growth of economies (World Bank, 2012, World Bank, 2014). Since inception, findings from the project have influenced SME policy in countries across all continents, including the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) high income countries. In 2013/14, 123 economies implemented at least one business regulation reform measured by Doing Business (World Bank, 2014). Considering these indicators is crucial in assessing the environment for existing and potential entrepreneurs.

Table 3.2. Doing Business Indicators

Indicator	Elements of the indicator and best practice procedures
Starting a business	Formal registration of businesses Provision of electronic registration/ online services No or low fees and ease of registration (one-stop shops)
Zoning and urban planning	Construction regulations to strengthen property rights Uncomplicated/ lower cost procedures to ensure permits obtained Zoning to avoid incompatible land uses across geographic areas (ensuring adequate water supply, waste removal) Zoning to enhance property values (reduction of pollution, provision of suitable lighting, mitigating problems related to overcrowding and congestions)
Registering property	Reliable, transparent system to register and transfer property titles Allows property owners to use land as collateral Property as insurance/ savings tool in hardship and retirement
Getting Credit	Focus on the secured transaction system (bankruptcy laws and legal rights of borrowers and lenders in secured transactions) Focus on the credit reporting system (data collected and distributed through credit bureaus) For businesses, a secured transaction system and a credit reporting system must be implemented together
Protecting minority investors	Providing separation of the business from the founders Providing a proper structure and allocation of duties and rights Ensuring clarity in decision-making processes Introduction of safeguards to mitigate against corruption Insuring share-holders rights
Paying Taxes	Ensuring the balance is right between raising revenue and encouraging business activity Making tax compliance easier (technology) and less costly
Enforcing contracts	Ensuring balance is right between providing adults and groups the freedom to enter into mutually beneficial contracts and the need to safeguard against potential abuse The provision of contract enforcement mechanisms
Resolving Insolvency	Introduction of efficient bankruptcy laws to minimize negative aspects of business failure and take advantage of positive effects Bankruptcy laws to provide predictability for creditors and debtors
Getting Electricity	Transparent procedures involved in obtaining an electricity connection Ensuring the time required to complete procedures is not lengthy Ensuring the costs involved are official (no bribes) and accessible.
Trading Across Borders	Ensuring that the time, cost and number of procedures involved in trading across borders is minimized Ensuring that costs are official – no bribes
Labour market regulation	Focusing on the flexibility of labour market regulations: rigidity of employment, redundancy costs, social protection schemes and benefits and labour disputes

Source: World Bank, 2012; World Bank, 2014

Normative Institutions and Entrepreneurship

While regulative institutions are rules and procedures that are created, communicate and enforced through channels that are widely accepted as official, Helmke and Levitsky (2006) define normative institutions as socially shared rules, usually unwritten, that are created, communicated, and enforced outside officially sanctioned channels. Enforcement is manifest through subtle, hidden or illegal social disapproval, shame, dishonour or physical punishment (Helmke and Levitsky, 2004). Normative institutions represent a 'dizzying array of phenomena' (Helmke and Levitsky, 2004, p.726) that have been internalised by social actors (Peng, 2003) including traditions, ethnicity, clans, mafia, personal networks, kinship, civil associations, customs, moral value, religious beliefs and all other practices that have evolved and been maintained over time (Sen, 2007) to provide a common framework of meaning (Scott, 2001).

While it is argued that regulative institutions are derived from normative institutions (Scott, 2001), where there is a degree of incongruence and a gap exists between what is understood as legal (as defined by laws and regulations) and legitimate (as defined by norms and beliefs), society's beliefs must be altered to ensure enduring changes in all institutions (Shirley, 2005, Webb et al., 2009). Unlike regulative institutions, the rate of change of normative institutions is very slow (Shirley, 2005). It is argued that normative institutions are modified only when other institutions force the change (Gordon, 2014).

As central to the heritage of a community, normative institutions constitute the 'culture' of an environment (Pejovich, 1999). Culture is, according to Tsai (2002), self-sustaining and enforcing. Breaking the rules results in sanction and, as is the nature of normative institutions, their enforcement is maintained by the masses (Helmke and Levitsky, 2006). Linkages between culture and entrepreneurship are not straightforward and much is still unknown about the relationship (Carree and Thurik, 2003). However, as an umbrella term for normative institutions, the question is not whether culture affects entrepreneurs, but the extent to which and how it affects behaviour. As normative institutions – and their respective authority, roles and sanctions – differ across societies, the following sections considers the relationship between entrepreneurship and religions with transformative potential to understand the extent to which and how a normative institution can affect entrepreneurial behaviour.

In the majority of countries, religion constitutes a normative institution and is often linked to concepts such as inequality, conflict, discrimination and power. While Marx argued that religion was often adopted by the ruling elite to divert attention from the inequalities prevalent in society (Rey, 2014), feminists argue that all religions are patriarchal and systematically exclude women from places of worship and society (Dube, 2002). However, according to the early sociologist, Emile Durkheim, religion has three roles in the operation of society: the facilitation of social conformity by linking behavioural norms, such as marriage, to religious justification; the creation of groups of people through shared meanings and symbols, creating social cohesion and facilitating emotional and moral links between people; and the provision of comfort through the belief that the human condition serves a greater purpose (Stark and

Bainbridge, 2012). This latter operation, the belief that the human condition serves a greater purpose, relates to the transformative potential of religion. It is argued that religions with high transformative potential, including Christianity and Islam, may facilitate entrepreneurial behaviour while religions with low transformative potential, including Hinduism, may hinder entrepreneurial behaviour (Audretsch et al., 2007).

Although many religious denominations regard faithful servitude as pleasing to a God, Protestant Asceticism added to this by regarding industriousness, even on low wages, as the best and often the only means of attaining certainty of grace in the eyes of God (Weber, 2014). It is this belief that drove a lifestyle of abstinence loaded with self-denial resulting in a willing, sober and conscientious workforce capable of driving Western capitalism by foregoing instant gratification to develop the long term pursuit of a profitable enterprise (Carr, 2003, Audretsch et al., 2013). Referred to as the Protestant Ethic, Weber regarded this acceptance of an ascetic lifestyle in exchange for transformative potential as a key force behind the development of modern, industrialised society in the West. He argued that religion plays a notable and often overlooked role in the explanation of social and economic development (Weber, 2014). Like Protestant Asceticism, Hinduism also encourages an ascetic lifestyle by placing little value on the alteration of one's material well-being (Audretsch et al., 2007). According to Audretsch et al. (2007), in a traditional sense, the occupational choices of Hindus are influenced by two factors: the disapproval of material pursuits and the clear demarcation of inherited occupations as determined by the caste system.

According to Hinduism, an individual is *Amrutasya Putraha* – a child of immortality – with the purpose of attaining freedom from re-birth (Ariyo et al., 2015). As such, an individual should not focus on material pursuits; a focus should be placed on gaining an understanding of reality. Further, monetary earning should be related only to self-realisation (Audretsch et al., 2007). In the most traditional sense, therefore, Hinduism and capitalism conflict. Further to this, Hindus were historically organized into four caste groups – Brahmins (priests), Kshatriyas (soldiers), Vyshyas (traders) and Shudras (menial occupations). Later, a fifth group developed – the Untouchables. As Hinduism spread, so spread the caste system.

The 1854 National Code of Nepal introduced an associated four-fold caste hierarchy: holy men or twice-born; liquor drinkers (indigenous peoples); people from whom water is not acceptable; and people from whom water is not acceptable and contact with whom require purification (Bhattachan et al., 2009). Those individuals at the base of the hierarchy were the Untouchables. Today, referred to as Hill or Terai Dalits in Nepal, these castes and sub-castes are identifiable by surname and are associated with traditional occupations (Bhattachan et al., 2009). In rural areas of Nepal, where the caste system is maintained (Poudel et al., 2015), the potential for individuals to adopt non-conventional roles is decreased. In the traditional sense, therefore, this limits the potential for any person to adopt entrepreneurial behaviour – from a high caste Brahmins to a Hudke Dalit whose caste occupation is that of a musician. Importantly, while Hinduism and Protestantism encourage ascetic lifestyles, the differing transformative nature of the religions impact on labour and entrepreneurship resulting in very different outcomes. This demonstrates the pervasiveness of normative

institutions and the importance of considering context. Regulative and normative institutions clearly define the rules of the game (Fuenfschilling and Truffer, 2014) and who is allowed to play. Consequently, these rules define who is prohibited from playing and, as such, the following section considers the relationship between women entrepreneurs and institutional theory.

3.3. Institutional Theory and Women Entrepreneurs

As the thesis focuses on women engaging in entrepreneurial behaviour, the subsequent section summarises the relevant literature on women entrepreneurs and considers women entrepreneurship through institutional theory. Research on gender, women and entrepreneurship gained momentum from the mid-1980s (Carter et al., 2001) and the scale and scope of the subject area has increased since (DeVita et al., 2014). Indeed, prior to the publication of Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice's first special issue on women's entrepreneurship in 2006, research on female business owners suffered from 'outright invisibility' (Hughes et al., 2012, p.429). By 2012 and the publication of Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice's second special issue on women's entrepreneurship, there had been an 'outpouring of interest' (Hughes et al., 2012, p.430) that undertook to push the field of women's entrepreneurship forward. However, while the field of women's entrepreneurship may have undergone recent expansion (Hughes et al., 2012), relative to the prevalence, continued growth and importance of women owned businesses, the topic continues to be understudied (Brush et al., 2009).

While women owned businesses as a whole are the fastest growing entrepreneurial population across the world (Brush et al., 2009), women in developing countries are the most likely to engage in entrepreneurial activities (OECD, 2004). Despite this lack of research, and in recognition of the argument that women represent an untapped source of 'entrepreneurial talent' (Baughn et al., 2006, p.687), the European Union, International Labour Organisation and OECD all recognise the important contribution of women entrepreneurs in the development of national economies (Carter et al., 2001, DeVita et al., 2014). As such, many developed countries, such as the UK, and Sweden (OECD, 2004, Government Offices of Sweden, 2009, Swinson, 2014), as well as many developing countries, such as Bangladesh, Mexico and India (Karim, 2001, Niethammer, 2013, Yadav, 2014), have introduced policies associated with fostering entrepreneurship among women.

At the same time, however, research on women entrepreneurs in developing countries is notably lacking. Again, as a relatively young discipline with roots and scholars in Western culture, the deficiency of research on women entrepreneurs in developing countries is inadequate, although not surprising. However, the importance of researching entrepreneurship within a different context is highlighted by Lerner et al. (1997) who argue that while women entrepreneurs do share common motivations and barriers on a global scale, including the influence of religion, the unavailability of training in basic business skills and difficulties in access to networks and business support systems, the social segregation and the lack of societal legitimation to act as an entrepreneur (Lerner et al., 1997, DeVita et al., 2014), the socio-cultural differences between countries and their effects on women entrepreneurs outweigh the overall

similarities and therefore, to fully understand women entrepreneurs is to understand the context within which they operate (Zahra, 2007, Welter, 2011).

Further, while there is a growing body of research on the relationship between institutions and entrepreneurship, there has been little consideration of the role of institutions specifically related to female entrepreneurs (Estrin and Mickiewicz, 2009). The importance of understanding how institutions inhibit female entrepreneurship – with particular reference to developing countries – is clear: 'There is perhaps no greater initiative a country can take to accelerate its pace of entrepreneurial activity than to encourage more of its women to participate' (Reynolds et al., 2001, p.5). To understand women entrepreneurs is to understand the environment within which they operate and as such, differences exists across societies.

That women represent the disadvantaged, subordinated or oppressed population in any society is well documented (Brown, 2014, Sadiqi, 2014, Al-Dajani and Marlow, 2015, Ma and Shea, 2015, Tsani et al., 2015). Nevertheless, unfair property rights pertaining to women, unequal employment rights and unequal rights related to contracts, mobility and religious liberty (Nussbaum, 2001, Welter and Smallbone, 2008) represent widespread gender-specific formal institutions. In terms of normative institutions, gender bias is manifest through a 'logic of appropriateness' (Chappell, 2010, p.223); gender specific values relate to the roles women are expected to adopt (typically domestic obligations and childcare (Baughn et al., 2006)) and what women are able to legitimately do. It is argued that acting within these roles facilitates ease of interaction

(Carter and Marlow, 2003). In particular, Welter and Smallbone (2008) argue that normative institutions determine the routes for women into entrepreneurship, the scale of female entrepreneurship, the form of entrepreneurial activities adopted and their success.

In Zimbabwe, Chitsike (2000) found that women were raised to associate income generation with immorality; the local saying '*anoda mari sehure*' ('she wants to make money like a prostitute') is applied to all income generating activities. While the ownership and management of a business is a 'male' profession, women are permitted to engage in income generating activities only if they are aligned with traditionally female skills such as sewing, cooking and growing produce (Chitsike, 2000). Roomi and Parrot (2008) found that women entrepreneurs in Pakistan were guided by the social customs of *purdah* (literally 'curtain' that encourages seclusion) and *izzar* (the honour of the family is held by women) which affected their mobility and ability to interact with males. As such, their ability to run their enterprises were compromised, putting their reputations at risk.

While women and men have equal property right entitlements in Uganda (International Centre for Research on Women and the Uganda Land Alliance, 2010), Khavul at al. (2009) found that even if a woman establishes a business, they are viewed as the property of their husbands and, as such, a husband would be entitled to remove assets, cash and stock. Further to this, when a husband of a woman entrepreneur dies, it is customary for his family to claim the business as their own (Khavul et al., 2009).

Finally, Tambunan (2009) found that women living in rural Indonesia faced four distinct barriers to participation: low literacy due to normative institutions that prevent girls and women accessing education, a disproportionate share of household responsibilities based on gender roles, Islamic-based norms that constrain women's ability to interact and adopt non-traditional gender roles and, finally, lack of official property rights to gain access to credit facilities.

Existing literature on women entrepreneurs in developing south Asian countries draws on research by Patel (1987) which suggests that there are three categories of women entrepreneurs: chance, forced and created (Raju, 2000, Seymour, 2001, Sharma and Dhameja, 2002, Tambunan, 2009). The businesses of chance entrepreneurs evolve over time - without clear goals - into economic enterprises. This evolution, Patel (1987) argues, often originates from personal leisure pursuits and decreasing childcare responsibilities. As such, for chance entrepreneurs, there is often no explicit decision to establish an enterprise. Expanding on Patel's research, Das (2000) argued that many chance entrepreneurs were motivated to keep busy, develop their hobby or established their business because their spouse had established an enterprise.

Forced entrepreneurs are those who are compelled to engage with entrepreneurship for financial reasons. Often, this decision is made following a negative experience or event such as the death of a spouse or facing financial hardship (Patel, 1987). This definition is akin to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor's term 'necessity' entrepreneur – an individual who establishes their enterprise because they have no alternative options for

licit income (Block and Wagner, 2010, Singer et al., 2014). The crucial, defining factor is that, unlike opportunity entrepreneurship which involves a choice to take advantage of a market opportunity, both forced and necessity entrepreneurship are need-based (Brewer and Gibson, 2014). While Das' (2000) research supports Patel's (1987) findings in that forced entrepreneurs were motivated to engage in entrepreneurship because they needed the money, additional motivations included increased flexibility, the desire to do something on one's own and to demonstrate to others that they were capable. The final entrepreneur in Patel's (1987) research is the created entrepreneur; 'located, motivated, encouraged and developed through Enterprise Development Programs' (Patel, 1987, p.175), the created entrepreneur will be discussed further at 3.5.

Again, the question is not whether institutions affect women entrepreneurs; instead, the questions should be how and to what extent institutions affect women entrepreneurs. The examples from Zimbabwe, Pakistan, Uganda and Indonesia have demonstrated that while there are similarities for women entrepreneurs in developing countries, there are critical differences and, as such, gaining an understanding of the institutional environments is essential. Where governments are both weak and corrupt, as is the case in many developing countries (Mair and Marti, 2009, Olken and Pande, 2011), this results in the formation of institutional voids. These weak, missing or perverse institutions are, posits Shirley (2005), the origins of underdevelopment.

3.4. Institutional Voids

The interaction between regulative and normative institutions results in 'myriad, complex and often unexpected effects: whereas some informal rules compete with and subvert democratic institutions, others complement and even help sustain them' (Helmke and Levitsky, 2006, p.3). Where these institutions interpret behaviour differently (whether behaviour is legal and/ or legitimate), there is institutional incongruence (Webb et al., 2009). For example, normative institutions that encourage homosocial capital (resulting in a gendered parliament) can undermine regulative institutions that target gender discrimination (Chappell, 2014). Where there is contradiction between institutions, Mair and Marti (2009) argue that institutional voids are created. Defined as 'analytical spaces at the interface of several institutional spheres, each with its own animating logic of meanings and social practices' (Mair et al., 2012, p.822), it is argued that three forms of voids exist: institutional voids that impede market functioning, institutional voids that hinder the development of markets and institutional voids that inhibit market participation (Mair and Marti, 2009).

The latter void is particularly pertinent because the literature has demonstrated that in many developing countries, normative institutions in particular affect the potential for women to participate in markets through entrepreneurship (Chitsike, 2000, Roomi and Parrot, 2008, Welter and Smallbone, 2008, Khavul et al., 2009, Tambunan, 2009). Further, in environments where normative institutions favour certain groups of people (such as powerful males), informal channels may not be accessible to women or other marginalised groups and, as a result, in the presence of these institutional voids, the

marginalised entrepreneur is unable to exploit identified opportunities or they must rely on alternative means to engage in entrepreneurship (Puffer et al., 2009). Finally, where institutions are perverse or absent, powerful actors that benefit from informal channels, such as corrupt officials or loan sharks, have a real interest in their preservation (Shirley, 2005). A growing body of research has identified the range of intermediary organisational actors – or entrepreneurship enabling organisations (EEO) – that have filled institutional voids to facilitate productive entrepreneurship (Teegen et al., 2004, Sanyal, 2006, Mair and Marti, 2009, Tracey and Phillips, 2011, Mair et al., 2012, Smith et al., 2016). These intermediary organisational actors and the individuals and groups that benefit from their actions are explored below.

3.5. Entrepreneurship Enabling Organisations and Ordinary Entrepreneurs

EEOs are a range of organisations including nongovernmental organisations (NGO), microfinance institutions, business incubators, multinational enterprises and other traditional organisations (Smith et al., 2016). These EEOs facilitate market participation by providing knowledge, resources and skills through expert venture scripts and introduce 'proto-institutions' that support and develop new entrepreneurs (through the transfer of knowledge, skills and resources), insulate them by diffusing hostile or unsupportive institutions (usually established normative institutions) and help them gain legitimacy while avoiding negative elements of regulative institutional voids (corruption, for example) (Webb et al., 2010, Smith et al., 2016). Expert scripts are action-based field specific knowledge structures that comprise 'highly developed sequentially ordered knowledge' (Mitchell et al., 2000, p.975). Smith et al. (2016)

argue that three types of expert knowledge scripts are required for the formation of new ventures: venture arrangement scripts, venture willingness scripts and venture ability scripts. Where individuals are uneducated, have little experience of non-subsistence work, limited or no internet access and a limited social network, it is argued that they will not have been exposed to such scripts, thus limiting their capability to create productive ventures alone (Mitchell et al., 2000, Smith et al., 2016).

Venture arrangement scripts are the knowledge individuals possess that allow them to engage in entrepreneurial behaviour. That is, venture specific skills, access to resources, a venture network and a protectable entrepreneurial idea (Mitchell et al., 2000, Smith et al., 2016). Venture ability scripts relate to an individual's capabilities, skills, attitudes and behaviours that are required to identify and evaluate an opportunity through the identification of new means-ends relationships (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000, Smith et al., 2016), understand the entrepreneurial process and apply previous market experience. Venture willingness relates to a commitment to engage in entrepreneurship (Mitchell et al., 2000), the propensity to take risks and, when facing uncertainty, the ability to take action and remain motivated (Mitchell et al., 2000, Smith et al., 2016). If the potential entrepreneur does not see others taking risks, it is argued that venture willingness scripts cannot be acquired (Smith et al., 2016).

The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) is considered as an organisation that enables entrepreneurship by filling an institutional void (Mair and Marti, 2009, Mair et al., 2012, Smith et al., 2016). Traditionally, women in rural

Bangladesh are subject to very rigid social norms and religious constraints that confine them to the house, limiting their ability to participate in entrepreneurial activities (Chowdhury, 2007). Further, traditional Bangladeshi society places control of the household income with the male (Nawaz, 2009) and, as such, raising capital for an enterprise is often considered a considerable barrier for potential women entrepreneurs (Chowdhury, 2007). Established in 1972 to aid in the rehabilitation of communities following Bangladesh's liberation, BRAC quickly refocused efforts on long term development, targeting health, the development of women, education, equality and market participation (Mair et al., 2012). Today, BRAC is the largest non-governmental organisation in the world; operating in Asia, Central America and Africa, the empowerment of women, enterprise development and poverty reduction are central to their operations (Mair et al., 2012).

Research by Tobias et al. (2013) highlighted an initiative in Rwanda involving several EEOs that provided an entrepreneurial infrastructure to enable marginalised and conflict affected individuals to participate in markets. Tobias et al. (2013) define these marginalised individuals as 'ordinary entrepreneurs'; Ordinary entrepreneurs are 'individuals who seize and enact opportunities for entrepreneurial activities created by others' (Tobias et al., 2013, p.730). It is noteworthy that Tobias et al.'s entrepreneur is comparable to Patel's created entrepreneur who is 'located, motivated, encouraged and developed through Enterprise Development Programs' (1987, p.175). The terms 'created entrepreneur' and 'ordinary entrepreneur' are used interchangeably throughout this thesis. In Tobias et al. (2013), the ordinary entrepreneurs are coffee farmers and the others that facilitated their involvement in an entrepreneurial value

chain were the Government of Rwanda, international donors and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Firstly, the Government of Rwanda established the OCIR-CAFÉ (Rwanda Coffee Development Authority) and, through the authority, seedlings, fertiliser, phytosanitary products and other inputs were given to growers or subsidised. Further, the Government of Rwanda, as majority owners of the monopoly responsible for dry milling and exportation, fixed prices for growers to minimise discrimination (Webber and Labaste, 2010). Secondly, international donors, USAid, funded the construction of coffee washing stations and trained locals actors to process coffee (USAID, 2006). Finally, NGOs, including the Partnership for Enhancing Agriculture in Rwanda through Linkages Project, the Assistance à la Dynamisation de l'Agribusiness au Rwanda Project and the Agricultural Cooperative Development International and Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance merger, encouraged entrepreneurship among local communities through training and education (USAID, 2006).

Shane and Venkataraman (2000) argue that the study of entrepreneurship must include three interrelated concepts: the sources of opportunities, the discovery, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities and, finally, the people who discover, evaluate and exploit the opportunities. Within Shane and Venkataraman's (2000) nexus, which has provided both the 'dominant and even default' notions of entrepreneurial opportunities since publication (Baker and Powell, 2016, p.41), it is the innovative entrepreneur that discovers, evaluates and exploits objective opportunities. For Tobias et al.'s (2013) ordinary entrepreneur, it is the others – the EEOs – that discover, evaluate and take the decision to exploit objective opportunities; the others discovered and evaluated the

opportunity to focus production on specialty coffee for an export market and facilitated exploitation through the provision of infrastructure. The involvement of the created entrepreneurs was limited to the final stage – the running of the business.

Baker and Powell (2016, p.43) argue that Shane and Venkataraman's (2000) nexus presents a 'radically decontextualized conception of opportunity' which fails to consider the influence of society and context. While Smith et al. (2016, p.1) argue that the entrepreneurial culture in less developed or periphery economies is typified by ignorance regarding entrepreneurial processes, alternatives to traditional goods, services and ways of doing business, Baker and Powell (2016) argue that there is, in fact, a largely unacknowledged inequality of entrepreneurial opportunity that is driven by country of origin, ethnicity, gender, caste, class and other demographic characteristics. As a result of unequal access to entrepreneurial opportunities (Baker and Powell, 2016), potential entrepreneurs, such as Tobias et al.'s (2013) ordinary entrepreneurs, do not have the capability to identify new opportunities through new means-ends relationships (Baker and Powell, 2016, Smith et al., 2016) and, as such, EEOs that exist to create productive ventures are critical for 'individuals who would not have the resources, knowledge, or skills in order to do so acting alone' (Smith et al., 2016, p.1) through the proliferation of expert venture scripts.

In this partnership between EEO and created entrepreneur, the created entrepreneur fails to fit into Shane and Venkataraman's (2000) default definition of 'entrepreneur' as innovative and active. In fact, according to Schumpeter (1936), if the role of these

created entrepreneurs is limited to running the business, their behaviour should not be considered traditionally entrepreneurial. However, if the EEOs expert venture scripts are transferred, diffused and eventually entrenched (Smith et al., 2016) and created entrepreneurs, as a result of having better or more equal access to entrepreneurial opportunities (Baker and Powell, 2016), begin identifying, evaluating and exploiting opportunities by, for example, identifying new sources of opportunities and exploiting them, then their behaviour could begin to align with default definitions of entrepreneurship (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000, Baker and Powell, 2016).

This is important for agency, linking entrepreneurship to development, the potential for transformative effects and gaining autonomy from EEOs and other outside assistance (Smith et al., 2016). In line with Schumpeter's (1936) argument, the ever changing environment for entrepreneurs is constantly creating incentives and dis-incentives to pursue opportunities through the provision of new information. As such, as opportunities are exploited and imitated, the value in the pursuit of an opportunity reduces as entrepreneurial profit becomes divided. Lack of product diversification and imitation of goods and services typifies a weak entrepreneurial culture (Smith et al., 2016). If EEOs are successful in proliferating expert venture scripts among created entrepreneurs, and entrepreneurial opportunities become more equal (Baker and Powell, 2016), the created entrepreneurs would develop capability to identify, evaluate and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities within their local context.

It should be noted, however, that research has argued that Shane and Venkataraman's (2000) definition of entrepreneurship, Mitchell et al.'s (2000) definitions of expert scripts and Smith et al.'s (2016) EEO model focus on high-growth, high-wealth-creation businesses that fail to consider context and, as such, have little relevance to developing countries (Bruton et al., 2013). This argument is applicable to most entrepreneurship literature; as a relatively young discipline with roots in Western culture, entrepreneurship scholars are often based in the mature economies of North America and Europe (Bruton et al., 2013). At the same time, however, the success of script proliferation, Smith et al. (2016) posit, relies on the extent to which EEOs and their teams are embedded in local contexts. Indeed, it is argued that 'entrepreneurial scripts from developed countries may need substantive adaptation in a different context' (Smith et al., 2016, p.915). The importance of considering context is clear.

A final element of EEOs relates to the extent to which EEOs are able to bridge social capital to transmit expert scripts. It is argued that where EEOs are embedded and can successfully bridge social capital, the impact of EEOs is optimised. Again, Smith et al.'s (2016, p. 917) research relates to 'high growth potential ventures' and the relevance of international social bridges to ordinary and created micro-entrepreneurs is questioned.

3.6. Entrepreneurship and Development

While the importance of entrepreneurship for economic growth has long been recognised, only in recent years have the claims regarding the potential for

entrepreneurship to act as a mechanism for growth and development increased remarkably (Schumpeter, 1936, Baumol, 1990, North, 1990, McMullen, 2011). It is argued that true integration of entrepreneurship into the discipline of development with particular reference to developing countries is ‘long-postponed’ (Naudé, 2010, p.1). As with development studies, in terms of developing countries, a focus was initially placed on the relationship between entrepreneurship and economic development. During the post-war period, it was argued that the investment, innovation and structural changes required to generate economic development in developing countries relied on the existence of entrepreneurship (Leff, 1979).

At the same time, however, it was recognised that the institutional environment and related economic systems typical in developing countries were often incomplete, ambiguous and difficult to manoeuvre and therefore, the level of entrepreneurship required to overcome the systems was, in comparison to more developed countries, greater (Leff, 1979). As such, entrepreneurship was often referred to as a ‘problem’ or binding constraint for economic development (Naudé, 2010). While Leff (1979, p.60) argued this claim was ‘much exaggerated’, it would be a number of years before entrepreneurship would be considered in a positive light. As such, governments and policy makers have placed increased importance upon the creation of an environment conducive to domestic and foreign business and investment (Acs and Szerb, 2007, Salimath and Cullen, 2010). Indeed, the very existence and widespread adoption of the World Bank’s Doing Business Project highlights the current and potential importance of entrepreneurship to all economies. In recent years, research relating entrepreneurship and development has increased; authors have argued that

entrepreneurship creates employment (Evans and Leighton, 1990, Salimath and Cullen, 2010), prosperity and wealth (Mair and Marti, 2009, Salimath and Cullen, 2010) and is an important driver of economic growth and development (Bruton et al., 2008, McMullen, 2011, Tobias et al., 2013).

While research has increased in recent years, a focus has been predominantly placed at national or regional levels (Tobias et al., 2013). Indeed, little research has considered the relationship between entrepreneurship and individual or community development and, further to this, even less attention has been paid to the particular mechanisms that make entrepreneurship a tool in the alleviation of poverty (Tobias et al., 2013). Where the link is made between entrepreneurship and a social objective, such a poverty reduction, is in the area of social business. To date, the Type I social business, defined as a self-sustaining 'non-loss, non-dividend company with a social objective' (Yunus, 2010, p.4), has been well researched (Miller et al., 2012, Choi and Majumdar, 2014, Anderson et al., 2015) and examples of social businesses are common in literature and the media. Again, this social business model, and the focus on regional or national levels is akin to the top-down approach to development where the poor are beneficiaries and, as the previous chapter has demonstrated, such macro policies often fail to deliver to the bottom billion (Collier, 2007).

Therefore, to better understand how entrepreneurship can address poverty issues, it is argued that entrepreneur scholars 'would be well served to pioneer the micro aspect of entrepreneurship' (Bruton et al., 2013, p.687) to assess whether development

economists are right in their consideration that entrepreneurship could act as a vehicle for 'endogenous transformation' (McMullen, 2011, p.186) with the entrepreneur acting as an agent of change. Indeed, Bruton (2010, p.8) argues in support of endogenous approaches to poverty alleviation, stating that business 'has the potential to do far more to solve the issues of poverty than any number of government aid programs' while Welter et al. (2016) argue that, despite being overlooked by researchers, entrepreneurship can aid in the pursuit of a myriad of goals, including social and economic equality. The subsequent section reviews the literature related to entrepreneurship and poverty reduction.

3.7. Entrepreneurship and Poverty

From the entrepreneurship literature, a search by Bruton et al. (2013) indicated that between 2003 and 2013, only 83 articles were published in the Financial Times list of top business journals that focused on entrepreneurship and poverty. This, Bruton et al. argue, represents a 'tiny fraction' of the thousands of articles published across the decade (2013, p.684). This 'reluctance' to engage – which is not felt by other business disciplines (Bruton et al., 2013, p.683) – is, according to the authors, due to the irrelevance of the existing literature, theories and models to developing countries and poverty ridden contexts (Bruton et al., 2013). Indeed, Athreye (2010) argues that where developing countries do constitute the context of empirical research, there is an implicit assumption that entrepreneurs, entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial behaviour is consistent across the globe and, as such, theories and approaches developed in and for the Western world are applied without question.

Nevertheless, Powell and McGrath (2014) posit that entrepreneurship must be considered as a key factor in escaping desperate poverty but, to date, little research has focused on the mechanisms that would facilitate this process (Tobias et al., 2013). In recent years, a growing number of researchers have begun to place a focus on the integration of entrepreneurship and the delivery of non-economic indicators including poverty reduction. In March 2009, The Economist published a special report on entrepreneurship. Claiming that entrepreneurship was 'an idea whose time has come' (Wooldrige, 2009, p.4), the author refer to entrepreneurs as global heroes with the potential to 'save the world'.

Further, in 2010, a special issue focused on entrepreneurship and sustainable development was published by the Journal of Business Venturing. Recognising that entrepreneurship may be a 'panacea' for social and environmental issues (Hall et al., 2010, p.439), the editors argue that uncertainty remains regarding the true role of entrepreneurship in fostering sustainable development. While the special issue identifies a number of key future research directions from motivations and incentives to the role of public policy and how it may influence the incidence of sustainable entrepreneurship and acknowledges the importance of context, no article in the special issue considers entrepreneurship within a developing country or impoverished community. The issue identifies this is as an important literature gap: relating entrepreneurship to impoverished communities in developing economies.

In 2011, in a special issue of Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice devoted to the future of entrepreneurship, two articles focused on entrepreneurship and non-economic gains and poverty. The first, an article authored by Shepherd and Patzelt (2011), focuses on linking entrepreneurial action with sustainability and development. Specifically, the article assesses the potential for entrepreneurship to sustain ecosystems while delivering economic and non-economic benefits to all stakeholders (including investors, the entrepreneur and society). For entrepreneurship to be considered sustainable, Shepherd and Patzelt (2011) argue that sources of life support and communities must be sustained while there is economic gain, non-economic gain to individuals and non-economic gains to society. It is argued that entrepreneurial action is capable of delivering much more than economic gain (Shepherd and Patzelt, 2011); indeed, the potential for entrepreneurship to sustain the environment, maintain and retain culture and community while delivering individual and societal economic and non-economic gain is discussed. Further research is required to understand the relationship between entrepreneurship and societal non-economic gains (Shepherd and Patzelt, 2011).

In a second article relating entrepreneurship to poverty reduction for the future of entrepreneurship, McMullen (2011) considers entrepreneurship in the context of global poverty, and the least developed countries. McMullen (2011) argues that entrepreneurship can enable endogenous transformation for less developed countries and proposes a new field of research that considers social entrepreneurship, businesses entrepreneurship and institutional entrepreneurship together. Specifically, the paper focuses on development entrepreneurship as a means of removing or operating around

institutional barriers – regulative and normative – that prevent populations engaging in global markets as producers or consumers. While this paper is again theoretical and focuses on development at a national level with most references to economic growth, McMullen does highlight the significance of the institutional environment (McMullen, 2011). It is noteworthy that the element of removing or working around institutional barriers to aid participation within McMullen's (2011) development entrepreneurship is akin to the operations of Smith et al.'s (2016) EEOs that, through the provision of proto-institutions, help ordinary entrepreneurs bypass hostile or unsupportive institutions to facilitate market participation.

The greatest research focus related to entrepreneurship and poverty alleviation has been on micro-lending and micro-finance (Bateman and Chang, 2010, Weber and Ahmad, 2014). The history of microfinance can be traced back to the 1800s and the actions of US based theorist Spooner, who argued that the provision of credit to entrepreneurs provided routes out of poverty (Njue et al., 2016), and Raiffeisen, the founder of cooperative lending banks to support German farmers (Mierzwa, 2016). Further, according to Saatçi and Özçam (2013), similar credit societies were established in Britain. Today, and since the application of modern microcredit in the 1970s (Saatçi and Özçam, 2013), the microfinance industry is considered to be a crucial tool in the encouragement of entrepreneurship in developing countries (Bruton et al., 2015). Supported by NGOs, government programmes, the media and academic articles (Bateman and Chang, 2010, Lutzenkirchen and Weistroffer, 2012, Kent and Dacin, 2013, Weber and Ahmad, 2014, Randøy et al., 2015), it is estimated that 200 million microloans are made every year (Lutzenkirchen and Weistroffer, 2012).

Providing the capital that the poor need to establish small scale business, micro-lending or micro-finance is a global phenomenon. However, it is argued that the industry does little to reduce poverty (Bruton et al., 2015); instead, micro-lending only encourages subsistence entrepreneurship or entrepreneurship that helps people meet their basic needs and can 'lock people into poverty' (Bruton et al., 2015, p.4). While the provision of capital is important to potential entrepreneurs living in poverty, financing entrepreneurship is not sufficient if there is no attempt to foster substantial entrepreneurship (Smith et al., 2016).

The important role of EEOs in the support of traditionally marginalised groups as they begin to adopt entrepreneurial behaviour has been previously discussed. While the literature indicates that EEOs can, through the dissemination of knowledge, resources and experience, foster entrepreneurship in developing countries in its most productive form, it is argued here that further research is required to ascertain whether, through entrepreneurship and 'proto-institutions', EEOs are, in fact, facilitating the development of the capabilities of created entrepreneurs.

3.8. Emancipatory Entrepreneuring

Research by Rindova et al. (2009) proposed that entrepreneurial behaviours can be viewed as 'generators for change' to facilitate emancipation from constraints that limit behaviour. Viewing entrepreneurship as emancipatory aligns with the CA's definitions of poverty and development. That is, poverty as deprivation of capabilities and development as a process of expanding human freedoms. In other words, through

involvement in entrepreneurship, entrepreneurs are able to remove major sources of ‘unfreedoms’ that constrain their lives and be liberated (Sen, 1999, Jennings et al., 2016). Rindova et al. (2009) propose that there are three core elements within the emancipatory perspective on entrepreneuring: seeking autonomy, authoring and making declarations. This chapter has identified that regulative and normative institutions encourage and constrain behaviour and that the effect of these constraints vary between groups (Welter and Smallbone, 2008). That women represent the subordinated population and experience poverty differently from men is well researched. From an emancipatory perspective, it is proposed that actors may seek to ‘escape from or remove perceived constraints’ (Rindova et al., 2009, p.480) within their environments through entrepreneurship and propose that future research examine the various environments where entrepreneurs take action.

Authoring, it is argued, involves engaging with others involved in the entrepreneurial process to pursue change (Rindova et al., 2009). As such, in the case of created or ordinary entrepreneurs (Patel, 1987, Tobias et al., 2013), interaction must take place with, among others, EEOs that facilitate their entrepreneuring. In exploring intermediaries that stimulate entrepreneurship, such as the EEOs discussed previously, Al-Dajani et al. (2015) discuss their influential role in constraining or enhancing the emancipatory potential of entrepreneuring. Indeed, Rindova et al. (2009) state that relationships developed during authoring often introduce new power structures that constrain, rather than support, entrepreneurs. While Smith et al.’s (2016) EEOs introduce ‘proto-institutions’ that support entrepreneurs and insulate them from hostile institutions, Al-Dajani et al. (2015) found that the actions of intermediaries can,

because of their organisational objectives, introduce new behavioural constraints and limit the emancipatory nature of entrepreneuring.

The final core element within the emancipatory perspective on entrepreneuring, making declarations, relates to unambiguously identifying change creation as the intention of entrepreneuring. As such, it is clear that Rindova et al. (2009) identify the creation of change as the overarching aim of entrepreneuring. While this may be the overarching organisational objective for EEOs, including BRAC who unambiguously identify the development of women through market participation as their aim (Mair et al., 2012), it is important to recognise that for the ordinary entrepreneurs operating through EEOs, including those in Tobias et al.'s research (2013), change creation may not be the overarching aim of their entrepreneuring. Instead, income generation, albeit as a means to an end, may be the overarching aim. However, emancipation may be an outcome of their desire to generate an income through entrepreneurship and, as a result, the distinct overarching aims of the EEOs and ordinary entrepreneurs are not necessarily incompatible. If their desire for income generation is related to pre-existing economic constraints, however, then the outcome of this may be the departure from more abstract constraints including psychological or cultural constraints.

To determine whether individuals have achieved emancipation through entrepreneuring, a 'noticeable departure from pre-existing constraints within their environments' (Jennings et al., 2016, p.83) must be observed and, as such, an understanding of the dimensions of context (Welter, 2011) that have, over time,

constrained and encouraged behaviours of women entrepreneurs in Nepal must be achieved. According to Rindova et al. (2009), pre-existing constraints can be intellectual, psychological, economic, social, institutional or cultural, incorporating several dimensions of context.

3.9. Conclusions

According to Bruton et al. (2013), by understanding how the poor can act as entrepreneurs to improve their lives, entrepreneurship scholars have the potential to make a real contribution to poverty reduction. The literature has highlighted the potential for entrepreneurship to act as an opportunity to enable poverty alleviation. However, little empirical research has been carried out to better understand this relationship. Further to this, the literature has highlighted that several additional gaps exist in the literature:

Firstly, while there is extensive literature on the relationship between entrepreneurship and regulative institutions, the relationship between entrepreneurship and normative institutions is not well understood particularly in terms of women entrepreneurs (Bushell, 2008). Secondly, further research is required to understand the 'transformative' potential for entrepreneurship. That is, further research is required to understand how and why entrepreneurial action can generate societal non-economic gain including in terms of emancipation and freedom from constraints and a true understanding of the relationship between entrepreneurship and poverty alleviation as capability deprivation should be attained. Thirdly, further research is required to

understand how EEOs can foster entrepreneurship through the dissemination of knowledge, resources and experience and the provision of ‘proto-institutions’ that insulate marginalised people from hostile institutions. In order to understand the position of women and women entrepreneurs in rural Nepal and understand their behaviour, consideration will be given to the dimensions of context. That is, the business, spatial, social, historical and institutional dimensions of context (Welter, 2011). In terms of the institutional dimension of context, institutional theory will be applied.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

4.1. Introduction

This thesis considers the relationship between entrepreneurship, poverty as capability deprivation and development as a process of removing sources of unfreedoms. In doing so, the study responds to Naudé's (2010, p.1) call to address the 'long-postponed' and practically important integration of entrepreneurship, development and poverty reduction. Indeed, despite a 2010 call to further explore the richness and validity of the Capability Approach in the domain of entrepreneurship (Gries and Naudé, 2011), limited empirical research has been conducted. This chapter presents the conceptual framework that informs the research. The relevant gaps in the literature from the domains of development studies and entrepreneurship are presented before the framework is presented and discussed. The research aim and objectives, which originate from the conceptual framework, are presented and discussed before the context of the research, where the conceptual framework will be applied, is considered.

4.2. Gaps in the Literature

While this thesis makes a direct contribution to a better understanding of entrepreneurship in the discipline of development, with particular reference to developing countries - an integration which is 'long-postponed' (Naudé, 2010, p.1) -

the research also addresses gaps in the entrepreneurship literature, the institutional theory literature and, finally, development studies literature.

Firstly, the thesis addresses gaps in the emancipatory entrepreneurship literature that seeks to understand the 'transformative' potential of entrepreneurship. Despite the publication of Rindova et al.'s (2009) 'groundbreaking' paper (Jennings et al., 2016), little attention has been paid, nor many empirical papers produced, exploring the transformative potential of entrepreneurship (Welter et al., 2016, Jennings et al., 2016). As such, further research is required to understand how and why entrepreneurial action can generate societal non-economic gains in terms of emancipation and freedom from constraints, from the emancipatory literature, and in terms of removing sources of unfreedom, from the Capability Approach literature. Indeed, this thesis answers a direct call to develop a 'deeper and engaged understanding of how impoverished female entrepreneurs starting informal ventures in contexts of deep cultural misogyny can improve their chances of survival and generate some degree of autonomy' (Welter et al., 2016, p.6), presenting a form of everyday entrepreneurship, with transformative potential, that is often neglected from the literature, despite its rich variety and importance (Welter et al., 2016, p.3).

Secondly, in terms of institutional theory, the argument that regulative and normative institutions and their related enforcement mechanisms influence, constrain and encourage behaviour by defining what is legal and legitimate is well established (Beckfield et al., 2015, Scott, 2008, Scott, 2005, Shirley, 2005, Scott, 2001, North,

1990). However, while there is extensive literature on the relationship between entrepreneurship and regulative institutions, the relationship between entrepreneurship and normative institutions is not as well understood particularly in terms of women entrepreneurs (Bushell, 2008). In addition, this thesis addresses gaps in the literature relating to institutional incongruence and the formation of institutional voids (Mair and Marti, 2009). Such voids can inhibit market participation – a pertinent consideration where potential entrepreneurs may, because of normative institutions that perpetuate discrimination and encourage discriminatory practises based on, among other criteria, gender, caste and ethnicity, experience discrimination and inequality within their communities and households. This thesis expands on a small body of recent research that understands the central role of organisations that fill these voids to facilitate market participation (Smith et al., 2016). Further research is required to understand how organisations, including entrepreneurship enabling organisations, can facilitate market participation by fostering entrepreneurship through the dissemination of knowledge, resources and experience and the provision of 'proto-institutions' that insulate marginalised people from the hostile institutions that inhibit participation (Smith et al., 2016).

Finally, and in response to criticisms regarding traditional top-down approaches to development that rely on the trickle-down effect and are donor led, alternative strategies have been sought. This thesis considers the relationship between entrepreneurship and the Capability Approach, as an alternative contextualised strategy to alleviate poverty, where poverty is defined as capability deprivation.

4.3. The Conceptual Framework

With adequate opportunities (Clark, 2009) and an enabling environment, individuals are agents of change, effectively shaping their lives and the lives of others through action to realise aspirations (Sen, 1999, Frediani, 2006, Frediani, 2008). Robeyns argues that capability expansion is demonstrated by improved life quality, the removal of obstacles in life and what people are able to do and be. Indeed, the overarching focus of CA evaluations should focus on whether individuals 'have more freedom to live the kind of life that, upon reflection, they have reason to value' (Robeyns, 2005, p.94).

As such, the existence of an enabling environment and the availability of opportunities may be considered inputs in, or conditions for, the process of expanding capability sets. Here, consideration is given to entrepreneurship as the adequate opportunity. Figure 4.1 presents the conceptual framework that considers the environment and presents entrepreneurship as an adequate, but potentially transformative, opportunity. The framework developed here identifies that institutions and institutional voids:

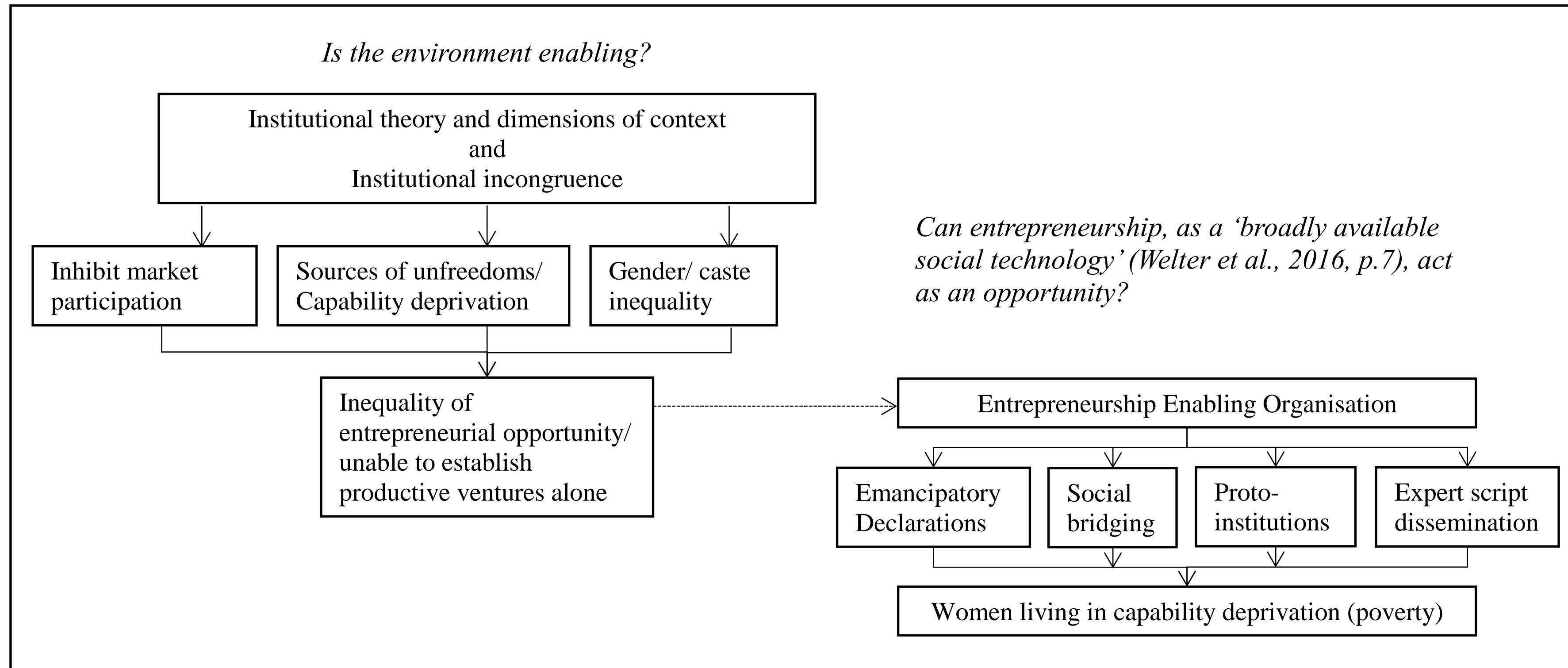
1. Can often perpetuate discriminatory practices based on differences between groups (including country of origin, ethnicity, gender, caste, class and other demographic characteristics), representing sources of unfreedoms.
2. Limit the development and expansion of capability sets because of behavioural expectations.

3. Interpret behaviour differently, resulting in the establishment of institutional voids that, when considered in terms of entrepreneurship, limit market participation.

As a result, the existence of institutional voids produces three significant barriers to participation (figure 4.1) which, when considered together, limit an individual's ability to establish productive enterprises alone. Indeed, there is an inequality of entrepreneurial opportunity, driven by inequalities and a lack of exposure and capabilities, that is largely neglected in the literature (Baker and Powell, 2016). Therefore, while entrepreneurship is often regarded as a 'broadly available social technology' (Welter et al., 2016, p.7), where institutional voids limit market participation, the role of intermediaries, including entrepreneurship enabling organisations, can be significant and crucial in facilitating the establishment of productive ventures for individuals who 'would not have the resources, knowledge, or skills in order to do so acting alone' (Smith et al., 2016, p.1).

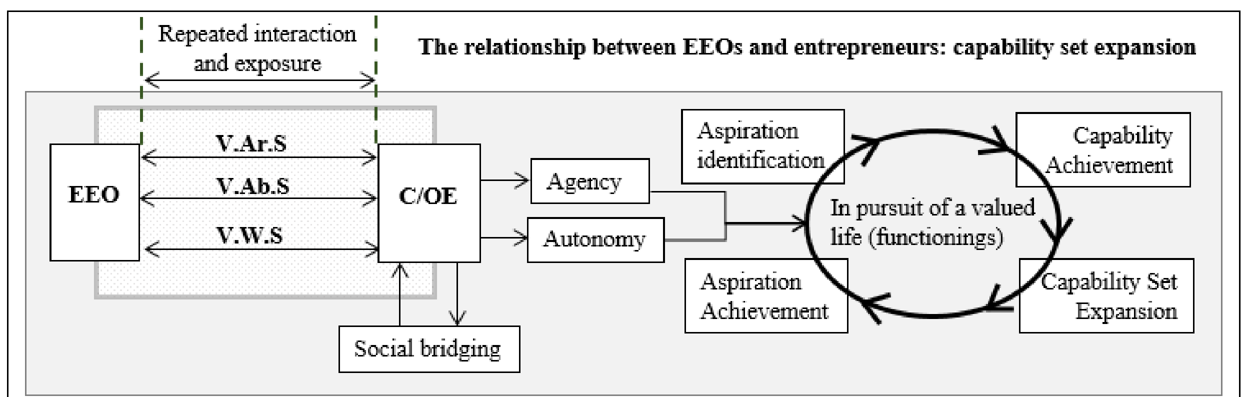
While Smith et al.'s (2016) model of an EEO incorporates key factors that, when considered together, are designed to deliver 'optimal impacts' (the provision of proto-institutions, the dissemination of scripts and social bridging), the conceptual model presented here introduces an emancipatory dimension. From an emancipatory perspective, it is proposed that actors may seek to 'escape from or remove perceived constraints' (Rindova et al., 2009, p.480) within their environments through entrepreneurship.

Figure 4.1. Conceptual Framework – the Enabling Environment and Entrepreneurship as Inputs for Capability Set Expansion



However, if the institutional environment constrains or subjugates individuals, thus rendering them unable to establish productive enterprises alone, they also lack the agency to unambiguously identify change creation as the intention of entrepreneuring. Thus, the importance of the EEO making emancipatory declarations through their organisational objectives is critical; if, in reality, organisational objectives undermine emancipatory potential, the transformative potential of entrepreneurship may be compromised. While Figure 4.1. displays the inputs of an enabling environment and entrepreneurship as an adequate opportunity and introduces the activity and involvement of an EEO delivering 'optimal impacts', Figure 4.2. describes the relationship between the ordinary entrepreneur and EEO in greater detail. Further, Figure 4.2. demonstrates the potential outcomes of the model, indicating how the relationship between EEO and ordinary entrepreneur may, overtime, facilitate the development or autonomy and agency. Further to this, Figure 4.2 demonstrates how the application of agency and autonomy can allow individuals to pursue a valued life through a process of aspiration identification or definition, capability achievement, capability set expansion and, aspiration achievement.

Figure 4.2. The Relationship Between EEO and Created/ Ordinary Entrepreneurs (C/OE): Capability Set Expansion



4.4. Aims and Objectives of the Research

The conceptual framework informed the overall research aim and related objectives of the research. These are discussed below.

The Research Aim: To better understand the potential for entrepreneurship to act as a real and appropriate opportunity to facilitate in the expansion of the capability sets of rural Nepali women in order for them to be able to live the lives they have reason to value.

Capability expansion is demonstrated by improved life quality, the removal of obstacles in life and what people are able to do and be (Robeyns, 2005). In pursuing lives that, upon reflection, they have reason to value, individuals are seeking improved life quality. The removal of obstacles in life pertains to the removal of sources of unfreedom (from the capability approach literature) or demonstrating a 'noticeable departure from pre-existing constraints within their environments' (Jennings et al., 2016, p.83) (from the emancipatory entrepreneurship literature). Finally, what people are able to do and be relates to the attainment of capabilities, aspiration identification and attainment. Under this aim, there are three research objectives. These are presented below.

Objective One. To gain an understanding of how and to what extent the institutional environment affects women and women entrepreneurs in a region of rural Nepal

This objective relates to one of the key inputs, or conditions, for capability expansion: the existence of an enabling environment. As such, this objective focuses on understanding the institutional environment and dimensions of context as well as understanding the potential for institutional voids that may inhibit market participation, interpret behaviour differently and perpetuate discriminatory practices based on demographic characteristics, including gender and caste. In gaining an understanding of the institutional environment, the potential significance of, and importance for, the involvement of EEOs will be ascertained.

Objective Two. To understand the role and transformative value of MEDEP, as an entrepreneurship enabling organisation, in the lives of nascent and established ordinary entrepreneurs and to assess whether, through the proliferation of expert venture scripts (action-based field specific knowledge structures (Mitchell et al., 2000)), the established women entrepreneurs have been sufficiently equipped to act independently of MEDEP.

The second objective also considers a key input, or condition, for capability expansion: the existence of opportunities. Here, consideration is given to entrepreneurship as an opportunity. The relationship between entrepreneurship enabling organisation and ordinary entrepreneur (as displayed at Figure 4.2.), in terms of embeddedness, proliferation of expert venture scripts, provision of proto institutions and social bridging, will be understood to understand the role of MEDEP. Further the transformative value, in terms of emancipatory potential, of MEDEP will be understood. Finally, the aim seeks to understand whether, over time, the significance

of MEDEP reduces overtime as entrepreneurs establish the skills, autonomy and agency to act independently, maintaining enterprises, and potentially establishing new enterprises, alone.

Objective Three. To understand the effect of entrepreneurship on the lives of the women entrepreneurs; to understand whether their involvement allows them to develop and exercise agency and whether their involvement allows them to identify and pursue a life they have reason to value.

While the first and second objectives relate to key inputs, or conditions, for capability expansion, the final objective seeks evidence of outcomes. That is, the third objective seeks to understand whether the women entrepreneurs are agents of change, shaping their lives and lives of others, through action, to realise aspirations. When considered together, findings from each research objective will address the overarching aim of the study.

4.5. The Context of the Research: Nepal

The conceptual model will be applied in a rural region of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal. Contextualising entrepreneurship through the assessment of institutions is crucial to understand the 'nature, richness and dynamics' of entrepreneurial behaviour (Zahra, 2007, p.451). In other words, acknowledging situational and historical boundaries facilitates an understanding of when entrepreneurship happens, how entrepreneurship happens, why entrepreneurship happens and who is involved (Welter, 2011). Chapter Three introduced the 'where's'

of context – business, spatial, institutional and social – and highlighted that entrepreneurship occurs within these 'intertwined' and constantly changing contexts (Welter, 2011, p.174).

During data collection, in acknowledgment of different levels of embeddedness (Welter, 2011), local contexts were considered particularly in terms of the social networks of the women, family composition and household roles but also in terms of local institutional contexts, spatial contexts and business contexts relevant to the industries the women entrepreneurs are operating within. This chapter considers the business, spatial, institutional and social contexts of Nepal as a whole. In particular, through the application of institutional theory, the regulative and normative institutions that influence behaviour of women, entrepreneurs and women entrepreneurs are discussed. In addition to the four dimensions (Table 3.1.), Welter (2011) also highlights the importance of considering 'when' entrepreneurship is occurring to understand historical influences on entrepreneurship. To provide the 'when' context for entrepreneurship, the subsequent section presents an overview of the political and social history of Nepal, from the mid-eighteenth century to the recent People's War.

4.5.1. An Historical Context: Democracy and the People's War

Following the unification of Nepal in the mid-eighteenth century, the country was governed by royal dynasties for 240 years. While the Shah Kings (1768-2008) were, by law, an absolute monarchy, de facto control was assumed by the hereditary Rana family from 1846-1951 (Kumar, 1962). A revolution in 1950 involving the Indian

government, the Nepali Congress Party and King Tribhuvan resulted in the Shahs regaining de facto control (Kumar, 1962). In 1951, Nepal was opened to the modern world (Bhatterai et al., 2005) and a new government, comprised of Ranas and the Nepali Congress Party, was formed. The subsequent 40 years were defined by instability, power struggles between the King and the government and the introduction of the four tiered party-less Panchayat system which placed national decision making with the King; the national assembly advised the King but had no control over budgets or bills (Thapa and Sijapati, 2003, Whelpton, 2005). In 1980, a national referendum was announced and, given the choice between the Panchayat system and a multiparty democracy, the electorate chose the Panchayat system (Hutt, 1994). Over the next decade, discontent with the palace grew and, by 1990, public protests and demonstrations forced the complete abolition of the Panchayat system and royal rule in Nepal. The ban on political parties was lifted and King Birendra assumed the role of constitutional monarch (Whelpton, 2005).

While the introduction of democracy in 1990 promised to address the inequalities intensified by the Panchayat system (Gellner, 2007) and stated that all citizens were 'equal irrespective of religion, race, gender, caste, tribe or ideology' (Bennett, 2005, p.7), promising all groups and individuals an opportunity to voice opinions and assert their identities and rights as equal citizens (Bennett, 2005), in practice, it was not as inclusive as envisioned. Males and high caste groups were favoured (Hachhethu et al., 2008) while women, Dalits (former 'untouchables'), Janjatis and ethnic minorities remained excluded from representation by political parties, who were unwilling or unable to represent the diverging aspirations and expectations of the public (Bennett,

2005). Fuelled by feelings of injustice, a radical movement, led by a fraction of the larger Communist Party, the Communist Party Nepal-Maoist (CPN-M), was launched from the Rapti Zone in Mid-West Nepal. The CPN-M demanded a complete restructuring to improve the lives of the population and strengthen the economy of Nepal (Thapa, 2012).

Through the production of a 40-point charter, which was rebuffed by the prime minister on 4th February 1996, the CPN-M called for the removal of the monarchy and the establishment of a new constitution and democratic state (Hutt, 2004, Thapa, 2012). Following the rebuttal, the movement went underground and the People's War was officially initiated on the 13th February 1996 (Thapa, 2012). The decade-long conflict spread to every district, caused great economic disruption (Menon and Van der Meulen Rodgers, 2015), caused the deaths of 17500 people, destroyed 8500 public structures and internally displaced 79500 people (Do and Iyer, 2010, Wagle and Jackson, 2015). At the time, in terms of casualties particularly, the People's War was considered one of the most intense internal conflicts in recent years (Murshed and Gates, 2005).

Frequent parliamentary revisions, states of emergency, domestic and international pressure and the appropriation and relinquishment of power by the monarchy produced an extremely unstable political and economic environment (Bhatterai et al., 2005, Do and Iyer, 2010). In 2007, as an interim government was eventually formed, the search for a peace process began (United Nations, 2007). In May 2008, through the fourth

amendment to the Interim Constitution, the world's newest republic was established as the CPN-M won the majority vote in the first elections since 1999 (Buncombe, 2008). In July 2008, ethnic Madhesi Ram Baran Yadav of Nepali Congress Party, was elected as Nepal's first president and the Constituent Assembly was tasked with drafting the constitution (Mocko and Penjore, 2016). By 2010, the first of four extensions were granted to extend the completion deadline of the constitution but, after failing to deliver, the Constituent Assembly was dissolved in May 2012 (Adhikari and Gellner, 2016).

Providing an historical context for entrepreneurship facilitates an understanding of when entrepreneurship is embedded (Welter, 2011). The primary data collection for this research was completed during a time of political uncertainty following civil war. As such, the recent political history of Nepal could have theoretical implications for entrepreneurship as a whole and for women entrepreneurs in particular. Further, given that primary data will be collected in a conflict affected situation (ADB, 2012), particularly as the People's War originated from the Rapti Zone, there are ethical considerations to be made. This is discussed in Chapter Five.

In recognition of the dimensions of context being intertwined (Welter, 2011), the subsequent sections present an overview of Nepal. That is, the economy of Nepal (historical, business and spatial contexts), the geography of Nepal (historical, business, spatial and social contexts) and the diversity of Nepal (historical, business, spatial, institutional and social contexts) will be explored (Welter, 2011).

4.5.2. The Economy of Nepal

Over 75 percent of the population of Nepal are dependent on small scale agriculture to survive and generate an income (Maharjan et al., 2013). Despite the significance of the agriculture industry, which is dominated by rice, maize, millet and barley (Bhattarai et al., 2015), to the majority of the population, low productivity, a consistent lack of fertilisers and improved seeds and a dependence on the changing monsoon season results in poor performance (Kollmair et al., 2006, Sharma, 2015). Although crucial to most of the population, including 3.7 million households that continue to engage in subsistence farming (Ghimire and Kumar, 2014), the sector is in decline (Adhikari, 2011); the contribution of the sector to Nepal's GDP has shrunk in recent years as the country shifts to a remittance-dominated economy centred on services (Adhikari, 2011). Indeed, since 1980, the contribution of agriculture to GDP has reduced from 62 percent to 38 percent (World Bank, 2011b). In the same period, the contribution of the service sector increased from twenty six to forty seven percent (Muzzini and Aparico, 2013). However, the activities of the service sector and the impact of growth are predominantly confined to urban centres and trekking trails: Mount Everest, Langtang, Annapurna, Kathmandu and Pokhara (UNCTAD, 2011, Kumar Chhetri, 2015). As a result, the urban economy in Nepal is growing significantly faster than the rural economy: the contribution of urban areas to Nepal's GDP grew from twenty eight percent in 1975 to sixty two percent in 2011 (World Bank, 2011b, Muzzini and Aparico, 2013).

In rural areas, the decline of the agricultural sector has resulted in national or international out-migration becoming an inevitability for many of the unemployed and youths entering the workforce (Adhikari, 2011). Indeed, according to Jones and Basnett (2013), four million young people travel abroad to seek employment with this number rising every year. In 2016, it was estimated that 28 percent of the Nepali workforce were employed in foreign countries (World Bank, 2016b). According to Tuladhar, Sapkota and Adhikari (2014) the remittance income of migrant workers has become a crucial component of the economy of Nepal. In 2011, 56 percent of all households were receiving remittance income (ADB, 2013). The GDP (using purchasing power parity rates) per capita in 2013 was $2173 – 40.8 percent of the South Asian average (UNDP, 2015c) and it is estimated that the contribution of remittances to GDP rose from 11 percent in 2003/2004 to 25 percent in 2012/13 and 30 percent in 2016 (Sharma, 2015, World Bank, 2016b). In addition to this, because of the free border agreement between India and Nepal, where remittances are received through informal channels from India, truly accurate figures may not be captured by official data (Thieme, 2003, Sapkota, 2013).

In addition to substantial GDP contributions, at local, household and individual levels, remittance earnings have increased Gross National Disposable Income and consumption in migrant households, improved living standards, resulted in migrant associations investing in social assets (schools, roads and healthcare centres), improved the health and education of migrant households and contributed to dramatic poverty reduction, particularly in rural areas (Kelegama, 2011, Thagunna and Acharya, 2013, World Bank, 2016b). In terms of gender inequality, there have been additional

outcomes from migration and remittance; these are considered at 4.7. However, as Nepal's remittance economy grows to one of the largest in the world (Coyle and Boyce, 2015), there may be long term implications to the economy. The structural transformation in Nepal has been atypical (World Bank, 2016b); rather than following a traditional route from an agrarian society driven by urban jobs in industry and cities (Rostow, 1960), improved living standards are dependent on highly volatile external remittance flows to act as a 'single driver for growth' (Thagunna and Acharya, 2013, World Bank, 2016b, p.22).

The pivotal – yet oversized – role of remittances in the Nepali economy has constrained internal competitiveness and the implications for Nepal's long term growth are unknown (Muzzini and Aparico, 2013, Sapkota, 2013), particularly given that Nepal's remittance economy – and its growth or decline – is heavily linked to exogenous factors and shocks such as commodity prices (World Bank, 2016b). While the decline of agriculture is a key driver behind the growth of out-migration, Sapkota (2013) argues that the scale of migration in Nepal can be further explained by political instability resulting from the People's War; disruption and a lack of certainty reduced income generation potential particularly in rural areas (Sapkota, 2013).

Without government policies that relate remittance earnings to long-term growth projects, such as investment in hydropower and sectors that absorb technology, and investments in roads and other infrastructure as well as reforming the domestic investment climate to encourage private sector investment and job creation, the

economy of Nepal may face an unsustainable future (Sapkota, 2013, Thagunna and Acharya, 2013), resulting in implications for the establishment of a market economy that supports entrepreneurship. Indeed, in 2015, UNDP highlighted the lack of adequate employment opportunities resulting in 'a huge exodus of productive workforce' (UNDP, 2015d, p.9) from rural areas and, in 2010, the Ministry of Industry placed a priority on developing an enabling environment for Micro Enterprise Development (MED) in Nepal to promote self-employment, make use of skills and accelerate rural industrialisation, indicating a desire to align Nepal's growth to typical and traditional routes (Rostow, 1960).

4.5.3. The Geography of Nepal

The previous section has underlined the extent to which dimensions of contexts are intertwined. Indeed, it is clear that the historical context has influenced the business context of Nepal and, in terms of the spatial context, it is clear that both the historical context and business contexts have influenced the spatial context of entrepreneurship in rural areas of Nepal through an increase in out-migration amongst men and young people. This section considers the geography and population of Nepal and incorporates historical, business, spatial and social contexts.

A landlocked country bordered by India to the South, East and West and the People's Republic of China to the North, the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal has an area of 147,181km^2 (CBS, 2011). The country is divided into five development regions: the Far Western, Midwestern, Western, Central and Eastern which span three ecological

zones: the Mountains in the north, which contain eight of the world's ten tallest mountains and accommodates 6.73 percent of the total population of Nepal (CBS, 2013), the Hill Region, which is the largest zone and houses 43.1 percent of the population, and the Terai Region, the plains that border India in the south and houses 50.27 percent of the population (CBS, 2013, Muzzini and Aparico, 2013, Yadav, 2016). Overall, 83 percent of the population reside in rural areas (Maharjan et al., 2013). The regions are further split into 75 districts which, for administrative purposes are further split into 130 municipalities and 3833 Village Development Committees (VDC). Within each district, a Chief District Officer is responsible for the coordination of development works and the maintenance of law (CBS, 2013, CBS, 2014a).

In 2011, the population of Nepal was 26.5 million people with an annual growth rate of 1.35 percent (CBS, 2013, CBS, 2014b). By 2030, the population of Nepal is expected to grow to 32.9 million (UNDP, 2015c). According to the UNDP (2015c), in 2015, 62.1 percent of the population were living in multidimensional poverty and 31.6 percent of the population were living in severe multidimensional poverty. With a Human Development Index (HDI) score of 0.548 and a rank of 145 out of a list of 188 countries on the United Nations Human Development ranking, the human development of Nepal, which takes into account life expectancy, literacy, schooling and living standards, is considered to be low (Government of Nepal, 2014). This ranking places Nepal below average in South Asia, only ahead of Pakistan and Afghanistan (UNDP, 2015c).

However, HDI values range from 0.398 in the Western, Mid-Western and Far Western Mountains to 0.622 in the Kathmandu Valley, representing a very real rural-urban HDI divide. The HDI value for Dang, Rukum and Salyan, the location of this research were 0.485, 0.431 and 0.441 respectively (Government of Nepal, 2014) indicating that spatial contexts vary across Nepal as a whole. Like context, issues of variance and inequality are intertwined and embedded in all dimensions of context including the historical context. The subsequent section considers the issue of diversity and inequality in Nepal and incorporates all dimensions of context: historical, business, spatial, institutional and social.

4.5.4. Diversity in Nepal

The breadth of languages spoken in Nepal – 124 (Yadav, 2016), the number of castes and ethnic groups listed in the 2011 census – 125 (CBS, 2011) – and the ten religions practised in Nepal (Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Kirat, Christian, Prakṛti , Bön, Jainism, Bahá'í, Sikhism) (Yadav, 2016) confirm the statement that Nepal is a 'multi-ethnic, multilingual, multi-religious and multicultural' country (CBS, 2014b, p.1). These differing ethnic backgrounds, ancient social values, religions, traditions and languages have not only created a diverse country (Hepburn, 2002), but also a country with far reaching, deep-rooted and structured social discriminations and inequalities (NPC, 2003). From under-representation in government, to limited access to education, health and employment for women, ethnic minorities, remote populations and those of lower caste examples of inequality are far-reaching, instigating massive divides between groups (Saville, 2001). The persistence of deep– rooted caste, ethnic

and gender-based inequalities, as well as frustrations related to poverty, agricultural stagnation, inadequate government spending on social services and infrastructure and Kathmandu focused development activities (Murshed and Gates, 2005, Adhikari and Lawoti, 2016), fostered a shared feeling of 'myopic neglect' (Bhatterai et al., 2005, p.670) amongst the periphery populations of Nepal.

While the specific cause of the People's War continues to be debated, it is argued that shared feelings of resentment were a key driver behind the insurgency (Adhikari and Lawoti, 2016). Indeed, five of the 40 demands made by the CPN-M (demands 18 – 22) focus on gender, religious, caste and ethnic inequalities (Thapa and Sijapati, 2003). As the government rejected the initial demands of the Maoists while continuing to engage in rent seeking, corruptive behaviour and targeting Maoist activities through violent police operations (Adhikari and Lawoti, 2016), the CPN-M only garnered further support. By the close of the People's War in 2006, the CPN-M had gained control of most rural regions in Nepal (Menon and Van der Meulen Rodgers, 2015). Indeed, the support of or the real lack of resistance to the insurgency by the people of Nepal indicates the extent to which frustrations were felt (Menon and Van der Meulen Rodgers, 2015).

At the root of the exclusion and inequality is the introduction of a Hindu state rooted in an 'upper class hill Hindu male culture' that allowed the historical dominance of male Thakuris and hill Brahmins (Adhikari and Lawoti, 2016, p.115). This structure resulted in socio-cultural discriminatory practices against all groups except the

dominant upper hill castes and, as a result of this discrimination, they were marginalised and excluded from social, political and economic domains (Adhikari and Lawoti, 2016). While legal reforms have since encouraged inclusion – discussed below – evidence of inequality and discrimination between groups on the basis of caste, ethnicity, geography and gender remains. In 2011, for example, the poverty incidence of Brahmins and hill Dalits was 10.34 percent and 43.63 percent respectively while the HDI values of Brahmins and Dalits were 0.538 and 0.434 respectively (ADB, 2013). Further, as already discussed, among the nine eco-development regions, HDI values indicate a very real rural-urban HDI gap (Government of Nepal, 2014). Further evidence of inequalities lie in major demographic parameters related to health and education. For example, indicators related to child birth demonstrate inequality in terms of religion, geographic location, income and education. Only 32 percent of women living in rural areas have a skilled attendant at birth compared to 73 percent of urban women (UNICEF, 2014). Further, over 90 percent of poor women do not have a skilled attendant when labouring (UNICEF, 2014).

While Nepal's infant mortality rate (IMR) (32 deaths/ 1000 live births) is lower than the global average of 34 deaths per 1000 live births, research by Adhikari and Sawangdee (2011) found great disparity between groups; the incidence of IMR is significantly higher where births are rural (50/1000), in mountainous regions (75/1000), where the household does not have a toilet (53/1000) or access to piped water (57/1000), if the family are Muslim (65/1000) or if the mother is illiterate (56/1000). As such, while the national average may be below the global average, the IMR of marginalised groups is above the global average and the South Asian average

(45/1000 live births) (UNICEF, 2014). In terms of under-five mortality rates, there is further disparity: 95 deaths per 1000 live births for Dalits compared with 43 deaths per 1000 live births for Newars[5] (ADB, 2013).

Further, while literacy rates have improved in recent years for the population over the age of five years, from 54.1 percent in 2001 to 65.9 percent in 2011 (CBS, 2014b), there are divides between gender, geography, caste and ethnicity. In 2011, nationally, 76 percent of males were literate while 57 percent of females were literate (CBS, 2014b); in Kathmandu, literacy rates are 86.3 percent but, in the Rautahat district in the Terai, literacy rates are just 41.7 percent (Yadav, 2016). Finally, literacy rates for Dalits in 2009 were 59.9 percent while literacy rates for Brahmins was 96.9 percent (ADB, 2013) and, while the national primary school enrolment rate in 2009 was 93.7 percent, only 20 percent of Dalit children attend school (ADB, 2013). Gender disparity is further evident in tertiary education; less than one quarter of all post graduate students in Nepal are women and, where the students are studying in mountainous regions, over 88 percent of postgraduate students are men (ADB, 2013, CBS, 2014b). Inequality occupies all aspects of life in Nepal.

Indeed gender disparities are further found in child labour rates, adolescents currently married or in a union, youth literacy rates, net attendance ratios in secondary school, population (aged 25 and over) with at least some secondary education and land

[5] Newars are a dominant ethnic group; the original inhabitants of the Kathmandu Valley.

ownership (UNICEF, 2014, Mishra and Sam, 2016), In 2013, the Gender Inequality Index score for Nepal, which takes into account reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market, was 0.489 (UNDP, 2015b). The existence and extent of gender inequality in Nepal makes the involvement of women in the People's War the more noteworthy.

Women and the People's War

The active participation of women has been one of the most discussed aspects of the war because of the roles adopted and the questions raised on what compelled women to be involved (Sharma and Prasain, 2004). Typically, the involvement of women occurred indirectly through involvement in a sister organisation or by direct involvement with the party (Sharma and Prasain, 2004). Sister organisations include the women's wing of CPN-M, the All Nepalese Women's Association (Revolutionary) (ANWA-R), ethnic liberation fronts and the National Free Students Union (Revolutionary) (Tamang, 2009). Women indirectly involved through membership in such organisations raised awareness for the CPN-M in their social groups and encouraged others to support the Maoist agenda (Hutt, 2004). The direct involvement of women, as well as men, in the CPN-M, occurred in two ways: enlisting in the people's militia or the people's army and engaging in defensive and offensive action, or by participating in the CPN-M's organisational wing, enlisting and indoctrinating comrades and potential comrades.

At their peak, it is estimated that women constituted up to 40 percent of the military force in the People's War (Sharma and Prasain, 2004). In addition, ANWA-R targeted patriarchal normative institutions through the introduction of initiatives to prevent child marriage and polygamy, banned the practice of Chhaupadi (banishment of menstruating women to cowsheds or huts) and produced campaigns to tackle domestic violence and alcohol abuse (Tamang, 2009). Sharma and Prasain (2004) state that the high level of involvement of women is due to the same feelings of discontent because of deep-rooted and structured inequalities and the CPN-M capitalising on this shared feeling. The women's actions and the CPN-M's encouragement of their involvement set important precedents for alternative dialogues on gender equality as the women adopted roles traditionally performed by males and took on 'male' responsibilities (Sharma and Prasain, 2004).

By 2008, the CPN-M had entered mainstream politics. They renounced violence and agreed to honour universal human rights and uphold democratic values (Wagle and Jackson, 2015). The Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal was established and the monarchy was ousted. Although elections for the Constituent Assembly were twice postponed, a high voter turnout was recorded for the April 2008 elections. The election process was designed to increase social inclusion and ensure inclusive development by promoting the representation of groups such as Dalits, indigenous groups, the Madhesi community, the inhabitants of Karnali area, hill nationalities (including Magar, Tamang, Gurung, Lai and Limbu), Muslims, women, and the disabled (NPC, 2007).The result of these elections was the introduction of the most inclusive state institution in the history of Nepal (Wagle and Jackson, 2015).

In order to ensure the involvement of women in the Constituent Assembly, a policy of reservation was introduced which set aside 33 percent of the seats in the Constituent Assembly for women (Nepal Election Commission, 2008). Similar reservation policies were established for Janjatis, representatives of ‘backward’ regions (Achham, Bajahang and Bajura in the Far-Western Development Region and Kalikot, Jararkot, Jumla, Dolpa, Mugu and Humla in the Mid-Western Development Region), Madhesi and Dalits (Tamang, 2009, Reynolds, 2010). Questions and criticisms regarding the gap between gender equality rhetoric and gender equality in practice have been raised by a number of authors (Pettigrew and Shneiderman, 2004, Pfaff-Czarnecka, 2004, Tamang, 2009, Tamang, 2011).

The subsequent section considers, through the application of institutional theory, the institutional dimension of context and the influence of regulative and normative institutions on women entrepreneurs. Firstly, to understand the context for Nepali women (not necessarily women entrepreneurs), the regulative institutions are considered in relation to gender laws and bills, policy and planning and the institutional framework before the relationship between normative institutions and gender is presented. Secondly, the section considers the relationship between regulative institutions and entrepreneurship and normative institutions and entrepreneurship.

4.5.5. Regulative Institutions and Women

It is argued that in recent years and particularly since the People’s Movement, legal reforms have amplified the voices of women in decision making and ensured greater

economic security (UN Women 2011). The following sections consider Nepali women in terms of the regulative institutions present in their environment: the institutional framework, including bodies that represent women and gender equality, policy and planning, including considerations of gender and women in development and laws and bills pertaining to women and gender equality.

The Institutional Framework

The Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MWCSW) was established in 1995 and mandated with promoting the empowerment of women and gender equality and gender mainstreaming (Bhadra and Shah, 2007). At district level, the Women Development Offices implement the programmes developed by the MWSCW. A main activity of the MWCSW is to strengthen to National Women Commission Nepal (Bhadra and Shah, 2007), established in 2002. Although it is argued that the commission has been highly politicised, the commission is officially autonomous and has the following functions, duties and powers (National Women Commission, 2006): the formulation of government policies and programmes related to the welfare of women; the assessment of whether developed statutes and international agreements related to women's welfare have been effectively executed and to recommend resolutions where corrective action is required; the monitoring and evaluation of implemented policies and programmes to ensure gender is mainstreamed and to recommend methods to effectively implement such policies; to complete research related to gender equality, empowerment and the law and to make recommendations regarding law amendments; to ensure that the government fulfils its role related to international agreements and treaties related to women; and finally, to lodge petitions

in court for gender violence and social malpractice related to women's rights. In addition to the existence of national ministries, local development offices were introduced and an independent commission developed to deliver gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the institutional framework; the representation of women in government bodies has improved in recent years.

In addition to the representation of women in the institutional framework, the participation of women is crucially important (ADB, 2013). In particular, it is argued that the participation of women transforms the institutional structure, positively influencing governance, enables women by removing disparities amongst groups, improves the status of women and empowers women to engage (ADB, 2013). For women in particular, the 2008 Constituent Assembly elections resulted in a substantial increase to their participation and representation in national elected bodies. In 1990 and 2005, women constituted six percent and 5.9 percent of the members of parliament and 7.4 percent of government ministers (Bennett, 2005). In the 2007 Constituent Assembly elections, 30 women were elected through the First Past the Post system and a further 161 women were allocated seats in the Constituent Assembly through proportional representation (Tamang, 2009). Overall, 33.22 percent of available seats were held by women (Reynolds, 2010) – above the South Asian average of 17 percent ranking the country 14th in terms of women's representation in national elected bodies in the international league table (United Nations, 2007).

Further to this, of the 197 women members of the Constituent Assembly, 51 were widows. Given that widows suffered from particularly restrictive discriminations based on the Laws of Manu that require that a woman not violate her vow to her husband even after his death (Yadav, 2016), their election indicates significant and radical transformation. Despite concerns of tokenism and positive discrimination related to gender quotas (Krook, 2009), it is argued that the descriptive representation of women in legislature ensures substantive representation of feminist issues, inspires other women to engage in politics and raise awareness of the capacity of women (Gurung, 2016). If it is assumed that elected women bring the women's agenda to the Constituent Assembly, the institutional framework is, in theory, supportive of women and gender equality in terms of representation of women by women in government bodies.

Policy and Planning

The approach of the government towards gender and equality has shifted since women were first considered in development plans. From 1956 to 1979, the Government of Nepal's five year development plans took a welfare approach to women, considering their reproductive role in society (ADB, 2010). From 1980 onwards, a Women in Development (WID) approach was adopted which focused on efficiency and equity (ADB, 2010) to development women (NPC, 2007). By 1997, a paradigm shift resulted in a focus being placed on Gender and Development (GAD), rather than WID (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: National Policy on Gender 1980-2008

Five year plan	Policy approach
Sixth 1980-1985	The policy recognised the role of women in development and focused on enhancing the efficiency of women, particularly in terms of their involvement in agriculture.
Seventh 1985-1990	The policy adopted focused on enhancing efficiency and productivity of women through the adoption of a participatory approach, particularly in terms of forestry projects, smokeless stoves and access to water.
Eighth 1992-1997	The policy adopted introduced women into the mainstream of development and proposed equitable distribution of development benefits.
Ninth 1997-2002	A paradigm shift occurred during the ninth plan; a focused was placed on Gender and Development (GAD) instead of WID and, as a result, gender was mainstreamed to reduce inequality and empower women
Tenth 2003-2008	Building on the introduction of GAD, the policy adopted mainstreamed gender, focused on the empowerment of women and reducing gender equality. Gender equality was introduced as a key indicator of poverty analysis.

Source: ADB (2010), Bhadra and Shah (2007), NPC (2007).

The three year interim plan (2007/8-2010/11), the plan developed to be implemented during this research, developed the government's commitment to gender mainstreaming and inclusion to include an engendered macroeconomic framework, gender specific budget allocations and the introduction and implementation of a gender management system. A long term vision of the interim plan was to 'build a new Nepal, as a just, gender inclusive and equitable country, by ensuring the fundamental and equal rights of women' (NPC, 2007, p.103).

The plan had three specific objectives related to gender mainstreaming and inclusion: to ensure the rights of all women in the social, economic and political development of Nepal to build an equitable and inclusive society; to end violence and discrimination against women; to socially rehabilitate women displaced and affected by the People's War and involve women in the peace process (NPC, 2007). Quantitative targets, including the gender development index and gender empowerment as well as the 33 percent reservation of women in policy making bodies, were also introduced (NPC, 2007). In order to achieve these objectives, six major programmes were introduced by the government (Table 4.2.).

Table 4.2: Major Gender Programmes Introduced in the Interim Plan

Programme	Focus/ mandate
Women Empowerment Programme	• Policy and legal reform • The coordination of NGOs and regional groups working in gender related fields • Legal aid • Leadership development • Gender awareness and advocacy • Post conflict considerations related to women.
Women Development Programme (Central)	• Gender awareness and advocacy • Social inclusion of excluded groups • Economic empowerment • Community and household development
Women Development Programmes (District)	• Raising public awareness against domestic violence and trafficking • Skill development • Campaigning against ‘bad traditions, violence and such other unacceptable conditions present in society’ (NPC, 2007, p. 107) • Women’s entrepreneurship and business promotion
Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Program	• Strengthening the institutional capacity of women development offices • Legal, economic and social awareness raising • Economic empowerment of traditionally excluded groups
Capacity Building of the Women Empowerment Mechanism	• Reviewing ministries and agencies to mainstream gender in programmes • Establishment of the gender management system • Extending the gender information management system to local levels • Strengthening gender focused units • Capacity development of community women agencies
Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting on International and Regional Instruments Related to Rights of Women	• Gender analysis and audit of ministries and district development committees (DDC) • Extending the reach of gender analysis • Reviewing gender responsive budgeting • Monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the implementation of programmes with international commitments

Source: NPC (2007)

To achieve the implementation of programmes and the overall objectives, the Government of Nepal allocated twenty eight billion rupees of their budget to the MWCSW and other ministries during the three year interim plan with specific budgets given for each of the six major programmes (NPC, 2007). This budget is substantial compared to the thirteen billion rupees allocated to 'Dalit upliftment', fifteen billion rupees to Adibasi Janjati programmes, ten billion allocated to Madhesi community and 1.5 billion for the development of the Muslim community (NPC, 2007).

In addition to the MWCSW, government ministries have considered gender in their policies, planning and budgets. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Units operate within the ministries of education, finance, health and population, agriculture and cooperatives (ADB, 2010). In 2007, the Ministry of Finance introduced inter-ministerial gender responsive budgeting; designed to monitor public expenditure and budget allocations from a gender perspective and assess the impact of development policies on men and women (ADB, 2010), the developed methodology resulted in a 50 percent increase in spending directly responsive to women (UN Women 2011). The National Planning Commission has developed a gender management system to classify programmes and projects while the Ministry of General Administration and the Ministry of Education and support have, in association with ADB, introduced gender strategies designed to alleviate constraints and improve the participation of women (ADB, 2010).

Laws and Bills

In terms of the regulative environment, it is argued that Nepal has introduced a 'raft of progressive laws that guarantee gender equality' (UN Women, 2011, p.23) since the government of Nepal ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1991. CEDAW is, according to the United Nations, an indication that member states are committed to achieving gender equality and fulfilling the human rights of women and girls (UN Women, 2011). The recent laws and bills pertaining to women and gender equality specific to Nepal are detailed below.

The Local Self Governance Act (1999) is a comprehensive law related to local development committees, protecting the interest of local people and providing opportunities for local people in governance (Rural Reconstruction Nepal, 2007). The Act ensured that reservation for women was guaranteed in local government; 20 percent of ward membership in local government was reserved for women and the nomination of women in VDCs and DDCs was made mandatory (Bhadra and Shah, 2007). The 11th Amendment of the Civil Code, the Women's Bill or Gender Equality Bill, was passed in 2002. The Women's Bill made amendments to the Civil Code of 1963 which was based on Hindu ideology and contained gender discriminatory laws (Yadav, 2016). Highlights of the amendment included women's right to inheritance, abortion rights, raised age of consent, divorce law amendments to ensure equal terms and harsher punishments for child marriage, rape and polygamy (Bhadra and Shah, 2007, Yadav, 2016). Further, many of legislative changes in the Gender Equality Bill directly address the rights of widows. Following amendments, widows no longer

required permission from children or male relatives to sell property or obtain a passport and were entitled to retain the property of her deceased husband after remarrying (Yadav, 2016).

Following the guarantees of the 2007 Interim Constitution of Nepal (Article 20(3)) that specified that no form of violence, including mental and physical, shall be inflicted upon any woman and stated that any violence against women is punishable by law (Khatri Chhetri, 2013), the Domestic Violence (Offence and Punishment) Act was introduced in 2009. Based on principles of UN Model Legislation, the definition of domestic violence was extended to include any form of mental physical, sexual and economic harm by a person to another person, established penalties related to committing domestic violence and introduced complaint mechanisms and victim support and protection orders (Nepal Law Commission, 2009, Khatri Chhetri, 2013).

In addition to Article 20, the 2007 Interim Constitution (the governing constitution during data collection[6]) committed to progressive restructuring of the state to address all forms of discrimination and incorporating the rights of women through specific provisions across thirteen articles (Government of Nepal, 2008). In particular, Article 13 (2), Right to Equality, states that there shall be no discrimination against any citizen on grounds of gender (Government of Nepal, 2008). While the UN state that the progressive genders laws introduced in Nepal 'guarantee gender equality' (UN

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[6] The current Constitution of Nepal, drafted by the second CA, came into effect in September 2015 (Iyengar, 2015)

Women, 2011, p.23), it is also acknowledged that laws written on paper 'do not always translate into equality and justice' (UN Women, 2011, p.8). Indeed, because of poor enforcement, implementation gaps and legislative ambiguities, the existence of progressive laws does not necessarily or immediately have an impact on the lives of women in Nepal. In terms of the normative forces present in the environment, there is still great disparity between men and women as well as all other traditionally marginalised groups. These forces are considered below.

4.5.6. Normative Institutions and Women

This section considers the relationship between normative institutions and Nepali women. As such, the historical context, the social context (in terms of roles within households and families) and the institutional context (in terms of culture, norms and traditions) are considered. The rhetoric of CPN-M claimed to favour an end to the patriarchal structure of Nepal and publicly opposed gender inequality (Valente, 2013). Indeed, prior to the commencement of the People's War, two of the forty demands made by the CPN-M addressed gender inequality: point 19 stated that 'patriarchal exploitation and discrimination against women should be stopped' while point 18 stated that 'Nepal should be declared a secular state' (Sharma and Prasain, 2004, p.155). Despite advances in regulative institutions, it is argued that 'women's social oppression is firmly rooted in the state sponsored Hindu religion which upholds feudal Brahminical rule based on the caste system, which disparages women in relation to men' (Yami, 2007, p.15). It is normative institutions, therefore, the deep-rooted, structured and unquestioned cultural norms, traditions and beliefs that are deeply

embedded in social and institutional contexts and perpetuate historical subordination, maintain patriarchal practices and promote discrimination against women and girls from birth.

Traditionally, the socially constructed role of the Nepali woman is that of a carer, a mother and a nurturer (Sherpa, 2007); Nepali women are docile, reserved, shy and softly spoken (Sherpa, 2007, Lundgren et al., 2013). Responsible for domestic chores, Nepali women run households and are responsible for the children while Nepali men are responsible for earning for the family outside the home (Tamang, 2010). These assumptions and the spatial mobility of men created a gendered separation of space; most public spaces are masculine while the private home is feminine (Tamang, 2010). Women, therefore, are expected to occupy their gendered space – the home – and fulfil their roles in line with socially constructed norms and values. Further to this, as the individual responsible for preserving the *ijaat*, or honour, of the family, women self-perpetuate gender norms to avoid normative and cognitive enforcement mechanisms such as shame, dishonour or social disapproval (Richardson et al., 2016).

According to Sherpa (2007), the patriarchal nature of Nepali society has affected the pride, confidence and esteem of women resulting in the acceptance of subordination and GBV. Violence against women and girls (VAWG), including domestic violence, marital rape, polygamy, boxi[7], child marriage, female infanticide, forced prostitution,

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[7] Accusations of witchcraft on Dalit women (Government of Nepal, 2012)

sex trafficking and dowry related violence, is widespread in Nepal (Standing et al., 2016). There is anecdotal evidence of the Maoists actively addressing GBV and polygamy in areas under their control during the war (Valente, 2013). The issue of domestic violence in Nepal has been discussed by a number of authors and is often reported in the national press (Puri et al., 2010, Tamang, 2010, Puri et al., 2011, Government of Nepal, 2012, Ahmad and Jaleel, 2015, Rana, 2015, Shakya, 2016, Singh, 2016). It is argued that GBV, in the household and in public, affects the majority of Nepali women; in 2011, half of all ever-married Nepali women between the ages of 15 and 49 reported experiencing gender violence in their lives (Ahmad and Jaleel, 2015). A similar report by the Department for International Development (DFID) (2011) suggested that 75 percent of all women experience GBV in their lifetime while nearly ten percent of adolescents (aged 15-19) experience violence during pregnancy (Standing et al., 2016).

According to the ADB, the incidence of GBV is higher in rural areas, and more common where women are separated or divorced from their husbands, uneducated or poor (ADB, 2015). Despite the introduction of the 2009 Domestic Violence and Punishment Act and the resulting illegality of violence within the home, there is, according to Standing et al. (2016), a culture of silence related to VAWG and GBV. It is argued that ignorance (or poor dissemination) of the law, a lack of trust in authoritative bodies to act and protect and, finally, persisting patriarchy and subordination all contribute to the creation of a culture of silence and the resulting underreporting of GBV (Government of Nepal, 2012, Chhetri and Lama, 2013, Neupane and Chesney-Lind, 2014, Standing et al., 2016).

Despite the production of laws to address gender inequality, it is reported that the majority of Nepali women are unaware of any laws related to GBV. A 2012 report by the Government of Nepal highlighted that only 13 percent (of 900 women surveyed in rural Nepal) were aware of any laws related to domestic violence while 91 percent were unaware that rape within marriage was illegal (Government of Nepal, 2012). Further to this, Puri et al. (2012) argue that this lack of awareness extends to local authorities, local police and agencies involved with GBV. Chhetri and Lama (2013) argue that this lack of awareness – through illiteracy, remoteness, poor implementation or dissemination – is at the root of gender inequality in rural areas of Nepal. While the Domestic Violence and Punishment Act (2009) introduced complaint mechanisms, detailed victim support procedures and protection orders (Nepal Law Commission, 2009, Khatri Chhetri, 2013), it is argued that women are untrusting of authoritative bodies to ensure the anonymity of assault victims, resulting in underreporting of GBV (Chhetri and Lama, 2013). A study by Tamang (2010) demonstrated the accepted subordination of women, by women, and the persistence of patriarchy; it was reported that 46 percent of Nepali women believe that domestic violence was acceptable where wives neglected children, disobeyed their husbands or failed to complete household work while 82 percent of surveyed women facing domestic violence chose not to report it to anyone. Indeed, a 2012 report by the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers in Nepal acknowledged that GBV – and domestic violence in particular – is widespread and often goes unreported (Government of Nepal, 2012).

However, in recent years, socially constructed gender roles have been tested; the previously discussed out-migration of men, for example, has challenged these norms

(Thieme and Wyss, 2005, Tuladhar et al., 2014). For the women left behind, it is argued that the outmigration of men has had a multidimensional impact and affected gender relations of power (Bhattarai et al., 2015): in the absence of male household family members, the workloads of the women increase further (Tamang et al., 2014, Adhikari and Hobley, 2015) and, relatedly, women have to adopt both male and female roles, challenging traditional norms and values (Coyle and Boyce, 2015). Without the consideration of remittance effects, the workloads of Nepali women, and particularly Nepali women living in economic poverty, are high anyway when compared with men but also in comparison with other developing countries in Asia and Africa (Komatsu et al., 2015). Further, where women do not live within patrilineal households, their decision making processes are particularly strengthened (Gartaula et al., 2010, Giri and Darnhofer, 2010).

This 'feminisation' of the agricultural sector in Nepal has resulted in authors calling for the development of a socio-political framework that would better prepare women for the responsibility (Maharjan et al., 2013, Tamang et al., 2014). Interestingly, however, while it is reported that the scarcity of men results in an increase in workload for the women, Bhattarai et al. (2015) argue that, over time, due to an increase in purchasing power because of remittance income, women are able to buy food from market. This results in reduced workloads for the women but also land abandonment as remittances are seldom invested in land or assets to boost agriculture (Maharjan et al., 2013). Similar to the uncertainty of the macroeconomic implications of remittance work, the long term impact of remittance on gender relations are not yet known. However, a further potentially positive impact of out-migration and remittance is that

income often finances small-scale enterprises (Kelegama, 2011, Adhikari and Hobley, 2015). Clearly, normative institutions continue to influence gender and associated acceptable behaviours. However, the out migration of men has indicated that the roles of women are changing in society and as such, the gap between what is legal and what is accepted as legitimate may be reducing.

4.6. Conclusions

This chapter presented the context of the study, the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal. To gain a full understanding of the 'nature, richness and dynamics' of entrepreneurial behaviour (Zahra, 2007, p.451), this chapter reviewed the literature related to the intertwined historical, business, spatial, institutional and social dimensions of context. Specifically, the literature has highlighted the following.

In terms of the business context, Nepal is recovering from a decade of political instability and change; the agriculture industry – the largest national employer – is in decline and the country is shifting to a service led economy. In the absence of opportunities in rural areas and for youths, the economy is also dominated by volatile remittance earnings (Adhikari, 2011) that constrain internal competitiveness (Muzzini and Aparico, 2013, Sapkota, 2013). This clearly has implications in the development of a market economy that supports entrepreneurship. In terms of the spatial context, the literature has determined that there are great disparities between geographic regions in Nepal. From healthcare to further education, poverty and literacy rates, the spatial context differs across regions and communities but also within groups and

across gender, caste and ethnicity. The literature review has also determined that while the regulative environment of Nepal has gender mainstreamed policy and plans, laws and bills that support gender equality and an institutional framework that ensures the participation and representation of women, the normative and cognitive institutions that perpetuate patriarchy and the subordination of women continue to discriminate against women (and other groups).

Entrepreneurship in the context of Nepal will be further explored in Chapter Six but, the literature has highlighted some key issues related to challenging societal norms. Firstly, if Nepali society values entrepreneurial behaviour but spatial contexts continue to define space and roles as gendered, would entrepreneurial behaviour by women be valued? Secondly, for the women, is there greater value in their involvement in entrepreneurship or in the maintenance of gender norms to maintain family honour and avoid institutional enforcement mechanisms? Finally, is entrepreneurial behaviour by women legal and encouraged in government policy and, similarly, is it legitimised in society? It is important that local contexts are considered during data collection to understand the business, societal, social, institutional and historical dimensions of context and to gain a deep understanding of the entrepreneurial behaviour occurring within these dimensions. In terms of the historical context, this chapter has also highlighted methodological issues related to completing research in post-conflict affected areas. This will be considered in the methodology.

CHAPTER FIVE

METHODOLOGY

5.1. Introduction

This chapter begins by outlining the research aim and objectives of the study before the philosophical foundations of the study are presented. Subsequently, the research approach, sampling design and data collection techniques utilised to address the aims and objectives of the study are provided. Finally, details regarding important rhetorical and ethical considerations are offered.

5.2. Research Aim and Objectives

The aim of the study is to better understand the potential for entrepreneurship to act as a real and appropriate opportunity to facilitate in the expansion of the capability sets of rural Nepali women in order for them to be able to live the lives they have reason to value. This aim will be addressed through three objectives:

1. To gain an understanding of how and to what extent the institutional environment affects women and women entrepreneurs in a region of rural Nepal
2. To understand the role and transformative value of MEDEP, as an entrepreneurship enabling organisation, in the lives of nascent and established

ordinary entrepreneurs and to assess whether, through the proliferation of expert venture scripts (action-based field specific knowledge structures (Mitchell et al., 2000)), the established women entrepreneurs have been sufficiently equipped to act independently of MEDEP.

3. To understand the effect of entrepreneurship on the lives of the women entrepreneurs; to understand whether their involvement allows them to develop and exercise agency and whether their involvement allows them to identify and pursue a life they have reason to value.

The first objective applies the five dimensions of context defined by Welter (2011) (historical, business, spatial, institutional and social) to understand the lives of women entrepreneurs and understand the 'nature, richness and dynamics' of their entrepreneurial behaviour (Zahra, 2007, p.451). Further, institutional theory will be applied to better understand the influence of the regulative and normative institutions that exist within the institutional context. Indeed, the literature has suggested that, in terms of gender equality, regulative institutions are supportive and progressive but, in terms of entrepreneurship, regulative institutions fail to provide an environment that fosters entrepreneurship. Normative institutions, however, perpetuate patriarchy and place women, and other traditionally excluded groups, in a subordinate position (Bhadra and Shah, 2007, Poudel et al., 2015, Marit and Aasland, 2016, Yadav, 2016). Conversely, the normative acceptance of entrepreneurship in Nepal is positive (Pyakuryal, 2000). This lack of consistency in terms of institutional support for women entrepreneurs would suggest a level of institutional incongruence resulting in the

formation of institutional voids that inhibit market participation (Mair and Marti, 2009, Puffer et al., 2009, Mair et al., 2012).

The second objective considers the role of MEDEP as an EEO in the lives of the women who participate in the programme. By their very involvement in entrepreneurship under MEDEP, the established (EWE) and nascent (NWE) women entrepreneurs fit the definition of 'ordinary' (Tobias et al., 2013) or 'created' (Patel, 1987) entrepreneurs that do not have the capability to create productive ventures alone (Smith et al., 2016). This objective assesses the extent to which and how MEDEP provide knowledge, resources and skills through expert venture scripts through 'proto-institutions' that support and develop new entrepreneurs and insulate them from hostile or unsupportive institutions. Further, this objective seeks to gain an understanding of whether, through their market participation, the entrepreneurs demonstrate autonomy and can effectively shape lives.

The final objective focuses on what their involvement in entrepreneurship actually means for the women entrepreneurs. In other words, has entrepreneurship allowed the women to live the lives they have reason to value? This objective draws on the findings from objectives one and two to understand whether entrepreneurship, as an adequate opportunity (Sen, 1999, Frediani, 2006), and the provision of an enabling environment, through the introduction of proto-institutions (Smith et al., 2016), have facilitated in the development of agency in the women entrepreneurs. Further, this objective seeks to understand if the women entrepreneurs are better able to identify and realise

aspirations (Frediani, 2006). Finally, this objective ascertains whether, through their actions and continued market participation, the women entrepreneurs are able to shape their lives and the lives of other women and girls.

5.3. Philosophical Underpinnings

Burrell and Morgan argue that ‘to be located in a particular paradigm is to view the world in a particular way’ (1979, p.24). If this is the case, through the adoption of a research paradigm it is implied that the researcher accepts particular assumptions regarding the nature of reality (ontology), the nature of knowledge and the relationship between the knower and to-be known (epistemology), the nature of values (axiology) and modes of obtaining knowledge (methodology) (Sandelowski, 2000). Therefore, through the adoption of a particular research paradigm, the researcher is provided with ‘what falls within and outside legitimate inquiry’ (Guba and Lincoln, 1998, p.108). As Leitch et al. (2009) argue, to ensure credible social research, the philosophical views of the researcher should shape research designs. As such, my epistemological, ontological and axiological views will be ascertained.

Morgan and Smircich’s (1980) subjective–objective continuum displays typical perspectives of reality. Utilising the continuum, it could be argued that the ontological assumption that best fits my views as the author is that of a socially constructed reality created by man. As a researcher, my ontological belief is that reality is not concrete: instead realities are multiple and open to interpretation. Where reality is socially constructed, it is argued that the construction process occurs through symbolic modes

of being (Morgan and Smircich, 1980) and it is through these symbolic modes that creates shared, and multiple, realities which only exist in moments where they are constructed and sustained. As a result, this ontological positioning claims that to understand the social world, interpretation of the existing multiple realities, which are grounded in 'people's self-understandings' (Leitch et al., 2009, p.3), must occur (Johnson, 1987).

Where it is argued that reality is socially constructed by man, the assumption is that knowledge is limited to understanding the process of reality creation (Morgan and Smircich, 1980). In other words, to obtain knowledge, a focus is placed on the analysis of specific processes through which reality is created. Therefore, language and rituals, as symbolic modes of being, are processes through which knowledge can be found. In order to uncover this knowledge then, it is argued that researchers must interact with the processes of reality construction and engage in interpretation and understanding. It is through the collection and interpretation of this knowledge that ideas are generated through induction and, it is only through looking at the totality of a situation that understanding of the social world can occur. In line with the ontological and epistemology discussed above, where it is argued that reality is constructed by man through modes of being, such as languages, rituals, rites, actions and labels, the modes of being are shaped by social, cultural, political, economic, gender and ethnic values (Appadurai, 1986). Therefore, reality creation and knowledge are value-laden. As such, there can be no objective knowledge in a subjective social world. Further, the differing perspectives and values held by all researchers impact upon the research from

inception to conclusion (Goodson and Phillimore, 2004). Therefore, where research is conducted within constructed realities, the entire process is value laden and biased.

A summary of the beliefs that underpin this research are as follows. In terms of what can be known about reality, the social world is subjective and socially constructed by man through modes of being which differ across societies, groups and cultures. Reality is transitory and is only sustained when constructed and maintained by individuals involved in its construction. In terms of the study of knowledge of reality, knowledge is found through the interaction and the interpretation of the reality creation process. A full understanding of the social world can never be realised. Finally, in terms of the role of values in research, the belief is that values are critically important and influence the construction and maintenance of reality. As such, the research process is value-laden and biased.

In line with the above discussions, it is clear that to understand the social world of the Rapti Zone, Nepal, including the role of entrepreneurship, for women and women entrepreneurs, the multiple and shared realities should be interpreted through interaction with adopted symbolic modes of being. It could be argued, however, that as realities exist only as long as they are constructed and sustained (Hassard, 1991), a full understanding of the social world can never be achieved. This argument is referred to as a 'game of never-ending mirrors' (Wallerstein, 1997, p.1254) but states that although interpretations of changing socially constructed realities will be inevitably

transitory, they are ‘nonetheless correct, or more correct for their time’ (Wallerstein, 1997, p.1254).

Further, it could be argued that the investigation of the nature and form of reality would allow future research to highlight shifts, alterations or enduring elements of a social world. The influence of the researcher must also be recognized. Firstly, as subjective beings, the interpretations of reality by different researchers may vary. Secondly, as argued by Scheurich and Young, how researchers understand reality is determined by their cultural context and from within the social history in which they live (1997). As such, as an individual educated in the west and conducting research in Nepal, it has to be recognized that my interpretations of reality in Nepal will be grounded in Western philosophy, which are influenced by specific values (Appadurai, 1986). Clearly, it has to be recognized that all research conducted within a socially constructed world will be value laden. However, the biases and subjectivity of both the researcher and the individuals involved in the creation of reality offer an accurate reflection of the complexity of reality. Indeed, as the process of reality creation is value-laden, the interpretation and understanding of these processes and the social world cannot be objective; there is no detached objective truth. In line with this epistemological positioning, throughout the research and in order to generate knowledge, it is crucial that the researcher *interacts* with the reality creation processes, or symbolic modes of being. As rituals, norms and rites differ across regions, societies and groups, to allow the researcher access to what is to be known, it is important that the specific processes involved in reality creation are ascertained.

Based on the ontological, epistemological and axiological foundations of the research, it is clear that the philosophical views are subjective in nature (Morgan and Smircich, 1980). Therefore, an interpretivist paradigm, characterised by a subjectivist view (Gioia and Pitre, 1990), constitutes the theoretical framework within which the research is conducted.

5.4. The Interpretivist Paradigm

Interpretivism recognises subjectivity. While research undertaken within a radical humanist paradigm is often critical in nature (Wilde, 2004) and orientated toward radically altering socially constructed realities (Gioia and Pitre, 1990), interpretivist research *accepts* the qualities of the social world and is less concerned with alterations to reality. As the interpretivist paradigm provides a framework which allows an *understanding* of human behaviour without the adoption of a critical perspective, it is argued that this most closely corresponds with the philosophical underpinnings of this study. As interpretivism is based on 'a life-world ontology' (Leitch et al., 2009, p.3) which accepts the multifarious and dynamic qualities of the social world, the adoption of the paradigm will allow the research problem to be viewed holistically without making assumptions regarding what is real and what is not (Cope, 2005).

In the absence of such assumptions, what can be known about the social world of Nepal will strictly derive from the experiences and interpretations of individuals involved in the construction of their reality. Within the interpretivist paradigm and in order to interpret the experience of these individuals, it is argued that the research must get

close to participants, enter their realities, and interpret their perceptions (Gray, 2009). Through this involvement and participation, an understanding of the social world of the women entrepreneurs will be developed, facilitating the generation of thick and rich descriptions of actual events, in real-life contexts, to uncover and preserve the meanings that those involved ascribe to these events (Gephart, 2004). As stated, the aim of the research is to develop an understanding. As such, a collaborative approach to the research process, which involves partnerships between the researcher and the researched to generate knowledge and understanding, will be adopted (Goodson and Phillimore, 2004). Further, interpretivist research argues that 'all observation is theory- and value-laden and that investigation of the social world is not, and cannot be, the pursuit of detached objective truth' (Leitch et al., 2009, p.3). As an understanding of the social world is reliant on the interpretations of those involved in its construction, values are important to the study. Instead of minimising the influence of values, it is crucial that the values of individuals are researched and understood – in the absence of values, the existing social world would not exist.

In summary, an interpretivist paradigm is in-line with the philosophical foundations related to reality, knowledge and values and provides a framework which will allow interpretation, description and understanding without the adoption of a critical perspective. Further, as the aim is to asses, explore, understand and consequently generate theory from findings, it has been determined that an inductive approach is apposite.

5.5. The Research Approach

A qualitative study involves an 'interpretive naturalistic approach to the world' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011, p.3), focusing on phenomena within its context, where the researcher is not an external observer but instead works *within* the subject of study to gain an *understanding* of the realities that exist through the interpretation of the meanings that individuals attach to a phenomena (Morgan and Smircich, 1980, Neergaard and Ulhøi, 2007). The approach is frequently adopted where the research seeks rich information about a little known phenomenon, to gain a full understanding of fundamental reasons, beliefs and motivations (Hennink et al., 2011). This is particularly true for research relating entrepreneurship to poverty; Bruton et al. (2013) note that most existing entrepreneurship research on poverty is qualitative because there is a need to build theory and identify questions. Finally, a qualitative approach allows the identification of issues from the perspectives of study subjects and details their interpretation of reality (Hennink et al., 2011). Given the philosophical assumptions, it is clear that a qualitative approach is apposite for this research.

Although leading entrepreneurship journals appear to favour articles located in the functionalist paradigm which use a quantitative approach (Grant and Perren, 2002, Jennings et al., 2005), frequent calls are made for more qualitative research (Neergaard and Ulhøi, 2007). Further, while researchers from a broad range of disciplines contribute to the field of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship theory is considered to be a relatively young academic field with poor methodological diversity and rigour (Neergaard and Ulhøi, 2007, Short et al., 2010). In order to achieve standards

comparable to other organisational sciences, therefore, it is suggested that researchers should begin to adopt diverse and creative approaches instead of consistently importing methods frequently used in other fields (Jennings et al., 2005). Authors such as Jennings et al. (2005) and Leitch et al. (2009), highlight the need for an improved systematic approach to qualitative research and it is argued that there is potential for entrepreneurship research to offer 'more interesting' and 'exciting' data than that of other fields (Jennings et al., 2005, p.9). As response rates to calls for qualitative research are few (Jennings et al., 2005), the consideration of a qualitative methodological approach which is creative yet rigorous would contribute to the field of entrepreneurship.

5.6. Participatory Research and the Adaptation Problem

It is argued that the realities of the poor are 'local, complex, diverse and dynamic' while the realities of the researchers or professionals are 'universal, reductionist, standardised and stable' (Chambers, 1995, p.173) and, as such, understanding between the indigenous poor and the researcher cannot be guaranteed. Therefore, Chambers (2009) questions whose reality is really important and posits that professionalism in development studies demands that the priorities of the poor and the poor themselves must be considered first and, central to this argument is the involvement of the poor in their own analysis. There are four elements to Chambers' (2009) agenda: analysis and action by local people (particularly the poor); sustainable livelihoods; decentralisation, democracy and diversity; and professionalism and personal change.

While participatory research, which adopts a collegiate partnership approach to research, engaging all parties involved throughout the process (Strong et al., 2009), is gaining popularity in development and policy spheres and arisen in response to the need to consider the 'ways of knowing' of indigenous communities, particularly during development initiatives (Cochran et al., 2008), the approach is not a straightforward alternative to conventional research strategies. The practical implications for adopting participatory research approaches, including Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), adoption are complex. For example, the adoption of a participatory approach would involve a transfer of ownership from researcher to participant (Strong et al., 2009). As such, a participatory researcher would be a 'learner and facilitator, catalyst in a process which takes on its own momentum as people come together to analyse and discuss' (Cornwall and Jewkes, 1995, p.1668) and not, as in conventional research approaches, the sole decision maker and owner of the research. As a result, participatory research often involves diaries being maintained by the researcher and participants. This relies on a number of factors and assumptions, however: a degree of literacy among participants; an assumption that participants are motivated to participate and able to participate (time, workload); and, finally as the development of trusting relationships are central to successful participatory projects, all forms of participatory research are time consuming (Becker et al., 2009).

Finally, by its definition, PRA relies on a vehicle – typically a development initiative. Carrying out PRA without the possibility of subsequent action would result in low levels of participation (due to high transparency) and would be extremely unethical (Becker et al., 2009, Chambers, 2009). However, utilising a participatory approach can

improve the quality and validity of research (Cornwall and Jewkes, 1995), produce reliable results (Williams, 2004) and will address fundamental epistemological issues related to contextualised knowledge. Further, adoption of a participatory approach would also address the call for diverse and creative methodological approaches in the field of entrepreneurship; as Reason (1999) argues, ways of adopting participatory approaches should be developed and, according to Neergaard and Ulhøi (2007), participatory methodological approaches have never been applied in an entrepreneurial context.

However, the adaptation problem, or satisfaction paradox (Neff, 2009), undermines the moral argument for adopting participatory approaches to research to put the last first (Chambers, 2009). The adaptation problem is based upon the argument that the aspirations of an individual are not rigid; instead, desires are 'shaped by (their) expectations, which are shaped by (their) circumstances' (Griffin, 1986, p.47). According to Sen, an individual evaluates their well-being relative to valued functionings but, where individuals face hardship or 'desperate circumstances' (Qizilbash, 2006a, p.21), cognitive tension is mitigated by learning to be 'happy' or satisfied with less (Sen, 1999). As a result, fuelled by the 'sheer necessity of uneventful survival' (Sen, 1997b, p.309), the true extent of their deprivation is distorted. In other words, to reflect hardship or in response to cultural or social forces and norms, individuals may adjust aspirations downwards to what they perceive as achievable. It is argued that the adaptation of aspirations, expectations and perceptions plays a fundamental role in the preservation of social inequality, particularly where women are relatively deprived (Sen, 2009).

As such, this undermines arguments related to listening to the disadvantaged and following best practice procedures of capability identification through public reasoning and discussion (Sen, 1999) simply because of the distortion of well-being assessment. This argument is developed by Qizilbash (2006b, p.84) who claims that due to limited capacity in terms of information and analysis, 'people's actual desires are too often unrelated to what is good for them or in their interest'. Indeed, he claims that desires or aspirations only reflect true interests if individuals are fully informed and make rational choices. If it is believed, therefore, that individuals are irrational and ill-informed, it is correct to question whether they are able to identify the 'kind of lives they want to lead… what they want to do and… the (people) they want to be' (Robeyns, 2005, p.95). Clark, however, claims that while the poor suggest adaptation in terms of subjective well-being by reporting life satisfaction, they are still able to articulate and demand a 'better' form of life (2009).

In addition to downward adaptation, Clark (2009) highlights a second casual mechanism that drives the adaptation of aspirations and is rarely referenced in CA literature; when faced with new opportunities and the achievements of others, an individual may adjust aspirations upwards. In addition, adaptation is, according to Neff (2009), reversible and people change. Clearly, though, this upward shift relies on the existence and perception of opportunities within an individual's environment and, as argued by Clark (2009), the exploitation of these opportunities by peers. This area of research is not fully understood and it is important that the theory is acknowledged.

This research aim to address calls for alternative strategies while ensuring that the adopted framework is able to ‘bring out a deeper understanding and appreciation about entrepreneurial work as it is enacted in practice and in thought’ (Jennings et al., 2005, p.10) to make a contribution to the topical issue of the relationship between entrepreneurship and poverty alleviation (as capability expansion). Because of the practical implications of adopting PRA are beyond the scope of this thesis, it will not be possible to apply PRA. However, it will be practical to adopt elements of PRA throughout the research. As a result, local knowledge will be emphasised throughout and the NWEs and EWEs will be asked to analyse their own situations through the interviews (Dobbie and Dyke, 2015) to facilitate information sharing and analysis while the roles and responsibilities of the researcher and translator is critically examined (Uddin and Anjuman, 2013).

The methodology adopted in this study consisted of a qualitative approach where by semi-structured interviews were undertaken with nine EWEs and seven NWEs. A Village Hall Meeting with a members of large vegetable cooperative was also conducted. In order to better understand the institutional environment, eight individuals from non-governmental organisations, research institutes, the Government of Nepal and support groups were also interviewed. All participants were interviewed between March and June 2011.

5.7. The Sample

In designing the sample of the study, consideration was given to an important challenge of the Capability Approach, the adaptation problem (Qizilbash, 2006a, Clark, 2009). In recognition of the adaptation problem, it was important to acknowledge the potential for downward adaptation in subjective reports of satisfaction and well-being (Qizilbash, 2006b), particularly for women living in poverty in more remote areas. With this in mind, purposeful sampling, which selects interview informants based on their experience of a topic to ensure information-rich cases (Palinkas et al., 2015), was adopted to include nascent women entrepreneurs (NWE) and established women entrepreneurs (EWE).

As the purpose of qualitative research is in the understanding of meaning and not in the production of generalised hypotheses statements, a limited number of entrepreneurs (Table 5.1) were recruited to allow for rich, in-depth analysis. Further, due to time and financial constraints of MEDEP and the importance of building rapport with participants (Dickson-Swift et al., 2007), there was a practical element to focusing on collecting rich data from a limited number of participants. The selection criteria for all the women entrepreneurs were:

1. The entrepreneurs must have been created by MEDEP
2. The entrepreneurs must be women
3. The entrepreneurs' places of work must be accessible by vehicle.

Table 5.1 Overview of Sample - Entrepreneurs

Micro enterprise		Name, age, Caste/ ethnicity	Business type
Nascent women entrepreneurs (NWE)			
ME1	1	Alpana, 35, Dalit	Small scale production of dried noodles; working in a group of five entrepreneurs; operated for ten months.
	2	Charu, 44, Magar	
	3	Hasina, 24, Chhetri	
ME2	4	Keshika, 32, Dalit	Clothing tailors; two entrepreneurs in group. Operated for eight months.
	5	Maliha, 26, Dalit	
ME3	6	Naina, 28, Dalit	Home producer of doughnuts; working in a group of three entrepreneurs; operated for one year.
	7	Pari, 26, Chhetri	
Established women entrepreneurs (EWE)			
ME4	8	Sohini, 39, Magar	Spice grinder; individual enterprise; operated for five years.
ME5	9	Tanushri, 40, Newar	Clothing and soft toy tailor; working in a group of six entrepreneurs; operated for four years
	10	Priyanka, 26, Janjati	
ME6	11	Kanta, 22, Chhetri	Poultry farmer (200 chickens); individual enterprise; operated for four and a half years
ME7	12	Ashika, 29, Gurung	Production of wet and dry noodles; two entrepreneurs in group; operated for six years
	13	Ruchira, 32, Magar	
ME8	14	Rati, 31, Magar	Vegetable producer (tomatoes, spinach, cabbage in the monsoon season; wheat and maize in the dry seasons); part of a large cooperative involving fifty entrepreneurs; operated for six years.
	15	Rupali, 26, Dalit	
	16	Sanjula, 27, Dalit	

The latter criterion was necessary because, despite limited financial budgets and time constraints of personnel, MEDEP had provided a United Nations vehicle, driver and local representative at no cost to facilitate data collection. In addition to the above criteria, EWEs had to have been operating for at least four years to allow for the dissemination of expert venture scripts. For the NWEs, their businesses should have been founded less than 14 months ago, at the time of data collection. Once a list of entrepreneurs was provided, purposeful sampling was adopted to ensure that

participants were representative of traditionally disadvantaged groups (ethnic minorities, low caste, indigenous to the Terai and disabled) and higher caste individuals (Chhetri and Newar). To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, the names of all the participants have been changed. The subsequent section presents a detailed overview of the nascent and established entrepreneurs.

The Participants

On average, the women had spent four and a half years in school; five of the participants were illiterate, but able to sign their names. One participant had completed ten years of school and had achieved her School Leaving Certificate (SLC). Fifteen of the women were married and had between one and five children between the ages of six months and 26 years. While the 11th Amendment of Civil Code, the 'Women's Bill', raised the age of consent to marry (with parental consent) to 18 years for men and women in Nepal in 2001 (Puri et al., 2011), over 70 percent of the women interviewed were married before they had turned 18. One woman was married at 12. The average age of marriage was 15, three years younger than the national average (Puri et al., 2011). While 60 percent of the women interviewed were in arranged marriages, 40 percent had arranged their own 'love' marriages (Puri et al., 2010).

The average age of the women when they gave birth for the first time was 17; the youngest gave birth at 13. All the women's school-aged children were attending school. In line with the Micro Enterprise Development Programme's aims, all the women were considered to be living in economic poverty prior to their involvement in

the programme. Interview participants had varying backgrounds; six were Dalit (former untouchables), five were from ethnic groups (Magar and Gurung), one was Newar (original inhabitants of the Kathmandu Valley), three were Chhetri (higher caste) and one was Janjati (Indigenous Terai).

Nascent Women Entrepreneurs

The seven NWEs live and work in Salyan and Rukum in the Rapti Zone. Their enterprises were established during MEDEP's third phase (2008-2013). At the time of interviewing, all NWEs had been operating for under 14 months. Due to the phasing by district of MEDEP~~,~~ interviews with NWEs were conducted in Salyan and Rukum. The subsequent section provides an overview of the entrepreneurs working in groups or as individuals.

Hasina (24, Chhetri), Alpana (35, Dalit) and Charu (44, Magar) are involved in a five-person group enterprise. Using handheld machines, they produce dried noodles which they sell at the daily market. The noodles are packaged in unbranded black plastic bags. Production takes place in a single rented room with clay walls and floor and no electricity. Hasina (24, Chhetri) is married and has a daughter (five). Hasina's husband lives and works as a policeman in a southern district. She attended school for ten years and is the most educated of the participants, having received her SLC. Prior to involvement in MEDEP, Hasina worked in administration. Alpana (35, Dalit) is married and has a son (16) and a daughter (13). She did not attend school and is illiterate but can sign her name. Her husband is unable to work, having contracted an

undiagnosed disease whilst working in Saudi Arabia. Prior to her involvement, she engaged in subsistence agriculture, producing buffalo milk from two buffalo[8]. Charu (44, Magar) is married and has two sons (29 and 23) and two daughters (27 and 19). Like Alpana, Charu never attended school and is illiterate. Her husband works as a low paid daily labourer, crushing stones for quarrying companies. Prior to her involvement in entrepreneurship, Charu also worked as a daily labourer. Their enterprise has been operating for ten months but has been severely affected by the irregular supply of electricity. At present, they are not generating a profit. Dalits handling food is not in line with traditional norms that consider Dalits impure (Bhattachan et al., 2009).

Keshika (32, Dalit) and Maliha (26, Dalit) work together as clothing tailors. They produce basic and low quality items of clothing and school uniforms. They have one foot operated sewing machine and one hand powered hemming machine. Their business operates from a single roadside rented room with no electricity. They take orders from local people and mend torn or ripped clothing. At the time of interviewing, Keshika and Maliha were breaking even but relying on agriculture (keeping chickens and growing vegetables) to feed their families. They have been operating for eight months. Keshika was widowed at 24 years old after her husband was murdered. As a widow, Keshika can be vulnerable to particularly restrictive discrimination based on the Laws of Manu that require that a woman not violate her vow to her husband even

[8] Buffalo can only produce milk every other year, after birthing a calf.

after his death (Yadav, 2016). She has two sons (12 and 14) but, because she was homeless and unable to support her family, her eldest son was taken into the care of the Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Centre (CWIN), an advocate organisation that targets children living under the most difficult circumstances (CWIN, 2016). Keshika attended school for two years. Prior to her involvement in entrepreneurship, Keshika worked as a daily labourer, crushing stones and also kept two goats. Keshika's surname indicates that she belongs to the Hill Dalit caste, the Damai, whose traditional occupation is that of tailor and, before his death, her husband worked as a tailor. Maliha is married with two sons (four and seven), has never attended school and is illiterate. Prior to involvement in entrepreneurship, Maliha engaged in subsistence agriculture, growing vegetables. Her husband is employed as a daily labourer.

Naina (28, Dalit) and Pari (26, Chhetri) are involved in a three person group enterprise. The women produce deep fried ring doughnuts, mixing and rolling the dough by hand then cooking over an open fire at Naina's house. They sell their doughnuts at market or to local shops at a reduced rate. Their equipment is basic; plastic bowls, a burnt wok, open fire, wooden utensils, plywood boards for storing the uncooked dough and bamboo baskets to transport the unwrapped doughnuts to market. They have been operating for one year. Pari has a son (ten) and a daughter (eight) and she attended school for nine years. Prior to involvement in entrepreneurship, Pari was rearing buffalo. Pari's husband works as a low paid government clerk. Naina is married with two sons (11 and four) and a daughter (nine). Naina's husband works for a local development fund focusing on the decentralisation of government. Prior to involvement in entrepreneurship, Naina worked as an agricultural labourer and as a

daily labourer, crushing stones. Similar to Alpana, Naina's handling of food is not in-line with traditional beliefs consider Dalits as impure. As such, like Alpana, Charu and Hasina, the ability of the group to generate an income may be affected and could leave them vulnerable to enforcement mechanisms. Naina and Pari are not making a profit. Due to prices rises in ingredient costs, they break even but are fearful of the potential reaction from their community if they increase their prices.

Established Women Entrepreneurs

The nine EWEs live and work in Dang, in the Rapti Zone. Their enterprises were established during MEDEP's second phase (2004-2007). At the time of interviewing, all EWEs had been operating for over four years. The subsequent section provides an overview of the entrepreneurs working in groups or as individuals.

Sohini (39, Magar) is the sole owner of a spice grinding enterprise. Originally a member of a group enterprise, all other participants left because the business was not generating a sufficient profit. Sohini grinds and packages spice mixes which she sells, in her own branded packaging, to customers, hotels and restaurants. She also charges for use of her machine if a customer wishes to grind their own spice. Sohini's enterprise is one of two in this research that requires electricity to power key machinery. Sohini has a shop with signage that adjoins her house on the main road. She has been operating for five years. Sohini is married, has one son (26), four daughters (23, 21, 16 and 14) and is also a religious devotee. Her husband runs a mobile tea shop at a nearby food production plant. Prior to her involvement in entrepreneurship, Sohini had a small food and drink based enterprise which conflicted

with her religious beliefs and caused domestic abuse in her marriage. Sohini is making profit.

Tanushri (40, Newar) and Priyanka (26, Janjati) operate a tailoring business with four other women. Initially, the women were trained to make basic clothing – as Keshika and Maliha are doing. Today, the women make all items of clothing, dye fabric, knit, weave and fabricate soft toys in their rented unit which houses six foot powered sewing machines. The workshop has electricity. Their business has attended roadshows and won awards for their work. They are currently focusing on expanding out with their district and are making a profit. They have been operating for four years. Tanushri is married and has two daughters (21 and 16) and one son (19). Her husband is a bus driver. She attended school for eight years. Prior to her involvement in entrepreneurship, Tanushri reared cattle. At the time of interviewing, Tanushri was converting a room in her home into a roadside shop displaying their clothing and soft toys. Priyanka (26, Janjati) is unmarried and has no children. Priyanka is physically disabled; she received no medical treatment after contracting skeletal tuberculosis, a curable condition, at eighteen months old. One of fifteen children (six surviving), her parents were unable to afford medical care; instead they sought treatment from a Jhankri, or witchdoctor, who failed to recognise her condition. Priyanka lives with her parents and supports them with her income.

Kanta (22, Chhetri) operates a poultry farm with 200 chickens on her parents' land. The chickens are kept in a purpose built tin roofed shed. She butchers chicken and sells

portions at her road side stall to local people, hotels and restaurants. She has developed branding and considering expanding into rearing goats. Kanta has been operating her enterprise for four and a half years. She is married and has one son (six months). She attended school for nine years. Her husband is continuing his education and she supports the household with her income. Unusually, Kanta and her husband live with her parents because her in-laws are not supportive of her enterprise. Prior to her involvement in entrepreneurship, Kanta had an administrative position within a local radio station and some experience of unpaid local journalism.

Ashika (29, Gurung) and Ruchira (32, Magar) own and operate a growing enterprise selling dry and wet noodles. One room in Ashika's house has been converted to house the large electrically powered noodle machine. Across the six years they have been operating, the business has grown from producing two kilograms to 50 kilograms of dried noodles a day. Although Ashika and Ruchira have plans to develop other products, including alcohol and sauces, they struggle to meet demand. They distribute their noodles across the district and also sell branded packets at market to local customers. Ashika is married and has one son (five) and four daughters (13, ten, six and six). Prior to her involvement in entrepreneurship, Ashika was a housewife. Her husband keeps cattle and sells Ashika's produce at the market. She attended school for five years. Ruchira is married with one son (13) and four daughters (ten, seven, six and four). Prior to her involvement in entrepreneurship, Ruchira worked with her husband on their land, growing small crops and keeping chickens and goats. Their produce was not sufficient to feed their family all year. Ruchira attended school for six years.

Rati (31, Magar), Rupali (26, Dalit) and Sanjula (27, Dalit) are all members of a large cooperative involving 50 women entrepreneurs from five group enterprises. Prior to MEDEP's arrival in their village, the women all grew their own vegetables but had not commercialised. Today, the women practice crop rotation, treat for pests, have expanded their range of produce, developed a vegetable collection centre for local and larger buyers and exported produce to India. They grow vegetables during the monsoon and wheat and maize in the dry season. They have been operating as a commercial enterprise for six years. Rati is married with one son (seven) and two daughters (13, nine). She attended school for eight years and was engaged in subsistence agriculture prior to commercialisation. She also relied on daily labour work during the dry season. Her husband worked in a supermarket in Malaysia for three years but returned after twice developing bladder and kidney stones. He returned with 150 thousand NR and currently works as a secretary at a school. Rupali is married with one son (five) and two daughters (ten and four). Like Rati, prior to her involvement in the cooperative, Rupali engaged in subsistence agriculture and relied on daily labour work during the dry season. Rupali attended school for four years. Her husband is currently working as a labourer in Bahrain. Sanjula is married with one son (11). Her husband is currently working in Saudi Arabia as a labourer. Sanjula attended school for three years and, like Rupali and Rati, engaged in subsistence agriculture and worked as a daily labourer, crushing stones, prior to her involvement in MEDEP. Again, as both Rupali and Sanjula are Dalit and handling food produce, this contradicts the socially maintained hierarchy of caste which considers Dalits as impure.

The sampling frame also included eight individuals considered local experts (Table 5.2). These experts were gender specialists, entrepreneurship development advisors, entrepreneurship advisors, MEDEP personnel, a former government minister and a current government minister from the MWCSW. Again, purposeful sampling was adopted to ensure that participants had a depth of knowledge and experience of the topic. Specifically, the experts were recruited to gain an understanding of the dimensions of context within Nepal at a local, regional and national level in relation to entrepreneurship and women and to understand the MEDEP model. Again, to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, the local experts have been coded.

Table 5.2 Overview of Sample – Local Experts

Interview Code	
PBK	Gender Specialist and Entrepreneurship Development Advisor
DBK	Minister, Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare
SYK	Former Government Minister and Gender Specialist
RPK	Gender Specialist and Entrepreneurship Advisor
BCK	Independent Gender Advisor to the Government, International Development Banks and NGOs
GDK	Gender Development Officer
SDK	Gender Officer, South Asian NGO
MDK	Local MEDEP representative

Sample recruitment

In terms of the entrepreneurs, due to their remote location, it was not possible to contact the participants prior to arrival. Upon arrival at their businesses, a broad overview of the study was discussed with the entrepreneurs and they were asked whether they were able and motivated to participate. One entrepreneur indicated that she did not want to

participate and she is not included in the sample. The Village Hall Meeting was not scheduled; the initial intention was to recruit three members of the vegetable cooperative. Upon arrival at the village, members of a large vegetable cooperative were contacted and a broad overview of the study was discussed. They were asked whether they, or any other members of the cooperative, were able and motivated to participate in interviews. However, over the course of several hours, 26 entrepreneurs representing five enterprise groups arrived in the village, indicating their interest in the project and their willingness to participate. Conducting a Village Hall Meeting was a practical solution to an evolving situation. A broad overview of the study was discussed with all the entrepreneurs and they were asked whether they were motivated to continue.

In terms of the local experts, all those who confirmed interest in participation were interviewed at their place of work in Kathmandu, with the exception of MDK, who was interviewed at MEDEP district offices in the Rapti Zone. The local experts were contacted prior to arrival in Nepal or while in Kathmandu in March 2011 – June 2011. Email dialogue continued until their participation between April and June 2011.

5.8. Data Collection

Data were collected between March and June 2011. All semi-structured interviews with entrepreneurs, which were led by the entrepreneurs to satisfy the incorporation of a participatory research approach, were conducted in Nepali in the Rapti Zone, Nepal (Figure 5.1). All interviews were conducted face-to-face with the exception of one

interview, the second interview with Sohini. Because of a general bandh (strike), which made road travel unsafe, MEDEP personnel insisted on an immediate departure from the region and, as such, a secondary telephone interview was arranged with Sohini. The interviews with the local experts were conducted in Kathmandu, Nepal, in English with the exception of the local MEDEP representative who was interviewed in Nepali in the Rapti Zone, Nepal. Before the piloting phase and the primary data collection are discussed, rhetorical considerations are given regarding the importance of language.

Figure 5.1. Research Area: Dang, Salyan and Rukum, Mid-West Nepal

Source: UNFCO, 2011.

Rhetorical Considerations

Within the interpretivist paradigm, language is, in itself, a social construction used to communicate ideas (O'Gorman and MacIntosh, 2015). As such, it is crucial that there is an awareness of meaning particularly given that elements of the research will be conducted in Nepali and translated into English. It is argued that few researchers reflect

on the implications of language difference and the use of translators in communication (Temple and Edwards, 2002, Temple and Young, 2004). This omission is noteworthy given that, in line with interpretivism, there is no one meaning of the social world and no right or correct way to understand or interpret reality. While Freed (2002, p.316) argued that the interpreter should be ‘a conduit linking the interviewer with the interviewee and is ideally a neutral party who should not add or subtract from what the primary parties communicate to each other’, it is acknowledged that the interpreter – as well as the researcher, translator and research participant – carries with them constructions and interpretations grounded in their understanding of reality. With this in mind, Temple and Edwards (2002) pose the following considerations: whether it matters if the act of translation is identified, to what extent the translator is involved in the analysis and, finally, whether it matters who does the translation.

Firstly, in terms of identifying translation, a principal translator (PT) who also acted as a research assistant was recruited for the duration of the study. It is acknowledged that this translator forms part of the process of knowledge production and that language is tied to local realities and constructs meaning. As such, there is no neutral position from which to translate. Secondly, in terms of the extent to which the translator is involved in the data collection process and the analysis, the PT was fully involved in the research process: involved in the identification of interview participants, conducted all the interviews with the entrepreneurs (including the pilot interviews), was present at all meetings with MEDEP and contributed to the planning of the research. During translation, in-depth discussions were held regarding meaning and the PT was encouraged to challenge interpretations of the data. Finally, in relation to the relevance

of who the translator is, the PT was considered as a 'key informant' (Temple and Young, 2004, p.170) rather than a neutral transmitter and, as a result, transcribed data, the research process and issues were discussed at length and throughout data collection and analysis. A focus was not solely placed on finding equivalence between words across languages during transcription. The principal translator was female, unmarried, of a similar age to the researcher, Newar (the indigenous population of the Kathmandu Valley) and originally from a rural region of Nepal. The surname of the principal translator was the most common surname in Nepal and found across all districts.

Ethical Considerations

Two distinct ethical considerations had to be taken beyond the main ethical considerations that guide all social research (Bryman, 2012, Webster et al., 2014): conducting research in post-conflict settings and discussing sensitive material.

At the time of interviewing, Nepal was undergoing reconstruction following one of the most intense internal conflicts of its time (Murshed and Gates, 2005). Although an Interim government had been formed in 2007 and national elections held in 2008, the constitution had yet to be developed. 2011 was a time of political uncertainty. Further to this, the People's War originated from the Rapti Zone in Nepal, the location of the research. As such, consideration had to be given to collecting data in a post-conflict region. The ADB, which refers to post-conflict regions as Transitional Situations, recommend that researchers and aid initiatives 'work differently' (ADB, 2012, p.2) in such settings. Post-conflict Nepal is highlighted as a transitional situation that requires

immediate government action in rural and remote regions to avoid exacerbating 'the deep frustration that can feed unrest and agitation by indigenous communities' (ADB, 2012, p.10).

Writing in 2012, ADB argued that Nepal was at risk of relapsing into fragility (ADB, 2012). There were obviously ethical considerations for the EWEs, NWEs as well as the representatives of MEDEP (coordinator and driver) as well as the PT. However, MEDEP were operating in the region and had no safety concerns. Transport in the form of a UN marked vehicle was provided throughout the data collection. Further, in recognition that the women interviewed may represent vulnerable groups, the data derived from the interviews was fully confidential. In order to ensure that their vulnerability was not 'further exploited, or worsened' (Ford et al., 2009, p.4), their responses were anonymous and the participants were also offered the right to refuse participation.

The other consideration relates to the potential for sensitive information, including issues of gender based violence (GBV), the People's War and poverty, being raised during interviewing. Effective qualitative research relies on the establishment of rapport between participants and researchers (Patton, 2002). Developing 'pseudo-intimacy' can encourage participants to share information they did not intend to (Webster et al., 2014, p84). Throughout the process, and in recognition of this need to enhance rapport and show respect for the participants while limiting the hierarchical nature of the researcher/ participant relationship (Dickson-Swift et al., 2007),

particularly where the topics discussed were sensitive in nature, the PT often self-disclosed information to indicate common ground; indeed, according to Patton (2002, p.405), the effective ethical researcher is neither 'judge, therapist nor slab of cold stone'.

For both considerations, a contextual and situational approach was adopted; indeed, Ryen (2011, p.416) argues that ethical dilemmas are 'emergent and contextual and call for situational responses'. As such, if it was felt that participants would experience adverse consequences or become at risk through their participation – or continued participation – interviews would come to a close. Keshika in particular was visibly upset during her first interview and she was asked twice whether she wished to stop.

5.8.1. Piloting Phase

The pilot of this study was undertaken in Kathmandu with women entrepreneurs of a European Union supported NGO. The organisation was established to empower women entrepreneurs. The data from these pilot interviews were not included in the analysis for the following reasons: Firstly, the dimensions of context for the urban women entrepreneurs may differ from that of the NWEs and EWEs in rural Nepal. Secondly, the purpose of the pilot interviews was to ensure that the PT understood the objectives of the study and allowed for early reflection. Due to the heavy workloads of rural women, continual translation of responses would have slowed the process. Because translation occurred during pilot interviews, this ensured that research objectives were being achieved. The PT followed a very detailed interview schedule

during the pilot interviews to ensure that objectives were being achieved (Appendix 5.1).

Finally, the aims of the supporting NGO were different to that of MEDEP. While the Kathmandu based-NGO aims to economically empower women through entrepreneurship by acting as a supply chain to link women entrepreneurs with international buyers, MEDEP's programmes are solely targeted at providing market opportunities for the rural poor to facilitate poverty alleviation and bring about qualitative change in the lives of rural people. Overall, a total of six interviews were undertaken during the pilot phase and the PT was provided with a very detailed interview schedule. All necessary changes were made to the research tools. The pilot interviews were recorded and transcribed. Once transcribed, the researcher and principal translator discussed the process and interpretations of meanings.

5.8.2 The Entrepreneurs

Seven NWEs and nine EWEs were each interviewed twice between April and May 2011 (Table 5.3). Three of the EWEs, Rati, Rupali and Sanjula, participated in the village hall meeting before being interviewed individually. The semi-structured interviews were carried out in Nepali, digitally recorded and lasted between 107 and 148 minutes. If the women were part of a group enterprise, they were interviewed as a group for their first interview. Participatory research places a focus on group – rather than individual – interviews because of the 'overlapping spread of knowledge' among group members (Chambers, 2009, p.148). Although it is argued that difficult or

sensitive topics are best discussed in individual interviews, Chambers (2009) argues that participants from the same community are more comfortable and willing to talk in groups than alone with a stranger. Further, it is argued that group interviews produce more accurate information (Chambers, 2009).

The interviews were all carried out at their enterprises. EWEs were asked to provide information on their background, the setup of their business, their motivations and the environment within which they operate/ operated. They were also asked to consider their business retrospectively (focusing on their motivations, their why they set up their businesses, what they wanted their businesses to do for them and their families and what, if anything, had changed in their lives since business establishment) and asked to discuss their hopes for their future with reference to valued functionings. NWEs were asked to provide information on their background, the setup of their business, their motivations and the environment in which they operate. They were also asked to consider what they wanted from their businesses and their hopes for their lives with particular reference to valued functionings.

Table 5.3 First and Second Interviews – NWEs and EWEs

Micro enter-prise	Name, age, caste/ethnicity, EWE/ NWE	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview length: total (1/2)
1	Alpana, 35, Dalit, NWE	Group interview	Individual interview	117 (82/35)
	Charu, 44, Magar, NWE		Individual interview	135 (82/53)
	Hasina, 24, Chhetri, NWE		Individual interview	132 (82/50)
2	Keshika, 32, Dalit, NWE	Group interview	Individual interview	132 (89/43)
	Maliha, 26, Dalit, NWE		Individual interview	129 (89/40)
3	Naina, 28, Dalit, NWE	Group interview	Individual interview	123 (91/32)
	Pari, 26, Chhetri, NWE		Individual interview	123 (91/26)
4	Sohini, 39, Magar, EWE	Individual interview	Individual telephone interview	107 (80/27)
5	Tanushri, 40, Newar, EWE	Individual interview	Individual interview	108 (58/50)
	Priyanka, 26, Janjati, EWE	Individual interview	Individual interview	118 (58/60)
6	Kanta, 22, Chhetri, EWE	Individual interview	Individual interview	107 (80/27)
7	Ashika, 29, Gurung, EWE	Group interview	Individual interview	132 (70/62)
	Ruchira, 32, Magar, EWE		Individual interview	110 (70/40)
8	Rati, 31, Magar, EWE	Village Hall meeting with 23 other entrepreneurs	Individual interview	139 (98/41)
	Rupali, 26, Dalit, EWE		Individual interview	144 (98/46)
	Sanjula, 27, Dalit, EWE		Individual interview	148 (98/50)

Upon completion of the first interview, the entrepreneurs were asked whether they were willing to participate in a second, follow up interview at a later date. If the entrepreneurs agreed to participate, they were asked to think about their lives, their businesses and their aspirations before the follow up interview. While a very general

interview structure was developed and amended following pilot interviews, the EWEs and NWEs were not prevented from discussing topics that they felt were relevant or important. The general overviews utilised in EWE and NWE interviews are provided at Appendix 5.2 and Appendix 5.3 respectively.

5.8.3. The Village Hall Meeting

The Village Hall Meeting was conducted in a single roomed village school. All the entrepreneurs were members of enterprise groups working together as a vegetable grower's cooperative. Given the large number of participants (26), it was deemed impractical to pursue the level of detail obtained from the group and individual interviews of all other EWEs and NWEs. However, the meeting provided an opportunity to solicit a broad range of views and, as such, the objectives of the village hall were as follows: to understand the range of external organisations operating in the area (to discuss reliance on external organisations), to discuss the role remittance and remittance earnings have had on the women and their households and to discuss the historical context – the People's War.

Again, the participants were not prevented from discussing topics that they felt were relevant or important. The Village Hall Meeting lasted 98 minutes. After the Village Hall Meeting, three entrepreneurs, Rati, Rupali and Sanjula, were asked whether they were willing to participate in an individual interview at a later date. Rati, Rupali and Sanjula were selected for two reasons: they represented different enterprise groups within the cooperative and because they were some of the most vocal during the

Village Hall Meeting. The interviews with Rati, Rupali and Sanjula followed the same structure as all other EWEs interviews.

5.8.4. The Experts

The experts were selected based on their knowledge of entrepreneurship development, gender issues, the policy process and the interviews were all conducted at the participants' place of work. If requested, a very brief summary of the research was provided by email in advance (Appendix 5.4). The interviews were semi structured and topics related to the specialisation of the experts. Upon arrival at the interview sites, consent was obtained from the participants and guarantees given regarding anonymity. All interviews were conducted in English and digitally recorded. The interviews lasted between 42 and 103 minutes (Table 5.4).

Table 5.4 Local Expert Interviews

Code	Occupation/ Experience	Organisation	Length (minutes)
PBK	Gender and Entrepreneurship Advisor	Independent advisor	72
DBK	Minister, Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare	Government of Nepal	46
SYK	Former Government Minister and Gender Specialist	National NGO	48
RPK	Gender Specialist and Entrepreneurship Advisor	National NGO	103
BCK	Independent Gender Advisor to the Government, NGOs and International Development Banks	Independent Advisor	62
GDK	Gender Development Officer	Development Bank	42
SDK	Gender Officer	Regional NGO	55
MDK	Local MEDEP representative	MEDEP	44

5.8.5. Research Diary

Throughout data collection, a shared research diary was kept by the researcher and the PT (see extract in Appendix 5.5). The content was based on reflections following interviews and allowed for follow up questions to be developed. In addition to this, during the interviews, while the principal translator was conducting the interviews, I made notes in the diary relating to body language of participants. The timing of these observations were noted using the digital recorder. This allowed for discussions regarding tone and body language during post-interview reflections and during the translation process. This was valuable because, without consideration of tone of voice and body language, a direct translation of some sections of interviews wouldn't have conveyed the full meaning. For example, during the group interview with Keshika and Maliha, the following was said:

> "PT: So what does 'freedom' mean to you?
>
> Maliha: Freedom is when you can make decisions on your own without anyone else having a say. It's also when you can do the things you like. When you don't have to depend on others, you have freedom. For me, freedom is when you can stand on your own two feet. Yes, freedom is when you can do things according to your own will.
>
> Keshika: Okay
>
> PT: So, are you free?
>
> Keshika: [pause] Yes, I am free. If that's what 'freedom' means. I don't have anyone telling me… I have to do everything myself, including all the household work and work outside the home, so if that is what being free is, then, maybe… Maybe I am free."

However, the research diary notes that were taken during this conversation state: "KM100.16.08: Keshika looks sad. Keshika tearful; readjusts shawl to avoid eye contact and is looking at the ground. I ask PT to check she is okay". The sadness felt by an ostracised, widowed woman living in poverty would not be conveyed without consideration of body language and non-verbal cues.

5.9. Analytical Approach

Once back in Kathmandu, the EWE and NWE interviews were fully translated and transcribed in English. The same principal translator (PT) was used throughout the translation process. During the translation process, which spanned eighteen full days and produced 409 pages of transcribed interviews, the PT listened to the interview recordings and translated aloud and I transcribed the translation. This very involved process was valuable for two reasons: Firstly, very early in the process, the potential for lost meaning was highlighted; in Nepali, the meaning of 'ramro' varies depending on the context. It can be used as any positive adjective – great, excellent, nice, tasty, enjoyable – but, directly translated, 'ramro' means 'good'. Secondly, if clarification was needed, it was discussed during the process rather than at a later date. Indeed, in line with participatory approaches to research, the PT and I discussed meaning, interpretation and language throughout data collection: from pilot interviews through to the translation process. Further, I was able to ask questions about tone of voice and align research diary notes on body language to the content of the interviews.

In line with the research approach, a qualitative analytical approach was adopted in this study. Content analysis is a flexible method (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005) adopted to systematically code and categorise large amounts of text (Mayring, 2000, Grbich, 2013) to provide an understanding of the phenomenon under study through the interpretation of meaning (Elo et al., 2014). There are, according to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), different content analysis approaches available to researchers. Based on the literature, it is argued that conventional content analysis is apposite for this study. Conventional content analysis is utilised where existing theory is limited and requires that the researcher immerses themselves in the data to allow for the emergence of categories (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). A heuristic approach, content analysis is described as inductive category development (Mayring, 2000), the process is cyclical and involves open coding, identification of categories, abstraction, reflection, and category revision. This reduction of data into concepts that described the phenomenon being researched is, according to Elo et al. (2014), essential for successful content analysis.

It is argued that qualitative data analysis must have credibility, dependability conformity, transferability and authenticity in order to be considered as trustworthy (Guba and Lincoln, 1998, Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). To ensure credibility, there should be a focus on truth. As such, participants in qualitative research must be identified and accurately described and there should be reflexivity. Dependability relates to the stability of data in different conditions and over time and relies on 'dense description' of research methods (Krefting, 1991, p.217); conformity relates to congruence between other parties understanding of accuracy, relevance or meaning

and relies on reflexivity; transferability relates to generalising or extrapolating; and authenticity relates to the fair and faithful representation of reality by the researcher (Elo et al., 2014).

The systematic coding and categorisation of the interviews was completed using NViVo. While there may be disadvantages related to computer use in qualitative data analysis (Cresswell, 2007), it is argued that computer assisted qualitative data analysis facilitates transparent processes and provides a reliable picture of the data (Welsh, 2002). The sample was split into three groups: the NWE and EWE interview data were separated to consider the influence of time on their involvement in entrepreneurship and, further, the expert interviews were also separated to acknowledge differences. The adopted coding process resulted in the emergence of categories which, after reflection, were revised where necessary. Further to this, for the second objective, prefigured codes were adopted to look for evidence of expert venture script exposure and entrenchment. To mitigate against the potential for this approach limiting analysis (Cresswell, 2007), potential emerging codes were continually considered. Once initial codes had emerged, the data were classified into themes and categories. Continual reflection throughout the process of classifying themes and categories, which followed Cresswell's analysis spiral (2007), resulted in the production of analytical themes and codes relevant to each objective. At Appendix 5.6, all raw data from one category are presented, as an example. Under objective one, five themes emerged from the data and, within those themes, data were classified into ten categories. This cyclical immersive process – as well as the considerations given during the data collection stage – which reduced the data into concepts was adopted to ensure trustworthiness.

For the first objective, to gain an understanding of how the five dimensions of context affects women and women entrepreneurs in a region of rural Nepal, data related to these contexts (historical, business, spatial, social and institutional) were reintegrated into four analytical themes from all sample groups: normative strength, regulative weakness, historical and alternative opportunities (Table 5.5). While it is acknowledged that the process of decontextualizing and recontextualising data often fails to capture individual differences between groups (Ayres et al., 2003), the identification of patterns and capturing of commonalities across interview participants is important in gaining an understanding of the dimensions of context that affect the women entrepreneurs (Guba and Lincoln, 1998, Ayres et al., 2003). Data from local expert interviews and findings from the literature were compared to assess congruence.

Table 5.5. Objective One Analytical Themes, Categories and Raw Data

Analytical Themes	Categories	Raw Data Examples
Normative strength	Gender inequality	"People notice if a woman does not stay at home, running the house. They think it's dishonourable." *(Ashika, 29, Gurung)* "I used to think that it was my job to look after the children. I thought that women shouldn't even go to training classes if they had children." *(Charu, 44, Magar)*
	Caste inequality	"She came here and she said to me 'if the business was only you and you owned it then I would eat your doughnuts but, because you have mixed with them, I will not eat them." *(Pari, 26, Chhetri participant working with Dalits)* "There is one woman; they called her Prabhuvuni [female god]. She does not eat our food [because it is handled by Dalits]." *(Alpana, 35, Dalit)*
	Challenging norms through entrepreneurship	"We used to feel scared to leave our homes. We used to think 'if we go outside, what will the community say about us?' We felt uneasy; we felt uneasy being in the workshop. We were worried that the community would say something bad to us. We felt scared." *(Tanushri, 40, Newar)* "Since I've started my business, they [community] think differently about me. I don't know why. I don't know why they say bad things about me." *(Keshika, 32, Dalit)* "He says to me that I should look after the children. He says that I shouldn't go because the children will be at home and that it should be him working outside the home. If he'd happily give me permission, it would be easier." *(Alpana, 35, Dalit)*
Regulative weakness	Poor implementation of gender laws	"There are lots of them in Nepal. Most women are victims of domestic violence. Fuelled by alcohol and so on." *(Sohini, 39, Magar)* "He beats her now and again. Sometimes he beats her, sometimes he's kind to her. But I feel very unhappy when I hear about such things." *(Priyanka, 26, Janjati)*
	Doing Business	"It is 'Oi-Lani' [Government land]. That is, it is land that we don't have a document for. We don't have a land document. We can't use this land as collateral. We just have access, no control over the land. The government have not passed the land to us, they haven't given the land ownership documents to us." *(Sohini, 39, Magar)* "It was difficult. Sometimes they would say that our documentation wasn't okay, sometimes they said other things weren't right. So, it was very hard, it took a very long time." *(Tanushri, 40, Newar)*

	Weak institutions/ trust	"We didn't get any help [from the government] during the registration process… they took the amount that we were told to pay… we still don't have our registration number. They said that some papers weren't okay so...[shrugs]." *(Ashika, 29, Gurung)* "After a while, I realised that the government would support our business. I didn't know that before." *(Ruchira, 32, Magar)*
Institutional change and emancipation	Rate of change and emancipation	"Someone sneered at me 'if you are successful at this enterprise, I will cut off my ear and leave this place [eat my hat]'. I think they were looking for a reaction and they knew my husband wouldn't say anything. My husband didn't say anything. I thought 'I will do this. I will show them. I will run this business" *(Ashika, 29, Gurung (EWE))* "I don't give any attention to people who say that now [adopting non-traditional gender roles]. I say to other women 'if you have the courage, you should do it too." *(Ruchira, 32, Magar (EWE))* "The barking dog barks but I will continue to do what I'm doing. Even though they say those things, I don't feel fear or tension. I think I have made good choices, I'm doing okay." *(Kanta, 22, Chhetri (EWE))*
Historical context	People's War	"They caused a lot of problems. We couldn't move around freely, we couldn't form groups or work in groups, we were not allowed to assemble anywhere. There were a lot of effects." *(Pari, 26, Chhetri)* "The Maoists went to the food organization office to loot all the food. We were in bed at home and we heard the sounds of blasts and bullets. We were worried that they would come to our homes that day. But, aside from that day, we did not face any difficulties." *(Alpana, 35, Dalit)*
Alternative opportunities	Lack of alternative opportunities	"We didn't make enough from the agriculture to feed ourselves even though that's all we were doing then… we were subsistence farming. There wasn't a lot. What we harvested only lasted six months." *(Alpana, 35, Dalit)* "If I stop doing this, what other job am I supposed to get?" *(Maliha, 26, Dalit)* "I just sold alcohol, earned some money and survived. So I was doing that; surviving like that." *(Sohini, 39, Magar)* "Besides labour work, I had no alternative opportunities for work then… Even keeping goats wasn't an option because there is hardly any fodder here." *(Keshika, 32, Dalit)*
	Remittance	"Most men are working in foreign countries. No women are working abroad from our village. Some of them send money and others return with nothing. Some return very weak." *(Rupali, 26, Dalit)* "Since we started our vegetable business, many men have stopped sending money home. They don't send money because they think that their wives and families are managing with the income from the vegetable cultivation business." *(Sanjula, 27, Dalit)*

For the second objective, to understand the role of MEDEP as an entrepreneurship enabling organisation, the experiences of the EWEs and NWEs were considered separately. As such, data were reintegrated into themes to identify commonalities before cross-case comparisons were conducted between the two groups. This facilitated an understanding of whether the EWEs have been sufficiently equipped to act independently of MEDEP through the proliferation of expert venture scripts and, in addition, whether the early experiences of EWEs were comparable to NWEs. As such, evidence of the necessity for, and proliferation of, expert venture scripts was sought. Data from an interview with MEDEP personnel was utilised to corroborate findings or provide clarification. The experiences of the women entrepreneurs were coded in terms of Smith et al.'s (2016) model of an EEO. That is, in terms of expert venture scripts and proto-institutions and, to understand the autonomy of EWEs, moving on from MEDEP and other supportive organisations (Table 5.6).

Table 5.6. Objective Two Analytical Themes, Categories and Raw Data

Analytical Themes	Categories	Raw Data Examples
Facilitating entrepreneurship	The role of MEDEP in venture creation	"They came to the village looking for people who were struggling economically. They visited everyone and asked us questions." *(Keshika, 32, Dalit)* "The woman at MEDEP said to me 'Okay, sit down, we are giving priority to Dalit women and we can help you set up a business." *(Alpana, 35, Dalit)*
	Emancipatory declarations	"We were already growing vegetables. When MEDEP came to the village, they asked if we wanted help to make it a business." *(Rupali, 26, Dalit)* "When MEDEP said to me, you can do it and we will help, I felt happy." *(Naina, 28, Dalit)* "The woman at MEDEP said to me 'Okay, sit down, we are giving priority to Dalit women and we can help you set up a business'" *(Alpana, 35, Dalit)*
Exposure to expert venture scripts	Venture arrangement	"Back then, I didn't know anything. I am not well educated. I was just surviving… then, I went through the enterprise training and I thought 'why not complete skill training?'" *(Sohini, 39, Magar)* "I had wanted to set up a business [before MEDEP came] but there was no one to help… I thought 'I don't have an education, I don't have any money. How can I start a business?" *(Keshika, 32, Dalit)*
	Venture ability	"Miss asked us to think about what there is in our village and what we could do with it. For example, there isn't enough bamboo here to make bamboo stools. There isn't enough bimal to weave mats. So, after analysing everything and with Miss's recommendation, I chose the doughnut business." *(Pari, 26, Chhetri)* "Sir and miss from MEDEP said 'we have done a market survey and, based on what we have found, it would be better for you if you set up a noodle enterprise.'" *(Hasina, 24, Chhetri)*
	Venture willingness	"I think that until I have other options, I will continue with this work [the enterprise] to help with income." *(Charu, 44, Magar)* "It would be good to have a job… if I had better opportunities and it would make my life more comfortable than this, I would [close my business], yes." *(Naina, 28, Dalit)*
Social protection	Counselling and hostile institutions	"Without MEDEP, it would have been difficult to be accepted as an entrepreneur here" *(Priyanka, 26, Janjati)* "If anyone says anything about me being Dalit, I would go to the MEDEP office and complain. I would tell my office. The office gives us strength, it helps." *(Alpana, 35, Dalit)*

	Normative acceptance of entrepreneurship	"Without MEDEP, it would be difficult to be recognized as an entrepreneur. If we go through MEDEP, then all the micro-entrepreneurs can meet and have a name." (*Tanushri, 40, Newar)* "It is true wherever you go; if you are well known and people recognise you as an entrepreneur, they will be attracted to you. They will know us and our prestige will increase." (*Maliha, 26, Dalit)*
Optimal impacts of EEOs	Embeddedness and trust	"I even lied to the people from MEDEP twice. I told them that my business was running fine; that I didn't need their help. But, after some time, because they came from a place near our village and because they shared things about themselves, I felt comfortable talking to them about my problems and feelings." *(Ashika, 29, Gurung)* "It was much easier with MEDEP's help. MEDEP have also influenced our family. Our families also support us. They thought that if MEDEP supported what we did, then why shouldn't they support us?" *(Tanushri, 40, Newar)* "Why would I want to be without my father and mother [MEDEP as parent]? If something bad were to happen, if something bad were to occur, we know that we can talk to them, go to them and get help. We can get as much help as we need." *(Ruchira, 32, Magar)*
	Bridging social capital	"They helped to show me the way. I also got the opportunity to go to a trade fair organized in Kathmandu. I went to a trade fair and an agricultural trade fair in Kathmandu. MEDEP gave me a travel allowance and daily subsistence allowance; it covered my bus fare and my hotel expenses." *(Sohini, 39, Magar)* "People recognized us as entrepreneurs – not tailors – and they knew us from the trade fairs and, in future trade fairs, they would visit us again." *(Tanushri, 40, Newar)*
Gaining autonomy	Evidence of successful transfer and diffusion	"I can run my business without MEDEP. I enjoy running it." *(Kanta, 22, Chhetri, EWE)* "We do things by ourselves because we shouldn't rely on MEDEP for everything. I used to be scared because we didn't really know what we were doing back then. We hadn't run a business before. Now we do not feel scared." *(Tanushri, 40, Newar, EWE)* "I have to say, I wouldn't feel unhappy if MEDEP had to close because they have made us strong. We will never forget MEDEP and we have great respect for MEDEP. We will always remember what they have done for us. But, if they had to close, it… it wouldn't be a catastrophe." *(Ruchira, 32, Magar, EWE)*
	Reduced reliance on EEOs or others	"If MEDEP goes, another programme will come and we can get new skills." *(Alpana, 35, Dalit, NWE)* "I don't think we would be able to run our business without MEDEP. If we cannot develop our skills, we cannot run it properly. We would definitely encounter many problems." *(Maliha, 28, Dalit, NWE)*

For the final objective, to understand the ways in which entrepreneurship has made a difference to their daily lives, an importance was placed on acknowleding that considering commonalities across and within cases, by decontextualizing and then recontextualising data, would not identify the individual differences and the extent to which the individual entrepreneurs were able to achieve valued functionings. The overall aim of the thesis is to assess whether entrepreneurship can act as an adequate opportunity to facilitate in the expansion of capability sets and therefore the responses of the EWEs were coded in terms of the contributions entrepreneurship has made to lives since establishing their businesses, their aspirations and desires for their futures and the futures of their children. The responses of the NWEs were coded in terms of the contributions they hope entrepreneurship will make to their daily lives, their aspirations and the aspirations for their children.

This objective draws on the findings from objectives one and two to understand whether entrepreneurship, as an adequate opportunity (Frediani, 2006), and the provision of an enabling environment, the proto-institutions developed by EEOs, has transformed the women entrepreneurs into agents of change. As a result, this objective seeks to understand whether the actions of the women entrepreneurs has been transformative: if the women entrepreneurs better able to realise aspirations (Frediani, 2006), if the women entrepreneurs have developed and are exercising agency and, finally, if entrepreneurship has allowed the women entrepreneurs to shape their lives and the lives of others to realise aspirations (Table 5.7).

Table 5.7. Objective Three Analytical Themes, Categories and Raw Data

Analytical Themes	Categories	Raw Data Examples
Agency	Attributing advances in well-being to self	"I can help myself through my enterprise. Maybe I didn't have the capacity to achieve then. I didn't have a good brain then… today, the very same people that used to come to my restaurant, drink, eat and then verbally abuse me now say 'Namaste' to me and give respect." (*Sohini, 39, Magar)*
	Effective power – shaping the lives of girls	"We face a lot of difficulties because we don't have an education. So, if we can offer a better education to our children, they will have more opportunities. I have had so many problems because of my illiteracy; I want to educate her." (*Alpana, 35, Dalit, mother to one daughter and one son)* "The most important thing is to provide an education to my children because I was not able to get a good education… if I had, maybe my life would have been different." *(Rupali, 26, Dalit, mother to two daughters and one son)*
	Effective power – shaping the lives of women	"I'd also like to work on the social development of other women… I want women from different villages to be inspired by us. I want them to be able to start their own small enterprises and make them bigger too." (*Tanushri, 40, Newar)* "It's important in all areas… it's important that people know that women can do these things. On any programme, in any office." (*Kanta, 22, Chhetri)*
Aspirations	Downward adaptation	"We have to be satisfied whether our lives are good or not. Otherwise, how would we cope?" (*Alpana, 35, Dalit)* "Sometimes I can't even give them a jotter and a pencil. When they ask bigger things of me… how am I supposed to make them doctors and pilots? I cannot meet their simple needs today." (*Naina, 28, Dalit)*
	Upward adaptation – new opportunities	"When we started the business, we had completely different dreams and what we have today is totally different to what we had dreamed about. It's hard to understand what has happened." (*Ashika, 29, Gurung)* "The enterprise has done amazing things for me. I can train anyone and I'm comfortable meeting people and I think I can go anywhere, visit anywhere. My attitude has changed." (*Priyanka, 26, Janjati)* "I'm always dreaming because, if you don't dream, nothing good will happen." (*Ruchira, 32, Magar)*
	Upward Adaptation - role models	"We have seen other women taking on different roles from usual. We thought we'd like to be like them. They have progressed and offered equal opportunities to their sons and daughters." *(Alpana, 35, Dalit)* "If we do something good, maybe we can be an example to the women of remote villages. Maybe they will see our achievements and maybe they will be motivated to try and do it themselves." *(Tanushri, 40, Newar)*

5.10. Timetable of the Study

The overall research process took place between 2008 and 2016. The timeline below highlights the significant activities undertaken (Table 5.8):

Table 5.8. Timetable of Study

Activities	Timeline
Literature collection and review	October 2009 – December 2016
Research Topic Identification	January 2010
Methodological Approach Design	June 2010
Sampling Approach Design	November/ December 2010
Interview Schedule Design	January – May 2011
Data Collection	March – June 2011
On-going Data Analysis	2011 – 2016
Writing Thesis	2012 – 2016
Editing Thesis	2016

5.11. Limitations of the Approach

There is a lack of research on women and women entrepreneurs in Nepal and in the Rapti Zone, Nepal, in particular (Bushell, 2008). However, as the research focuses solely on women entrepreneurs and excludes male entrepreneurs, it does not acknowledge that due to deep-rooted and structured inequalities in Nepal, males and females of specific groups, including Dalits, represent subordinated populations. As such, this could be viewed as a limitation. Further, the literature has highlighted that the influence of caste continues to affect the occupational choices of certain groups. The sample was not large enough to consider this in depth and should be considered a future research direction. Further, to gain an understanding of how entrepreneurship could help change the lives of an entrepreneur and the next generations of Nepali women, future research could adopt a longitudinal approach to follow women

entrepreneurs and their children across a number of years. Finally, to fully consider the influence on EEOs on ordinary entrepreneurs, future research could include women entrepreneurs who have established businesses without the support of an enabling organisation to understand to what extent the proliferation of expert venture scripts and the introduction of proto-institutions support entrepreneurs.

CHAPTER SIX

CONTEXT AND WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS OF THE RAPTI ZONE, NEPAL

6.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the results and analysis for objective one of the study through the application of the five dimensions of context – historical, business, special, institutional and social – to understand the lives of the MEDEP nascent and established women entrepreneurs (NWEs and EWEs) and to understand the 'nature, richness and dynamics' of their entrepreneurial behaviour (Zahra, 2007, p.451). Institutional theory is applied to better understand the regulative and normative institutions within the institutional context. These dimensions of context were reintegrated into five analytical themes: normative strength; regulative weakness; institutional change and emancipation; historical context; and alternative opportunities. The chapter concludes by discussing the importance and implications of the overarching themes that arise from the interviews and the relevant research gaps.

The subsequent sections present the analytical themes and related categories of objective one of this research. That is Normative Strength (gender inequality, caste inequality and challenging norms through entrepreneurship), Regulative Weakness (poor implementation of gender laws, doing business, weak institutions and trust),

Institutional Change (resilience and emancipation), Historical Context (the People's War) and Alternative Opportunities (lack of alternative opportunities and remittance).

6.2. Normative Strength

Helmke and Levitsky (2006) define normative institutions as socially shared rules, usually unwritten, that are created, communicated, and enforced outside officially sanctioned channels. Normative institutions represent a 'dizzying array of phenomena' (Helmke and Levitsky, 2004, p.726) that have been internalised by social actors (Peng, 2003) including traditions, ethnicity, clans, mafia, personal networks, kinship, civil associations, customs, moral value, religious beliefs and all other practices that have evolved and been maintained over time (Sen, 2007) to provide a common framework of meaning (Scott, 2001). Before the thematic categories under the theme of normative strength are discussed, the normative institutions of Nepal are considered in relation to entrepreneurship.

Normative Institutions and Entrepreneurship

Despite Nepal being declared a secular state in 2007, it is argued that Hinduism continues to be an influential force in Nepali society (Yadav, 2016). The caste system, which is rooted in Hinduism, classifies individuals and grants freedoms hierarchically, was largely based on occupations (Bidner and Eswaran, 2015). Research by Audretsch, et al. (2007) found that, in India, the caste system continues to influence the propensity for individuals to pursue entrepreneurship. In particular, it was found that lower caste

individuals are less likely to become entrepreneurs because the caste system continues to limit occupational choice (Audretsch et al., 2007).

In Nepal, the occupational division of caste groups ensured that menial employment was given to Hill and Madhesi Dalits while prominent economic activities were assigned to high caste groups (Bhattachan et al., 2009). For example, the traditional occupation of two Hill Dalit Damai sub-castes, Pariyar and Suchikar, was tailoring while the traditional occupation of the Musahar, a Madhesi Dalit, was farm labouring (Bhattachan et al., 2009). According to the Hindu varnas, of the four caste groups and the Dalits, it is the Vyshyas who are traditionally entrepreneurial (Audretsch et al., 2007) and, in rural or remote areas of Nepal where the caste system, despite the prohibition of untouchability and caste discrimination (Bhattachan et al., 2009), persists, the potential for individuals to pursue unconventional roles is, potentially, reduced.

It is argued that normative institutions define the value placed on entrepreneurial behaviour. While many societies value or admire the value creation, creativity and initiative displayed by entrepreneurs, other societies place little to no value on such behaviour and, as such, there is little normative acceptance of entrepreneurship (Busenitz et al., 2000, Stenholm et al., 2013). As a result, where individuals are operating in an environment that does not value entrepreneurial behaviour, they risk potentially harmful enforcement mechanisms if they chose to adopt roles that challenge normative institutions. However, research by Pyakuryal (2000) indicates

that entrepreneurship is, in general, valued in Nepal; entrepreneurs are perceived as diligent, hardworking, skilled and more successful. It is also believed that entrepreneurs are better able to achieve a good future for themselves. Further to this, Pyakuryal (2000) posits that while upper caste individuals commonly own businesses, they have a negative perception of business and would prefer salaried jobs. Lower caste individuals and people living in poverty, however, view entrepreneurship positively. Finally, it is generally held that certain caste and ethnic groups, including the Newars and the Thakalis are more enterprising than other groups (Pyakuryal, 2000). It should be noted that a positive assessment of entrepreneurship may not be constant across groups, backgrounds and geographical areas. As suggested, there is great diversity in Nepal.

Little research exists on the relationship between normative institutions and women entrepreneurs in Nepal. It is argued that the barriers women face in relation to entrepreneurship are the barriers women face in Nepali society in general: the pervasiveness of social structure, religion, cultural beliefs, beliefs about inheritance rights, illiteracy and poor dissemination of information and ignorance (Bushell, 2008). Because of the traditionally patriarchal environment which affects literacy rates, property rights and gender norms – regardless of the existence of gender laws – it is argued normative institutions on women entrepreneurs do not, in general, support potential and existing women entrepreneurs (Bushell, 2008).

The interviews highlighted three key thematic categories under the theme of normative strength: gender inequality, caste inequality and challenging norms through entrepreneurship (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1 Thematic Categories of Normative Strength

Categories	Raw Data Examples
Gender inequality	"People notice if a woman does not stay at home, running the house. They think it's dishonourable." (*Ashika, 29, Gurung)* "I used to think that it was my job to look after the children. I thought that women shouldn't even go to training classes if they had children." (*Charu, 44, Magar)*
Caste inequality	"She came here and she said to me 'if the business was only you and you owned it then I would eat your doughnuts but, because you have mixed with them, I will not eat them.'" (*Pari, 26, Chhetri participant working with Dalits)*
Challenging norms through entrepreneurship	"We used to feel scared to leave our homes. We used to think 'if we go outside, what will the community say about us?' We felt uneasy; we felt uneasy being in the workshop. We were worried that the community would say something bad to us. We felt scared." (*Tanushri, 40, Newar)* "He says to me that I should look after the children. He says that I shouldn't go because the children will be at home and that it should be him working outside the home. If he'd happily give me permission, it would be easier." (*Alpana, 35, Dalit)*

6.2.1. Gender Inequality

The literature has determined that, despite progressive laws that promote inclusion, the historical dominance of male Thakuris and hill Brahmins (Adhikari and Lawoti, 2016) has resulted in socio-cultural discriminatory practices against all groups except the dominant upper hill castes and, as a result of this, discriminated groups were marginalised and excluded from social, political and economic domains (Adhikari and Lawoti, 2016). These deep-rooted inequalities based on gender, caste and ethnicity

persist in rural Nepal in particular (Government of Nepal, 2014). In terms of gender inequality, the interview findings demonstrated that both nascent and established women entrepreneurs were aware of the expectations of behaviour. That is, women should continue to adopt their traditional role in society: carers, mothers, nurturers and responsible for domestic work (Sherpa, 2007, Tamang, 2010). In particular, the interview participants related expectations of behaviour to limited access to education and opportunities to develop knowledge through engagement with social and spatial contexts.

> "At my in-laws house, they think that the woman must be confined to the house, the husband must go out to work. Women must not go out to understand things and see the world." *Kanta, 22, Chhetri*

> "I used to think that it was my job to look after the children. I thought that women shouldn't even go to training classes if they had children." *Charu, 44, Magar*

Indeed, five entrepreneurs (Ashika, Rati, Hasina, Naina and Kanta) indicated that marriage and children had forced the end of their education because of behavioural expectations within social and institutional contexts. The literature has highlighted that while there is gender disparity in primary and secondary education, there is greater disparity in tertiary education particularly in rural areas; 88 percent of postgraduate students in mountainous regions are male (ADB, 2013, CBS, 2014b). The expectation that women should, after marriage, occupy the feminine space within their spatial context – the private home –explains this disparity. Further, the women also discussed the persistence of *ijaat* or family honour in relation to adopting gendered roles. Nepali women are responsible for maintaining family honour and, as such, to avoid normative

and cognitive enforcement mechanisms, which can include social disapproval, shame, dishonour or physical punishment, women self-perpetuate gender norms (Helmke and Levitsky, 2004, Richardson et al., 2016).

> "I think the status of a woman is very important. People notice if a woman does not stay at home, running the house. They think it's dishonourable. People say 'she used to be a good woman, staying at home but now… [rolls eyes]' you know, people *will* criticise you."
> *Ruchira, 32, Magar*

In fact, during start up, a local man threated to urinate in Ruchira's mouth if she continued to work on her business while another accused her of boxi or witchcraft – an act that can result in the death of the accused (Government of Nepal, 2012). A further indicator of gender inequality discussed during the interviews was the persistence of GBV within Nepal. Indeed, according to DFID (2011), over 75 percent of all Nepali women experience GBV in their lifetime while nearly ten percent of adolescents (aged 15-19) experience violence during pregnancy (Standing et al., 2016). Indeed, the interviews indicated that GBV occurs in all districts of the research area. While Charu, Alpana, Sohini and Priyanka indicated that they knew of women who were currently experiencing domestic abuse and Hasina indicated that she had experienced GBV herself, it is argued that 82 percent of surveyed Nepali women choose not to report GBV to anyone (Tamang, 2010). These findings support the claim that VAWG is considered legitimate within social and normative institutional contexts in Nepal despite the introduction of the Domestic Violence and Punishment Act (2009). The relationship between gender and regulative institutions is discussed further under the second analytical theme: regulative weakness. Clearly, therefore, gender

inequality persists in the Rapti Zone representing real normative strength within the institutional, social and spatial contexts. The subsequent section considers a further dimension of inequality; that is, discrimination based on caste and ethnicity.

6.2.2. Caste Inequality

The second category under the theme of normative strength relates to the enduring nature of discrimination based on caste. Despite caste based discrimination being a driver of the People's War and despite the introduction of legal reforms that ban practices of untouchability and encourage inclusion, the caste system is commonly maintained in rural areas of Nepal (Poudel et al., 2015). Dalit entrepreneurs, Alpana, Naina, Rupali and Sanjula, all handle foods despite normative institutions that consider Dalits impure. Indeed, Dalit participants, in particular, indicated that, on top of the discrimination they faced as women, the caste system – and practices of untouchability – have affected their entrepreneurship:

> "After we sold our doughnuts, a trader gave us water. One of my friends, [name indicates Dalit], went to drink the water but another friend said 'why did you touch the water first?' I haven't faced discrimination directly but my friend has." *Naina, 28, Dalit*
>
> "There is one woman; they called her Prabhuvuni [female god]. She does not eat our food [because it is handled by Dalits]." *Alpana, 35, Dalit*

Further, where women from other groups or castes are working with Dalits in food-based businesses (Charu, Magar; Hasina, Chhetri; Pari, Chhetri; Rati, Magar) their

involvement may threaten their ability to better their own lives. Indeed, Pari highlighted that she had faced this herself.

> "One time, a lady visited my home and said to me 'if the business was only you and you owned it then I would eat your food but because you have mixed with them (Dalits), I will not eat your food." *Pari, 26, Chhetri*

Similar to the self-perpetuation of gender norms to avoid normative enforcement mechanisms such as shame, dishonour and physical punishment, interview participants were also perpetuating discrimination based on caste in two ways: in relation to occupational choice and in terms of a hierarchy. First, in relation to occupational choice, Ashika and Ruchira indicated that they would only consider hiring people from their own ethnic groups. Further, Priyanka acknowledged that working as a tailor was traditionally a Dalit occupation. Finally, Alpana, Charu and Hasina chose not to establish a loom enterprise because "we thought 'it's usually Magars that make looms and most of us are Dalits and Chhetris'" (*Alpana, 35, Dalit*). It is interesting to note that, despite the persistence of untouchability, their enterprise group, which contains Dalits, selected a food based business perhaps indicating improved congruence between regulative and normative institutions in relation to caste discrimination within their community. Secondly, Gurung participant, Ashika, indicated that, within her social context, Brahmin males continue to be viewed as more intelligent than Magars, Gurungs and Janjatis, perpetuating the historical and hierarchical dominance of Thakuris and hill Brahmins (Adhikari and Lawoti, 2016) and indicating the continued influence of the historical context on normative institutions.

> "Once a Brahmin came here looking for a job but my husband turned him away. [My husband] said that [the Brahmin] would outsmart me and take my business so we didn't hire him. I don't mind Gurung, Magar and Chaudhary working here though[9]." *Ashika, 29, Gurung*

However, it is also true that within the enterprise groups, higher caste women (Newar and Chhetris) are working alongside lower caste groups (Dalits and Janjatis) and ethnic groups (Gurung and Magar) and that there is equality amongst the women entrepreneurs. Indeed, Chhetri participant Pari was surprised to encounter discrimination against the Dalit women in her group.

> "I thought that there would be no discrimination between human beings. I felt awful when there was discrimination against these women in our group." *Pari, 26, Chhetri*

It is clear that the social, spatial, historical and normative institutional contexts continue to define the roles of these women and places them in a subordinated position based on the historical dominance of male Thakulis and hill Brahmins (Adhikari and Lawoti, 2016). Nevertheless, through their involvement in entrepreneurship, the women are adopting roles that do not align with behavioural expectations both in terms of gender and caste. Their behaviour challenges these expectations.

[9] Gurung and Magar are ethnic minorities; Chaudhary is a surname common within the Indigenous Terai nationalities.

6.2.3. Challenging Norms through Entrepreneurship

The previous section has highlighted the prevalence and persistence of normative institutions and their enforcement mechanisms. As a result of these prevailing normative institutions, all the entrepreneurs indicated that they all felt reticence in establishing their businesses because of social expectations of behaviour and because of the threat of enforcement mechanisms.

> "We used to feel scared to leave our homes. We used to think 'if we go outside, what will the community say about us?' We felt uneasy; we felt uneasy being in the workshop. We were worried that the community would say something bad to us. We felt scared." *Tanushri, 40, Newar*

> "In the beginning, we felt shy. Yes, we were worried that someone would say bad things to us." *Alpana, 35, Dalit*

> "I used to worry about whether my business would bring shame or dishonour to me and my family. I wondered whether I would win people over… scared that we wouldn't succeed. I was worried that I'd fail and that we'd lose respect." *Ashika, 29, Gurung*

Indeed, in terms of gender, their working outside the home challenges norms because of their occupation of a masculine space (public areas) and because of their adoption of traditionally male roles: earning for the family (Tamang, 2010). As a result, women occupying a public space, therefore, compromise the family *ijaat* and risk facing normative enforcement mechanisms such as shame, social disapproval, or physical punishment (Richardson et al., 2016). At the time of interviewing, the NWEs were

facing negative discrimination from their social contexts – families and communities – because their involvement in entrepreneurship was challenging gender norms.

> "Since I've started my business, they (community) think differently about me. I don't know why. I don't know why they say bad things about me. Sometimes people create an atmosphere where you don't feel comfortable in your own home…. There is no one like me. No one faces problems like me. It would be very hard for someone to face such difficulties and survive." *Keshika, 32, Dalit*

Welter (2011) argues that the social context is particularly important for entrepreneurs operating in hostile environments, women entrepreneurs and traditionally excluded groups. Because Keshika is widowed, her parents-in-law have died and her parents live in another district, she cannot rely on her social context to provide family support and encourage her continued involvement in entrepreneurship. Further, because the community have ostracised her since her involvement in entrepreneurship, she is unable to rely on the support of friends. Prior to her involvement in entrepreneurship, the community had been supportive of Keshika and her youngest son; they had donated stones and wood and helped her build her thatch roofed hut. Out of all the interview participants, Keshika was the most withdrawn; there was no laughter during her interviews, her body language was never positive and she was tearful. The ostracism of Keshika is an indication of normative enforcement mechanisms – mechanisms enforced by others who impose costs if norms aren't followed (Hodgson and Calatrava, 2006) – and the powerful influence of these mechanisms was clearly demonstrated by Keshika's body language and behaviour. At the household level in particular, the behaviour of the women was also challenging the role of the husband.

> “He says to me that I should look after the children. He says that I shouldn’t go because the children will be at home and that it should be him working outside the home. If he’d happily give me permission, it would be easier.” *Naina, 28, Dalit*

> “If he (husband) gets pressure from work or he has a lot of work to do and our child falls ill, he complains. He blames me. Sometimes I feel like closing the business… sometimes. He says ‘I told you not to work! Why do you keep going there?’ Then he says ‘oh do whatever you want to do [dismissive].’ It’s hard for me and I feel like I want to leave the business.” *Hasina, 24, Chhetri*

It is important to acknowledge that if the role of the women is changing within their households and impacting upon the gendered role of their husbands, the exclusion of males from economic responsibilities within households can, it is argued, exacerbate GBV (Chant, 2014). It is noteworthy that Hasina, who faces pressure from her social context to leave her enterprise group and adopt the traditional role of wife and mother, has indicated that she faces domestic violence within her household. In discussing a project in Kathmandu, Gender Specialist and Entrepreneurship Development Advisor, PBK, discussed her experiences of entrepreneurship potentially exacerbating GBV within the household:

> “A lot of women (entrepreneurs) are being violated by their husbands… I have to admit, I did not imagine that gender based violence would even come into our entrepreneurship development programme but I have recognised that gender based violence is one of the factors that constrains or promotes entrepreneurship development in women. The next question is whether this violence that’s occurring now, was it already happening prior or has this emerged because of the

> their empowerment and capability development and men being threatened by her earnings and what she is becoming? Because of his gender role, you know? This is something that is very interesting and we're trying to deal with it as best we can." *PBK, Gender Specialist and Entrepreneurship Development Advisor*

The experiences of the women varied. For some women, their husbands were supportive of their decision to start a business and have continued to help them develop as entrepreneurs. For other women, their husbands' expectations were that the women's domestic work should continue to be a priority:

> "My husband would say to me 'what are you doing that's so important that you ignore your children and family?' but I had been to the training by then. If I hadn't gone to the training then maybe another person would have got the opportunity. It's not MEDEP's fault that my husband feels this way, they are just teaching us how to run an enterprise. It's my responsibility to deal with these and learn how to better manage my time. So I say to him 'I am not doing anything wrong, I'm running this business with good intentions. For a good reason'. So I kept going and, by doing that, I have managed to convince him a bit. He complains less now." *Hasina, 24, Chhetri*

> "If he were to help me with the household work, I could come over here without feeling bad about it. Yes, that's how I feel. If he would be happy to give me permission, it would be easier" *Alpana, 35, Dalit*

> "He says to me 'don't go; you have to look after the children.'" *Pari, 26, Chhetri*

> "He said that he had the responsibility of earning money for the family. He said 'even if we have to take out a loan to survive, I will repay it'. He said 'I look after you and the children. Don't go to the doughnut

> enterprise'. But I'm not working on this business just because we are poor and don't have much. I went to the training classes and I want to do it for me." *Naina, 28, Dalit*

While the entrepreneurs have, through their involvement in entrepreneurship, adopted roles that challenge normative institutions and contradict the socially constructed role of the Nepali women, the nature of the businesses continues to be in line with the gendered role of women, comparable to the entrepreneurs in Chitsike's (2000) research: Indeed, all the women's enterprises were food based (doughnuts, noodles and spice), agriculture and farming (vegetable cultivation and poultry farming) or basic manufacturing (tailoring and soft toys). Further, nine of the entrepreneurs were producing their products within a feminine space, the private home. Where production occurred in a private workshop or rented space, this was only shared with other women. Gender Specialist and Entrepreneurship Development Advisor, PBK, in discussing created women entrepreneurs in Kathmandu, stated that she had felt unease regarding women entrepreneurs operating businesses in line with gendered roles:

> "We are offering the women limited choices and I think that the women might think that that's it for them… Is this something that women want or is it… are they happy to have certain choices and that's it? I am noticing that women are not given any more choices than what we perceive is appropriate for them. It's a basic problem – you have highlighted a basic problem. I think entrepreneurship can, in fact, be limiting because of the way we're giving it out. We are offering only what we think is best for the women." *PBK, Gender Specialist and Entrepreneurship Development Advisor*

However, PBK goes onto state that all initiatives related to the development of women, 'have to begin somewhere'. As calls are made to develop a socio-political framework to better prepare women for the feminisation of the agricultural sector in Nepal (Maharjan et al., 2013, Tamang et al., 2014), it could be argued that adopting some traditionally male behaviours (working outside the home) while continuing to align with female roles (food preparation, clothing and small scale agriculture), can facilitate ease of interaction (Carter and Marlow, 2003), particularly for the women who are illiterate or poorly educated, while better preparing them to engage in other activities.

> "From the very start, we knew that this work [making doughnuts] could be done by women so I was quite confident." *Naina, 28, Dalit*

Indeed, according to GDK, a local Gender Development Officer at ADB, aligning enterprises with traditional roles is a positive first stage in developing women:

> "Most enterprises relate to household work which is traditionally women's work. So from household work, they commercialised and this gives them money, interaction, and so on so it was an easier entry. It was not difficult. Of course, they have to be trained and go to classes so there was a degree of exposure but they did not have to learn many new skills. It was just an extension of a traditional role. So that's how it played a big role in developing women in the mountains." *GDK, Gender Development Officer*

However, Former government minister and gender expert, SYK, indicated that while commercialised household work often constitutes an easier entry for women, it is important that the women entrepreneurs value the importance of their new roles in the

community and acknowledge their businesses as a progression, and are aware that they are capable of more than ‘women’s work’:

> “It has been a very good means for women to demonstrate their skills in business. It is very convenient, it’s been very convenient for women to be rural entrepreneurs because they are often right in the middle of the village, they’re in their own surroundings, they are just using their family home and their skills in cooking usually but they don’t realise they're doing a very important job there. They are providing a service.”
> *SYK, Gender Expert and Former Government Minister*

Acknowledging themselves as entrepreneurs is considered further under the second objective of this research but, for Tanushri, occupying space outside the feminine private home through entrepreneurship constitutes a critical first stage in attaining aspirations.

> “To stop being unemployed is a big step. The best way to do this is to become an entrepreneur.” *Tanushri, 40, Newar*

Findings from the theme of normative strength demonstrate that traditional gender norms, defined by the social context, persist. The entrepreneurs are all aware of the expectations placed on their behaviour and the enforcement mechanisms that pose a threat to themselves and their families should they pursue entrepreneurship and enter the male gendered space. To a lesser extent, the same is true for caste discrimination although it is clear that practices of untouchability are reducing. Indeed, for the entrepreneurs in this research, it is the older generations that perpetuate discriminations

based on caste indicating a change in normative institutions and alignment with regulative institutions that ban practices of untouchability.

6.3. Regulative Weakness

The previous section has demonstrated the social and spatial contexts continue to perpetuate beliefs deriving from normative institutions that place women in a subordinated position. Further, because of their involvement in entrepreneurship and the adoption of behaviours that are not traditionally female, the entrepreneurs have faced enforcement mechanisms. The subsequent sections discuss the regulative institutions that relate to gender and entrepreneurship within the dimensions of context and highlight the lack of trust shared between the regulative framework – the government – and the entrepreneurs (Table 6.2).

Table 6.2 Thematic Categories of Regulative Weakness

Categories	Raw Data Examples
Poor implementation of gender laws	"There are lots of them in Nepal. Most women are victims of domestic violence. Fuelled by alcohol and so on." (*Sohini, 39, Magar)* "He beats her now and again. Sometimes he beats her, sometimes he's kind to her. But I feel very unhappy when I hear about such things." (*Priyanka, 26, Janjati)*
Doing Business	"It is 'Oi-Lani' [Government land]. That is, it is land that we don't have a document for. We don't have a land document. We can't use this land as collateral. We just have access, no control over the land. The government have not passed the land to us, they haven't given the land ownership documents to us." (*Sohini, 39, Magar)* "It was difficult. Sometimes they would say that our documentation wasn't okay, sometimes they said other things weren't right. So, it was very hard, it took a very long time." (*Tanushri, 40, Newar)*
Weak institutions/ trust	"We didn't get any help [from the government] during the registration process… they took the amount that we were told to pay… we still don't have our registration number. They said that some papers weren't okay so...[shrugs]." (*Ashika, 29, Gurung)* "After a while, I realised that the government would support our business. I didn't know that before." (*Ruchira, 32, Magar)*

Regulative Institutions and Entrepreneurship

Before these thematic categories are discussed, the subsequent section considers entrepreneurship in the context of the regulative institutions of Nepal. The regulative institutions are manifest in Nepal through the rules and laws enforced by the state. As constrainers of social behaviour and also enablers of action, the regulative institutions present in Nepal provide incentives to act and legitimise entrepreneurial behaviour. As the government of Nepal views entrepreneurship as a key component of economic growth, poverty reduction and employment generation, the role of the state in developing an environment that fosters entrepreneurial behaviour is crucial.

Fostering Entrepreneurship: Policy and Planning

Without effective enterprise policy, the propensity for potential entrepreneurs to exploit discovered opportunities is reduced. Microenterprise development (MED) as a poverty reduction strategy was introduced by the Government of Nepal in 1998 through the publication of the Ninth Plan (NPC, 1997). Initially, a micro-credit based approach was developed to encourage self-employment and micro entrepreneurship among the youth, women, the 'vulnerable economic class' (NPC, 1997, p.402), families living in poverty and individuals from disadvantaged groups (NPC, 1997, Sharma, 2014). In particular, an emphasis was placed on agricultural enterprises, or agri-enterprises, to 'provide new dynamism' to the agriculture sector (NPC, 1997, p.358). From the perspective of the Government of Nepal, the main goal of MED was to increase income through self-employment. It was assumed that poverty in Nepal would be reduced as a result (MEDEP, 2010a). In order to promote and further support micro-enterprises and cottage industries, the Ninth Plan developed the Cottage and Small Scale Industry Programme and designed market-oriented skill development training and announced the introduction of the Micro Enterprise Development Programme (MEDEP) (NPC, 1997).

The Micro Enterprise Development Programme (MEDEP)

Produced with the technical support of the UNDP, MEDEP was piloted in five districts in the Terai and five districts in the hills and designed to create meaningful employment opportunities for socially excluded groups and the rural poor by creating 7000 microenterprises (NPC, 1997). To begin with, the overall aim of the programme was to reduce poverty (UNDP, 2015d). Because this pilot, initiated from 1998 to 2003,

was considered a success, a second phase was approved and implemented in 15 districts between 2004 and 2007 (MEDEP, 2010b). The third phase (2008-2010) saw the programme being implemented in 36 districts. Funding for all phases was received from UNDP, DFID, AusAID and NZAID (MEDEP, 2010b). During the third phase, the operations and activities of MEDEP were being supported by a range of organisations at local, regional and national levels (Table 6.3) indicating the extent to which the programme was being adopted and maintained.

Table 6.3. Supporting Organisations of MEDEP

Supporting Organisations	
DEDC	District Enterprise Development Committee
(D)MEG(A)	(District) Micro Entrepreneurs Group (Association)
NMEGA	National Micro Entrepreneurs' Group Association
MFI	Microfinance Institution
BDSPO	Business Development Service Provider Organization
DDC/VDC	District/ Village Development Committee
DCSI	Department of Cottage and Small Industries
DCCI	District Chamber of Commerce and Industries
FNCCI	Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industries
Banks	

Source: MEDEP, 2010b

By 2010, MEDEP had created over 35,000 women entrepreneurs and, by 2014, the overarching aim of MEDEP had been extended to promote general economic activities among the rural poor to facilitate poverty alleviation and bring about qualitative change in the lives of rural people (UNDP, 2015d). Due to the continued success of the programme, the government of Nepal labelled Micro Enterprise Development (MED) as crucial to the economic development of the country and introduced the

Industrial Enterprise Bill which proposed concessions for micro enterprises (UNDP, 2015d).

By 2013, the Government of Nepal had developed Micro Enterprise Development for Poverty Alleviation (MEDPA), a state programme that adopts the MEDEP model, and during the implementation of the fourth phase of MEDEP (2013 to 2018), it was agreed that the Government of Nepal would assume ownership of MED in Nepal (UNDP, 2015d). The Government of Nepal’s long term development strategy, published in 2016, identified Small and Medium Enterprises (SMES) as a key growth driver (Thapa, 2015a). In particular, to achieve the title of middle-income country by 2030, the vision for Nepal includes placing a major focus on entrepreneurship and university incubations to support start-ups, the expansion of SMEs and attracting foreign direct investment in SMEs (NPC, 2016). Clearly, regulative institutions acknowledge the potential for MED to reduce poverty and contribute to national economic development. At the same time, however, it is also acknowledged that the overarching constraining factors for Nepali entrepreneurs are weak institutions and unstable politics (Sharma, 2014). The Doing Business project, which assesses the formal institutions and regulations which impact upon the life cycles of SMES, is considered at 6.4.2. in relation to Nepal’s regulative environment.

6.3.1. Poor Implementation of Gender Laws

The literature has highlighted that gender equality is supported in Nepal through the introduction of national laws, gender mainstreaming, the representation of women in

political bodies and the mandates of institutional bodies. At a local level, the districts of Dang, Salyan and Rukum are managed by 39, 47 and 43 VDCs respectively. The institutional structure is designed to ensure that each district has a Women and Children Office, the implementation wing of the Department of Women and Children (MWCSW, 2012), a government department tasked with the empowerment of women; in particular, the Department of Women and Children are focused on empowering women who are 'are economically poor, socially deprived or otherwise put at a disadvantage' (DWC, 2012, p.1). However, a minister at the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare indicated that for the past ten years, there have been no representatives of the of the Ministry at local levels. Instead, secretaries of VDCs

> "Collect the demands of the local people and submit them to DDCs. When DDCs have their annual meetings, they discuss findings and they rank demands and they get sent to government departments. Again, the departments discuss the findings and their report gets sent to the ministries." *DBK, MOWCSW*

Then, three or five year plan are developed with priorities developed based on 'who is in power, what their policies are and the priorities of the government' (*DBK*). As such, despite gender and social inclusion being the priority in national plans, with multiple levels of bureaucracy and no local representatives of the MWCSW, gender based issues may be lost. Indeed, national Gender Specialist and Entrepreneurship Development Advisor, PBK, highlighted the progressiveness of Nepal on paper but questioned the extent to which supportive laws and frameworks have an effect on women entrepreneurs.

> "In terms of laws, it is getting towards equality… I think that Nepal has been quite progressive particularly in terms of violence against women and property rights but how much of it is being enacted? I don't know."
> *PBK, Gender Specialist and Entrepreneurship Development Advisor*

The EWE and NWE interview findings supported this and identified that laws and acts pertaining to gender equality had been poorly implemented and enforced. Despite the introduction of key laws, including the Domestic Violence Act of 2010 which forbids physical and mental abuse, trafficking, sexual harassment, prostitution, abortion, child marriage, physical torture, misbehaviour and murder over dowry disputes (ADB, 2010), participants indicated that patriarchal social relations persist across all districts in the Rapti Zone and within their communities in the form of domestic violence against women.

> "There are some women in the village [experiencing domestic violence] but we shouldn't really talk to you about it. It might be bad for them if we tell you." *Charu, 44, Magar*

> "There are cases here of men getting drunk and beating their wives, yes." *Alpana, 35, Dalit*

> "Yes, there are lots of them in Nepal [women who suffer from domestic violence]. Most women are victims of domestic violence. Fuelled by alcohol and so on." *Sohini, 39, Magar*

> "Plus, I was scared that if I couldn't do what I told my husband I could do, that he would discipline me." *Hasina, 24, Chhetri*

> "If I hear that… one of my brothers-in-law has beaten my sisters and, you know, if there are disputes in their homes... I hear about it from my sisters. They cry to me 'he did so-and-so to me, I need money.'"
> *Priyanka, 26, Janjati*

These interview findings are in-line with those of the United Nations. They argue that within the Mid-Western region of Nepal, in particular, the movements and interactions of women are especially constrained while child and early marriage, dowry related incidents (including physical and mental torture, domestic violence and murder) and gender based violence are 'widespread' (UNFCO, 2011, p.7). Indeed, according to Gender Specialist, PBK, all laws pertaining to women have not been implemented effectively; despite the introduction of abortion laws, there are:

> "No services, hardly any services in the remote areas. When you have a law and it is the right of the people, you should make available the basic minimum services, at least. But they are not there." *PBK, Gender Specialist and Entrepreneurship Development Advisor*

Further to this, the interviews highlighted that while equality acts and bills have been passed, their poor implementation has had little impact on property rights for women *(PBK)*, the reservation of women in village development committees and district development committees *(DBK, PBK)* and punishments related to polygamy (*Keshika)*. While it could be argued that this incongruence between what is legal and legitimate will only change over time as society's beliefs are altered, it is important to acknowledge that the effectiveness of the institutional framework – at all levels – is constrained by a true lack of resources and capacity.

6.3.2. Doing Business

For entrepreneurship, in particular, formal institutions provide guidelines for new entrepreneurs to ensure compliance with the law, provide incentives to act and legitimise entrepreneurial behaviour. Without a supportive regulative environment, the propensity for entrepreneurs to exploit discovered opportunities is reduced. In 2011, The World Bank's Doing Business Project global rankings positioned Nepal at 116/ 183 (World Bank, 2011a). The ranking indicates that the regulative environment of Nepal represents a significant obstacle to entrepreneurs and SMEs. The eleven indicator sets (Table 6.4.) are discussed below in relation to Nepal.

Table 6.4. Indicator sets of the Doing Business project

Starting a Business	Zoning and Urban Planning/ Construction Permits
Registering Property	Getting Credit
Protecting Minority Investors	Paying Taxes
Enforcing Contracts	Resolving Insolvency
Getting Electricity	Trading Across Borders
Labour Market Regulations	

Source: World Bank, 2011a; World Bank, 2016a

In terms of the Starting a Business indicator, Nepal ranked 96 out of 183 economies in 2011. The process takes 31 days and involves seven procedures. While the cost of starting a business remains high (46.6 percent of income per capita), this cost reduced from 73.9 percent in 2008, 60.2 percent in 2009 and 53.6 percent in 2010 (World Bank, 2011a). To improve the ranking and encourage entrepreneurship, the number of procedures, the time taken and the capital required to start a business should reduce (World Bank, 2011a). By 2016, Nepal made starting a business easier by reducing

processing time and establishing a data link between agencies. While improvements have been made, because of the actions of other economies, Nepal's rank had declined to 105 out of 189 economies, placing it below the South Asian average (World Bank, 2016a).

The Zoning and Urban Planning/ Construction Permit indicator set relates to construction regulations, property rights and zoning laws that protect environmental concerns and incompatible land use. Nepal ranked 130 out of 183 economies in 2011 (World Bank, 2011a). According to the results, to build a warehouse in a town, assuming that procedures were followed, construction would take 424 days, require that 15 procedures were completed and cost 192.1 percent of income per capita (World Bank, 2011a). Similar to starting a business, the costs involved in dealing with construction permits has consistently reduced since 2008. Through the introduction of an electronic building permit system, Nepal made dealing with construction permits easier, resulting in a rank of 78 out of 189 economies (World Bank, 2016a).

Nepal achieved its highest ranking related to the Registering Property indicator; because of the country's low number of procedures (three), short time it takes to register property (five days) and relatively low cost to register property (4.8 percent of property value), Nepal ranked 25 out of 183 economies in 2011 (World Bank, 2011a). By 2016, Nepal's rank had declined to 72 out of 189 economies because of poor transparency, the reliability of infrastructure, land dispute indices and geographic coverage (World Bank, 2016a).

A sound transaction system and a credit reporting system allow businesses to use assets to generate capital securely. Nepal ranked 89 out of 183 economies in 2011 (World Bank, 2011a) in terms of the Getting Credit indicator set. While there is no public credit registry in Nepal and less than one percent of individuals and firms are listed in the largest private credit bureau, this is not considered in the ranking (World Bank, 2011a). In terms of the strength of legal rights for borrowers and lenders indicator, however, Nepal scores above average (six out of ten) and, as a result, it could be argued that the Getting Credit indicator fails to consider the potential for over indebtedness of borrowers and lack of protection for lenders (Ritchie, 2007). By 2016, Nepal's rank had declined to 133 out of 189 economies; while the strength of legal rights for borrowers and lenders had increased over the period, it is still the case that no credit information is shared in a public credit agency (World Bank, 2016a).

In terms of Protecting Investors, Nepal ranked 74 out of 183 economies in 2011. This indicator, which pushes for strong investor protections to allow companies to raise capital for growth, innovation and expansion takes into account director liability, disclosures and shareholder suits (World Bank, 2011a). There has been no improvement in Nepal's performance for this indicator since 2008 and Nepal has recorded average scores in terms of investor protection (World Bank, 2011a). In 2016, Nepal ranked 57 out of 189 economies, representing a further decline. This reduced rank indicates that Nepal's regulations offer weak minority investor protections (World Bank, 2016a).

Nepal ranked 123 out of 183 economies in 2011 in terms of Paying Taxes. The indicator considers the number of payments companies must make in a year, the time it takes per year and the total tax rate due (in terms of a percentage of profit). For Nepal, those results are 34 payments, 338 hours and 38.2 percent (World Bank, 2011a). While the time it takes to pay taxes in Nepal has reduced from 408 hours a year in 2009, total tax rate has increased from 34.1 percent during the same time period (World Bank, 2011a). In 2016, there was little change in Nepal's global ranking; Nepal stands at 124 out of 189 economies (World Bank, 2016a). While the number of tax payments and the time taken to file have remained the same and reduced slightly, the total tax rate due, in terms of a percentage of profit, has reduced to 29.50 percent (World Bank, 2016a).

The Enforcing Contracts indicator, which takes into account the cost, time and procedures involved in enforcing contracts, assesses how well the judicial system functions in an economy and the likely impact this has on operating companies (World Bank, 2011a). Nepal ranked 123 out of 183 economies in 2011 (World Bank, 2011a); there are 39 procedures involved in enforcing a contract, it takes over two years to enforce a contract and costs 26.8 percent of the claim. Nepal's ranking has remained consistent since 2008. Nepal achieved a ranking of 152 out of 189 economies in 2016 while this represents a decline in comparison with other economies, Doing Business claims that enforcing contracts in Nepal was made easier in 2016 through the introduction of improved oversight and monitoring in the court. This resulted in faster filing times (World Bank, 2016a).

Nepal is ranked 107 out of 183 economies in terms of Closing a Business and resolving insolvency and has made no improvements to the time it takes, in years, to close a business, the cost (as a percentage of the estate) and the recovery rate of creditors in four years since the launch of the Doing Business Project (World Bank, 2011a). By 2016, Nepal's global ranking was 86 out of 189 economies. While the recovery rate had improved, Nepal's score on the insolvency framework index, which assess insolvency legislation, was seven out of 16 suggesting that the regulative environment of Nepal is not able to support the rehabilitation of viable firms and the liquidation of nonviable firms (World Bank, 2016a).

The Getting Electricity indicator was not introduced to the Doing Business report until 2012. As such, there are no figures for the performance of Nepal in terms of getting electricity in 2011. In 2016, however, Nepal stands at 131 in the ranking of 189 economies (World Bank, 2016a). Getting electricity in Nepal takes 70 days, requires five procedures and costs 1134.90 percent of income per capita (World Bank, 2016a). Due to routine load shedding, the supply is very unreliable; there are frequent outages every day (World Bank, 2016a).

The Trading Across Borders indicator, which takes into account the number of documents needed to export and import, the time required, in days, to export and import (not including ocean transport) and the cost required to export and import (in terms of US$ per container). Nepal ranked 164 out of 183 economies (World Bank, 2011a). While the time taken – and documents required – to export and import has

remained consistent since 2008, the cost to export and import containers has increased every year (World Bank, 2011a). In 2016, Doing Business introduced a new methodology which did not take into account the costs involved to export and import (US$ per container). As a result, Nepal stands at 60 in the ranking of 189 economies, representing a marked improvement (World Bank, 2016a).

Overall, by 2016, Nepal ranked 99 out of 189 economies in terms of ease of doing business. While all indicators are poor, the regulative environment of Nepal is particularly unsupportive of entrepreneurs in terms of getting electricity (particularly a regular supply), getting credit (in terms of having a central agency to mitigate against overindebtedness and protect lenders from bad debt), paying taxes (in terms of an expensive, time consuming process) and enforcing contracts.

While it may be that the regulative institutions of Nepal fail to support an environment conducive to business, entrepreneurship and creativity, all the entrepreneurs interviewed stated that the state played a very small role in their enterprises. Due to the size and nature of the enterprises, many of the indicators for the Doing Business project (dealing with construction permits, protecting minority investors, trading across borders, enforcing contracts, paying taxes[10] and resolving insolvency) were not relevant to the entrepreneurs. The indicators that were relevant to the EWEs and

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[10] According to the Value Added Tax Act, 2052 (1995), VAT applies to enterprises that generate revenue of over two million NR (ILO, 2005) All the enterprises were generating revenue under the taxable threshold of US$27750 (Conversion rate correct as at May 2011).

NWEs, starting an enterprise, registering property, electricity supply and getting credit, are discussed below.

Despite there being seven procedures that individuals must complete to legally start and operate a company in Nepal, including registering for VAT and income tax, producing a company stamp and verifying the uniqueness of a company name, only one procedure had been completed by three enterprises. Only four entrepreneurs, all EWEs, Kanta, Tanushri, Priyanka and Sohini, had registered their enterprises at the Cottage and Small Industry Development Board (CSIDB). All other entrepreneurs either had no knowledge of their obligation to register their businesses or had encountered barriers to completion including illiteracy, inhibitive costs and poor understanding of the process. Despite Ashika and Ruchira completing and submitting the forms required to register their business, the CSIDB rejected their application because 'some papers weren't okay' (Ashika, 29, Gurung) but the fee was retained. Indeed, Ashika states that they didn't receive any help from the government during the registration process.

All entrepreneurs were either working from home or were renting space in existing buildings and, as such, indicators related to a new electricity supply were not relevant to the participants. However, the poor supply of electricity further highlighted the theme of institutional weakness. Their experiences support findings from the Doing Business report; Nepal was given a zero rating (on a scale of zero to eight) on the reliability of electricity. Depending on the weather, the supply of electricity can be as

low as four hours a day in areas of Nepal (Chianese et al., 2013) and all the entrepreneurs that had relied on or were relying on electricity to operate highlighted the difficulties they faced because of the under supply of electricity and resulting routine load shedding. The entrepreneurs have reacted to this by either working when electricity is available, which is often through the night, by relying on hand powered machinery to produce their products and working by candle light if necessary or by relocating their workshops to other wards with a better electricity supply. Indeed, only two enterprises (Sohini, Ashika and Ruchira) use machinery powered by electricity.

> "When the electricity comes on, I work on the business. Load shedding causes me big problems. I even have to work through the night sometimes." *Ashika, 29, Gurung*
>
> "The lack of electricity really hinders our operation. The electricity is really unreliable." *Alpana, 35, Dalit*

The interviews identified that four enterprises were operating on 'oi-lani' land – government owned land – that allowed them access and use (Sohini, Tanushri, Priyanka and Kanta). The processes involved in applying for ownership, through the payment of a land tax, were not well understood by all the entrepreneurs operating on government land. According to the World Bank, the low number of procedures, the short time it takes to register property and the relatively low cost to register property means that government processes are relatively straightforward (World Bank, 2016a). However, it is the implementation and delivery that makes registering property difficult. Specifically, it is poor transparency, the reliability of infrastructure, land dispute indices and geographic coverage that has resulted in institutional weakness.

The literature has highlighted the importance of property rights in relation to poverty reduction, capability expansion, facilitating entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship by women in particular (Nussbaum, 2001, Shirley, 2005, Bushell, 2008, World Bank, 2016a).

The interview findings highlighted that credit facilities are available to the entrepreneurs; 11 of the 16 entrepreneurs had personal or business loans. Funding sources included unregulated lenders (cooperative groups, individual money lenders, microfinance organisations, group saving organisations) and, less frequently, regulated sources (banks). While having access to micro finance credit facilities is critical for vulnerable groups (Ledgerwood, 2000) and can often deliver socio-economic benefits to borrowers and their communities (Yunus, 2003), the industry is often unregulated (Ledgerwood, 2000). This is the case in Nepal; the lack of a central credit agency was highlighted by the Doing Business report. While participants indicated that getting credit to support themselves and their businesses was unproblematic, the absence of a centralised system has resulted in some entrepreneurs receiving multiple loans. Alpana, an uneducated Dalit entrepreneur whose husband is unable to work after developing an unidentified illness while employed as a labourer in Saudi Arabia, had received loans of over six hundred thousand rupees, or eight thousand US dollars[11] from multiple lending sources; this is equivalent to over thirteen times Gross National Income per capita in 2011. Unable to repay these loans from unregulated lending

[11] Currency conversion rate NPR72.0 is equivalent to US$1 in May 2011. In 2011, the Gross National Income per capita in Nepal was $610.00

institutions with exorbitant interest rates, the debt had increased to nine hundred thousand rupees, or thirteen thousand US dollars – twenty one times Gross National Income per capita in 2011. At present, Alpana's enterprise does not make a profit. She acknowledges that she is unable to repay any of the loans. The ease at which entrepreneurs are able to get credit was demonstrated by Sohini. Sohini lives and works on oi-lani land and, therefore, has no collateral against which she can borrow.

> "Before, when I asked to borrow money, they would ask me lots and lots of questions. Today, if I ask for a loan, I am approved very quickly. They used to ask me lots of questions: 'why do you need a loan? Where will you invest this money? When will you pay it back?' But today, if I ask for a loan, they hand over the money very easily." *Sohini, 39, Magar*

In the absence of a centralised credit system that would allow lenders to identify clients with existing obligations, multiple lending by multiple sources has resulted in overindebtedness, a phenomenon which is becoming increasingly common in South Asia for vulnerable groups (Ritchie, 2007). It is only through the introduction of a centralised system and code of conduct that would allow for screening of borrowers to avoid overindebtedness.

Beyond the supply of electricity and unregulated credit, however, the interviews have highlighted that regulative institutions, including the government, have a minimal impact on the lives of the EWEs and NWEs as women and as entrepreneurs. Indeed, it is the institutional weakness and poor implementation that have a greater effect on the women and their behaviours. While the Doing Business Report indicates that the environment of Nepal is not conducive to entrepreneurship and creativity, the true

influence of (and the absence of) these regulative institutions on these women entrepreneurs is unknown; while it may be true that the environment requires businesses to comply with 130 processes from over 41 ministries and government agencies (World Bank, 2015b), clearly, the implementation of these regulations is weak. The findings have important implications for the Doing Business project.

It is argued that institutions must stimulate cooperation in terms of state monitoring and compliance with the law (Shirley, 2005). If this is not achieved, governments are either too weak or strong. Because regulative institutions do not threaten the personal independence of the participants, it is clear that government bodies and their influence on the participants are, in line with Shirley's argument (2005), weak. Such weakness creates conditions that do not support a market economy. At the same time, however, if the government of Nepal were able to strengthen institutions by implementing and monitoring compliance for all businesses in line with Doing Business recommendations, the participation of the established and nascent entrepreneurs in this research could be extremely problematic. For example, the Doing Business project endorses computerised procedures; in 2013/2014, the government of Nepal implemented an electronic building permit system and, as a result, this made doing business in Nepal 'easier' as defined by the Doing Business Project (World Bank, 2014).

However, levels of access to computers and the internet remain very low across Nepal as a whole and in the districts of Rukum, Salyan and Dang in particular. While 36.9%,

45.0% and 70.8% of households in Rukum, Salyan and Dang have access to a mobile telephone, only 0.7%, 0.78% and 3.78% of households have access to a computer. Further, 0.17%, 0.31% and 0.98% of households in Rukum, Salyan and Dang have access to the internet (CBS, 2014a). These figures are lower than the national average and substantially lower than the populations of Kathmandu (Table 6.5). Therefore, while the computerised system may represent a straightforward means of data storage, barriers to accessing this information may remain the same for much of the population. The Doing Business report fails to consider a number of key factors including literacy levels and ease of access to the key processes. Further to this and by its own admission, the project solely focuses on Kathmandu in Nepal and fails to consider geographical differences between districts and regions. As such, the true relevance of these regulative institutions to Rukum, Dang and Salayan – as well as the remainder of Nepal – must be questioned.

Table 6.5. Households with access to amenities, by district (percent)

	Computer	**Internet**	**Telephone**	**Mobile phone**
Rukum	0.70	0.17	1.28	36.9
Salyan	0.78	0.31	1.52	45.0
Dang	3.78	0.98	4.00	70.8
Kathmandu	35.50	19.40	27.90	90.70
Nepal	**7.30**	**3.30**	**7.40**	**64.60**

Source: CBS, 2014

6.3.3. Trust

In addition to ensuring compliance, institutions must be able to encourage trust to develop the conditions required to support a market economy (Shirley, 2005). In

relating formal institutions to their businesses, all participants indicated that they do not view the government as a supportive body. Instead, they had expected the government to affect them negatively:

> "Maybe due to illiteracy or ignorance, I was scared that if we asked for help or looked for training, people would become aware of our business and then the government would shut down our business. That's what I thought then. After a while, I realised that the government would support our business. I didn't know that before." *Ruchira, 32, Magar*

> "No, we had no help from the government. We did it by ourselves. My father told me about the registration process. To date, the government hasn't caused any problems. I thought they would." *Kanta, 22, Chhetri*

Research has highlighted that Nepali women do not trust authoritative bodies to act and protect them (Chhetri and Lama, 2013). Being able to trust authoritative figures is, according to Sen, central to the development of freedom (Sen, 1999). Achieving the freedom to trust constitutes an important dimension of the means and ends of development. While MED as a poverty reduction strategy was introduced by the Government of Nepal in 1998 and the Government of Nepal has acted as a partner in developing and implementing MEDEP since 1998, the women entrepreneurs were unaware of the government's involvement in the programme. Indeed, Tanushri, who has been involved with MEDEP for four years, was very insistent that MEDEP was not a government programme and, during her interview, she sought clarification from a representative of MEDEP:

> "[To DMEGA] Is it a government programme, sir? I don't think it is.

> DMEGA: the money does not come from the government, it comes from the UNDP but she is *sort of* right, it is a government and UNDP programme."

DMEGA's response is interesting because, officially, MEDEP has always been a joint poverty alleviation initiative of the Government of Nepal and UNDP. This unawareness of the government's involvement in MEDEP was constant throughout the interviews. All the entrepreneurs indicated that they hadn't received any help from the government both in terms of their entrepreneurship but also, in relation to their lives in general. Indeed, their view of the government was very negative, perhaps an indication of the shared feeling of myopic neglect in rural Nepal (Bhatterai et al., 2005):

> "No government will do anything for me. This government doesn't do anything for me. Even if I had voted, it wouldn't make a difference to my life." *Pari, 26, Chhetri*

During the current MEDEP phase, which closes in 2018, the Government of Nepal will assume full responsibility of MED in Nepal by replicating the MEDEP model under the MEDPA programme (UNDP, 2015d); in 2014, the mandate of MEDEP began to shift from direct intervention to the facilitation of a MED system in Nepal. While the Government of Nepal's long term development strategy identified Small and Medium Enterprises (SMES) as a key growth driver (Thapa, 2015a) and placed a focus on university incubations to support start-ups, the expansion of SMEs and attracting foreign direct investment in SMEs (NPC, 2016), the literature argues that

unstable politics and weak institutions are overarching constraining factors. The interview findings have highlighted a further factor that may constrain successful implementation: the clear lack of trust in the government. Without establishing institutions that encourage trust, the current relationships between the entrepreneurs and MEDEP may be compromised. At the time of interviewing, it was clear that the entrepreneurs were very trusting of MEDEP and their teams:

> "MEDEP help me. Their help has helped me move forward in life. Yes, with help like we have had… With the help of others, we can move forward. Even if we face sorrows and hardships, with the help of others, we can move forward in life." *Keshika, 32, Dalit*

> "Other people come here, they leave and don't think about us again. But MEDEP, they came and they helped us. The people that don't look back… most organisations are like this. They come with a selfish agenda." *Maliha, 26, Dalit*

> "I even lied to the people from MEDEP twice. I told them that my business was running fine, that I didn't need help. But, after some time, because they came from a place near our village and because they shared things about themselves, I felt comfortable talking to them about my problems and feelings." *Ruchira, 32, Magar*

The theme of trust is discussed further at 7.5 but, from these findings, it is clear that while entrepreneurs communicate mistrust toward the government, they place trust in MEDEP and their personnel, despite MEDEP being a joint government programme.

6.4. Institutional Change

The previous themes have highlighted a degree of incongruence between normative and regulative institutions regarding what is legal and what is considered legitimate. While all institutions are defined as social structures that have attained a 'high degree of resilience' (Scott, 2001, p.48), rates of change do vary. Normative institutions, including cultural beliefs and practices, are much embedded in the environment and, as a result, their rate of change can be very gradual (Shirley, 2005). The following section discussed three interrelated elements of institutional change – rate of change, resilience and emancipation from constraints (Table 6.6).

Table 6.6. Thematic Category of Institutional Change and Emancipation

Category	Raw Data Examples
Rate of change and emancipation	"Someone sneered at me 'if you are successful at this enterprise, I will cut off my ear and leave this place [eat my hat]'. I think they were looking for a reaction and they knew my husband wouldn't say anything. My husband didn't say anything. I thought 'I will do this. I will show them. I will run this business" (*Ashika, 29, Gurung)* "I don't give any attention to people who say that now [adopting non-traditional gender roles]. I say to other women 'if you have the courage, you should do it too.'" (*Ruchira, 32, Magar)* "The barking dog barks but I will continue to do what I'm doing. Even though they say those things, I don't feel fear or tension. I think I have made good choices, I'm doing okay" (*Kanta, 22, Chhetri)*

In terms of property rights, Hasina and Kanta indicated that normative beliefs were becoming more aligned to regulative institutions including the 2002 11th Amendment of Civil Code 'Women's Bill' which established equal inheritance rights to both sons and daughters and the 2006 Gender Equality Act which included daughters under the

Act pertaining to property rights and enabled women to use movable and immovable property freely without consent of male family members. Both Kanta and Hasina's parents were considering all their children equally, regardless of gender:

> "[my parents] didn't want to discriminate between their sons and daughters so, even though they had no property to give my sister or me, we got building plots." *Hasina, 24, Chhetri*

In discussing the patriarchal structure of Nepal, a national gender expert discussed the 'latent feeling of deprivation' shared by Nepali women, particularly prior to the People's War:

> "Women are very aware of their repression, subordination… within their homes, they really felt the pressure of restrictiveness and there was a lot of resentment. I think the Maoists really took advantage of that." *PBK, Gender Specialist and Entrepreneurship Development Advisor*

This feeling of resentment or underserved subordination was shared by a number of the EWEs who not only identified the ongoing repression of women and discussed the initial negative community reaction to their entrepreneurship but also identified entrepreneurship as an opportunity for women to escape from the subjugation they experience because of normative institutions and pressure from social and spatial contexts. Indeed, over time and through the course of their entrepreneurship, the social and spatial contexts and the related normative institutions had become better aligned to inclusionary regulative institutions.

> “People used to say ‘why are you doing this work instead of your household work?’ I think they thought that we should just be doing household work instead of leaving the household to have a business.” *Tanushri, 40, Newar*

> “There is a vast difference [in people’s perception of me]. Before, people thought that I could only work in agriculture and nothing else. But now…(pause)… it’s hard to appreciate myself but, if I go to nearby houses then most people say ‘Namaste’ to me [acknowledge me with respect].” *Ruchira, 32, Magar*

> “They [women] can prove to themselves that they can also do whatever they want. They can do many things even if they have little support from their families. Women can work if they wish.” *Kanta, 22, Chhetri*

Indeed, RPK, an advisor involved in female entrepreneurship in Nepal indicated that the women entrepreneurs she is involved with are

> “Becoming more than empowered, they are conscious, they are alert. They know where they are and what their roles can be and what kind of contribution they can make so this kind of awareness is a process to bring about changes in their lives.” *RPK, Female Entrepreneurship Advisor*

Unlike regulative institutions, the rate of change of normative institutions is very slow (Shirley, 2005). It is argued that normative institutions are modified only when other institutions force the change (Gordon, 2014). Where there is a degree of incongruence and a gap exists between what is understood as legal (as defined by laws and regulations) and legitimate (as defined by norms and beliefs), society’s beliefs must be altered to ensure enduring changes in all institutions (Shirley, 2005, Webb et al.,

2009). The entrepreneurs also indicated that, in terms of caste, normative institutions were also changing over time and what is understood as legal and legitimate is becoming better aligned.

> "Other people haven't said anything to us but we have been told that people have said that if we hadn't touched the doughnuts that they would eat them. But, because we touch them, they won't eat them. They're still not eating them but their children do." *Naina, 28, Dalit*.

> "I know that nothing will happen to them if they eat food prepared by us. Before, they hated us. But, now, I feel that times have changed. The generations have changed. It encourages me to stay in the business. I rarely face it. I think it is decreasing." *Alpana, 35, Dalit*

Further, where community acceptance had not yet occurred, the EWEs were less susceptible to discriminatory comments, indicating that cognitive institutions related to their own self-perception had changed over time:

> "Before, when I was not fully committed to the business… someone sneered at me 'if you are successful at this enterprise, I will cut off my ears and leave this place'. Since I've become successful, do you think that man talks to me? He does. He said 'so you did do it, you must be a witch'. I would say to him 'yes, must be. I am a witch [casually, dismissive].' What else could I have said?" *Ashika, 29, Gurung*

> "I don't really listen to what people say. The barking dog will always bark but I will continue to do what I'm doing. Even though they say those things, I don't feel fear or tension. I think I have made good choices, I'm doing okay… People will talk; they will talk and talk and then, one day, they'll stop talking." *Kanta, 22, Chhetri*

> "I don't give any attention to people who say that now [adopting non-traditional gender roles]. I say to other women 'if you have the courage, you should do it too'. Some people are angry but I run my house and we eat two meals a day. That's it." *Ruchira, 32, Magar*

Clearly, the EWEs have, through entrepreneuring, begun to achieve 'departure from pre-existing constraints within their environments' (Jennings et al., 2016, p.83) including discriminatory practices that derive from social, spatial and institutional contexts. Further, because the EWEs have developed cognitive institutions that offer insulation from any discriminatory comments, it could be argued that the EWEs have demonstrated a noticeable departure from the patriarchal psychological constraints that affect the pride, confidence and esteem of Nepali women (Sherpa, 2007), indicating that their entrepreneuring may be considered as emancipatory (Rindova et al., 2009). Further aspects of emancipatory entrepreneurship are discussed in Chapter Seven.

6.5. Historical Context

This section discusses the historical context and its influence on the lives of the women entrepreneurs. Providing an historical context for entrepreneurship facilitates an understanding of when entrepreneurship is embedded (Welter, 2011). This theme discusses the influence of the People's War on the women entrepreneurs (Table 6.7.).

Table 6.7. Thematic Category of Historical Context

Category	Raw Data Examples
People's War	"I think they [Maoists] caused a lot of problems. We couldn't move around freely, we couldn't form groups or work in groups, we were not allowed to assemble anywhere. There were a lot of effects." *Pari, 26, Chhetri* "The Maoists went to the food organization office to loot all the food. We were in bed at home and we heard the sounds of blasts and bullets. We were worried that they would come to our homes that day. But, aside from that day, we did not face any difficulties" *Alpana, 35, Dalit* "In the beginning, the Maoist activities affected us negatively but now it doesn't. Some time ago, they didn't let us live in [town] and we were chased from our home. That's why I don't live with my in-laws" *Hasina, 24, Chhetri*

From 1996 to 2006, the People's War, a radical movement led by the CPN/M was launched from the Rapti Zone, the location of the research. Despite ethical considerations being made regarding the participants' vulnerability in discussing the People's War in a conflict affected situation (ADB, 2012), and despite a warning from GDK to "be very careful when asking these sensitive questions; be careful who you ask and what you ask" (*GDK, Gender Development Officer*), the participants were very forthcoming in discussing the actions of the Maoists and the effect their actions had on their daily lives. While the literature indicates that the Maoists were very active in targeting patriarchal normative institutions (Tamang, 2009), the interviews indicated that the People's War had little impact on the status of women in their social contexts.

> "They didn't say anything to us about all humans being equal. I did hear that on the radio though." *Alpana, 35, Dalit*
>
> "No, they didn't say anything about women to us when they were here." *Hasina, 24, Chhetri*

> "They didn't convince me to work outside the home, no. The Maoists didn't influence my decision making." *Pari, 26, Chhetri*

Questions and criticisms regarding the gap between gender equality rhetoric and gender equality in practice, particularly in terms of Maoist demands, have been raised (Tamang, 2009, Tamang, 2011) but, since the close of the People's War and the introduction of reservation policies for women in the Constituent Assembly, PBK indicated that the Maoists were

> "Really very articulate in capitalising on psychological feelings and what women were going through. What was promised was never delivered of course." *PBK, Gender Specialist and Entrepreneurship Development Advisor*

Further, BCK, a gender advisor to the government and international development banks said the following about the reservation and representation of women in the constituent assembly:

> "At first, we said 'women's representation!' and now women are there, representing and then we said 'women's voice!' and we heard women's voices. Maoist women are so vocal but they don't bring the women's agenda, they bring only the party agenda which is very, very patriarchal. They are very indoctrinated by patriarchal ideologies." *BCK, Gender Advisor*

Because of frequent revisions of parliament and delays in producing the constitution the extent to which Maoist rhetoric regarding equality is enacted is still unknown.

Indeed, the current prime minister and leader of the CPN-M, Dahal, was only elected in August 2016. However, despite concerns of tokenism and positive discrimination related to gender quotas (Krook, 2009), it is argued that the descriptive representation of women in legislature ensures substantive representation of feminist issues, inspires other women to engage in politics and raise awareness of the capacity of women (Gurung, 2016). Rather than relating Maoist activity to the betterment of lives, the women indicated that they were, in fact, fearful of the Maoists. They wouldn't go anywhere alone, were afraid of being kidnapped and were made to believe that bombs would be dropped on them. Within Alpana, Charu and Hasina's community, Maoist activity was most prevalent; they looted the food organisation, there was gun fights, they lit fires in the hills surrounding their village and the Maoists demanded payment from all households. For higher caste participants, the effects of the Maoists on their daily lives were greater. Pari's (Chhetri) husband was threatened by the Maoists who demanded money from him. When he was unable to pay, they kidnapped him and was only released because Pari's father was from the same village of one of the Maoists officers. Hasina, Chhetri, and her husband were forced to leave their home because he worked for the police.

> "They didn't like the families of the police and they didn't allow us to stay there. That's why we came here. They gave me options: join with them or give them money… they would ask for as much as they wanted. That's why I couldn't stay there." *Hasina, 24, Chhetri*

The targeting of higher caste or more wealthy people was common across all Nepal and, in fact, according to a local Gender Development Officer at ADB, because the Maoists were focused on the 'elite',

> "No one wanted to be elite, no one wanted to be rich in their eyes because they were the target. The dynamics really changed." *GDK, Gender Development Officer*

None of the NWEs were operating as entrepreneurs during the People's War but, for the EWEs who were active (Sohini, Ashika, Ruchira, Rati, Rupali and Sanjula), there was minimal disruption to their activities beyond the frequent bandhs, or strikes, which make road travel unsafe. This affected the vegetable cooperatives in particular who relied on buses to transport goods to market. None of the women were directly involved in Maoist activities either through defensive or offensive action or through participation in the organisational wing.

6.6. Alternative Opportunities

This section discussed the business context which considers how industries and markets impact on and influence entrepreneurship and considers competition, industry life cycles and the economy as a whole (Welter, 2011). The literature has highlighted that opportunities for income generation in rural Nepal are limited; the agriculture industry is in decline and the country is shifting to a service led economy (Muzzini and Aparico, 2013). Further, the activities and the impact of the service sector are predominantly confined to the cities of Kathmandu and Pokhara and the trekking

routes of Lantang, Mount Everest and Annapurna (UNCTAD, 2011, Kumar Chhetri, 2015). The categories in this analytical theme are lack of alternative opportunities and remittance (Table 6.8).

Table 6.8. Thematic Categories of Alternative Opportunities

Category	Raw Data Examples
Lack of alternative opportunities	"We didn't make enough from the agriculture to feed ourselves even though that's all we were doing then… we were subsistence farming. There wasn't a lot. What we harvested only lasted six months." (*Alpana, 35, Dalit)* "If I stop doing this, what other job am I supposed to get?" (*Maliha, 26, Dalit)* "I just sold alcohol, earned some money and survived. So I was doing that; surviving like that." (*Sohini, 39, Magar)* "Besides labour work, I had no alternative opportunities for work then… Even keeping goats wasn't an option because there is hardly any fodder here." (*Keshika, 32, Dalit)*
Remittance	"Most men are working in foreign countries. No women are working abroad from our village. Some of them send money and others return with nothing. Some return very weak." (*Rupali, 26, Dalit)* "Since we started our vegetable business, many men have stopped sending money home. They don't send money because they think that their wives and families are managing with the income from the vegetable cultivation business." (*Sanjula, 27, Dalit)*

6.6.1. Lack of Alternative Opportunities

Prior to establishing their businesses, all EWEs and NWEs fulfilled traditional roles in their households; housewives, mothers and minor agricultural work including rearing livestock. One woman had prior experience running a small food and drink based enterprise while three other women had held part time employed positions (administration and NGO field work). Most women had also worked as unskilled labourers, crushing stones, in exchange for low pay or food crops. Their working lives

are consistent with and representative of women living in rural Nepal (Marit and Aasland, 2016). The lack of education, particularly among Dalit participants, has limited their opportunities.

> "I've only attended a literacy class and you cannot get a job from a literacy class. Today, people study a lot more and they struggle to find jobs. How can I compete with them?" *Alpana, 35, Dalit*
>
> "I wanted to get a job but, it didn't happen. We were married when we were very young. After marriage, we can't study so we can't get jobs." *Maliha, 26, Dalit*
>
> "What job could I get? I don't have the education to get a job." *Keshika, 32, Dalit*
>
> "Even if we asked for a messenger job, they would ask: 'have you passed your SLC?' and we haven't so… I wanted to get any job, anywhere at all, but I can't." *Pari, 26, Chhetri*
>
> "Today, there is little value in the SLC. Other people have gone on to higher education." *Rati, 31, Magar*
>
> "If my parents had been wealthier they may well have invested more in my education and I might have got an office job. But my parents weren't rich so it wasn't possible." *Priyanka, 26, Janjati*

The participants place little value on what is, for many of them, their only alternative to generate an income, beyond agriculture: daily labour work crushing stones. Central to the capability approach to poverty alleviation is the requirement of real and appropriate opportunities to achieve aspirations. As such, where a lack of education has resulted in limited opportunities - subsistence agriculture that does not generate enough food or income to maintain households for the year or daily wage labour –

there are no real alternative opportunities to improve lives. As such, entrepreneurship though the commercialisation of traditional roles constitutes a real opportunity for the women, even if it is considered a first step. This real lack of alternative options for licit income indicates that the women entrepreneurs in this research can, in line with the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, be considered 'necessity' entrepreneurs (Block and Wagner, 2010, Singer et al., 2014).

6.6.2. Remittance

A second consideration of the business context relates to foreign employment. In the absence of opportunities in rural areas and for youths, the economy has become dominated by volatile remittance earnings (Adhikari, 2011). Because the majority of migrant workers are male, it is argued that this has had a multi-dimensional impact on gender relations of power (Bhattarai et al., 2015). During the village hall meeting, foreign employment was discussed with the women entrepreneurs. Within their communities, 'most men are working in foreign countries' (Rupali, 26, Dalit), indicating a true example of the feminisation of agriculture in rural Nepal. For all the women, income generation was the motivating factor in their husbands working abroad; migration is viewed as a real opportunity for men when alternative income generating activities are agriculture or labour work, crushing stones. Indeed, Rati, whose brothers were working in Bahrain and Malaysia, confirmed that the money men can earn "in foreign employment is much more than the money I make". Rati's husband also worked in Malaysia in a supermarket for three years and, despite being hospitalised with health problems, returned with 150 thousand rupees. This, however,

is not representative of the other women whose husbands were currently or had been working abroad. Indeed, during the village hall meeting, a participant stated that

> "Maybe they will come home with all the money they have made but some don't bring anything back with them." *Village hall participant*

This was the case for Alpana, Rupali and Sanjula. Alpana's husband was employed for six years in Saudi Arabia as a general labourer, installing electric cabling in 'very, very tall buildings' and on oil platforms in the sea. He fell ill with an undiagnosed disease, was unable to work and had to borrow money to return. Alpana is very regretful of her husband's decision to work abroad and angry with the situation.

> "There are no benefits [to foreign employment]. He fell ill. He cannot earn any money now. That's it. There are no benefits… But, what's the point in being angry with him? Of course I feel angry with him but I cannot say anything to him. He is physically ill. Even if I say anything to him, it won't make it better." *Alpana, 35, Dalit.*

Living and working conditions for Nepali migrants vary between countries and industries. Quite often, work is 'degrading and dangerous', migrants suffer with health or psychological problems and they often have no legal rights or representation in the absence of a Nepali embassy (Thieme and Wyss, 2005, p.89). Like Alpana's husband, many migrants return home in debt, indicating the extent to which many returning migrants suffer with social and economic costs (Thieme and Wyss, 2005, Kollmair et al., 2006). As such, a greater burden is placed on Alpana as the sole earner for her husband, two children and parents-in-law. Like Alpana, Rupali's and Sanjula's

husband both returned ill with little or no money. Rati, Alpana, Rupali and Sanjula all indicated that, while their husbands were employed abroad, they had increased workloads, supporting the findings of the literature (Thieme and Wyss, 2005). Further, in the absence of husbands, when women live with their parents-in-law, they are often in a particularly weak position (Thieme and Wyss, 2005), as was the case with Alpana:

> "My mother-in-law and father-in-law are old now. They couldn't do anything to help and they also complained a lot. They don't like the food I cook." *Alpana, 35, Dalit*

While the literature places a large emphasis on ensuring that government policies are developed that relate remittance earnings to long term growth projects to ensure sustainable growth and focus on introducing policies to better prepare women for the feminisation of agriculture, the interviews have highlighted that, while there may be positive outcomes of remittance earnings, better employment and social protection systems should be developed to protect migrant workers so that the women left behind are not burdened with responsibilities during and after foreign employment.

6.7. Conclusions

This chapter presented the results and analysis of the first research objective through the application of historical, business, spatial, institutional and social contexts (Welter, 2011) to understand the lives of NWEs and EWEs and to understand the 'nature, richness and dynamics' of their entrepreneurial behaviour (Zahra, 2007, p.451).

The chapter has highlighted that NWEs and EWEs are all aware of their gendered role within their social and spatial contexts: the Nepali woman as wife, mother and nurturer. By extending these roles into a traditionally male gendered space – the public space – through commercialisation and entrepreneurship, the women have challenged gender norms defined by social and spatial contexts and influenced by the historical context that placed women, as well as caste groups and ethnicities, in a hierarchy. In doing so, over time, the perception of the EWEs by their social contexts (community and family) as well as spatial contexts (power relations), have been altered and, further to that, the EWEs themselves have acknowledged this change and aligned their self-perception with this new position. As such, the EWEs identify Nepali women as dominated and also identify the potential for entrepreneurship to act as a generator of change (Rindova et al., 2009). Indeed, through their entrepreneuring, the women entrepreneurs have demonstrated a 'noticeable departure' from economic, psychological, social, institutional and cultural constraints that previously viewed the women as 'nurturer' and confined them to the female space – the private home (Jennings et al., 2016).

Within the emancipatory entrepreneurship research, the role of entrepreneurship enabling organisation is crucially influential in constraining or enhancing the emancipatory potential of entrepreneuring (Al-Dajani et al., 2015). The subsequent chapter focuses on the second objective of this research: to understand the role of MEDEP, as an entrepreneurship enabling organisation, in the lives of nascent and established ordinary entrepreneurs and to assess whether, through the proliferation of

expert venture scripts, the established women entrepreneurs have been sufficiently equipped to act independently of MEDEP.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ENTREPRENEURSHIP ENABLING ORGANISATIONS AND ORDINARY ENTREPRENEURS

7.1. Introduction

This chapter addresses the second objective of the thesis: to understand the role of MEDEP, as an entrepreneurship enabling organisation (EEO), in the lives of nascent and established entrepreneurs and to assess the extent to which MEDEP have, through the introduction of 'proto-institutions', transferred, diffused and entrenched venture scripts sufficiently equipping the established women entrepreneurs (EWEs) with the knowledge, skills and resources to act independently of MEDEP and other organisations while providing protection from hostile institutions.

To understand the role of MEDEP as an EEO, the experiences of the EWEs and nascent women entrepreneurs (NWEs) were considered separately. As such, interview data were reintegrated into themes to identify commonalities before cross-case comparisons were conducted between the two groups. This facilitated an understanding of whether the EWEs have been sufficiently equipped to act independently of MEDEP through the diffusion of expert venture scripts and, in addition, whether the early experiences of EWEs were comparable to NWEs. As such,

evidence of the necessity for and diffusion of expert venture scripts was sought. Data from an interview with MEDEP personnel were utilised to corroborate findings or provide clarification. Further, data from local expert interviews were used to consider EWE and NWE responses in the context of regional and national knowledge.

The experiences of the women entrepreneurs were coded in terms of Smith et al.'s (2016) model of an EEO. That is, in terms of expert venture scripts and proto-institutions and, to understand the autonomy of EWEs, moving on from MEDEP and other supportive organisations. Data were coded under five analytical themes: facilitating entrepreneurship; exposure to expert venture scripts; social protection; 'optimal' impacts of EEOs; and gaining autonomy (Table 5.5). These themes are explored below.

7.2. Facilitating Entrepreneurship

Where individuals are uneducated, have little experience of non-subsistence work, limited or no internet access and a narrow social network, they will not have been exposed to sufficient skills and knowledge, nor have sufficient resources, limiting their capability to create productive ventures (Mitchell et al., 2000, Pryor et al., 2015, Smith et al., 2016). The previous chapter has determined that, because of the persistence of normative beliefs regarding the role of women and gendered space, all the women entrepreneurs each fit most or all of these characteristics. Where this is the case, EEOs, such as MEDEP, can facilitate engagement in entrepreneurship (Smith et al., 2016). By locating, motivating, encouraging, and developing such individuals (Patel, 1987),

EEOs can help them ‘seize and enact opportunities for entrepreneurial activities created by others’ (Tobias et al., 2013, p.730) to establish productive enterprises. That there exists inequality of entrepreneurial opportunities has been proposed by Baker and Powell (2016); that the women entrepreneurs are unable to establish productive ventures alone is a clear indication of this inequality.

This relationship between EEOs and ordinary entrepreneurs is particularly apposite for peripheral or developing economies where the entrepreneurial culture may be typified by ignorance regarding the entrepreneurial processes and alternative goods, services and ways of doing business (Smith et al., 2016). The EWEs and NWEs considered in this study are entrepreneurs involved with MEDEP, a poverty alleviation initiative of the Government of Nepal and UNDP that fills institutional voids to foster and facilitate productive entrepreneurship. For the entrepreneurs in this study, these voids, Mair et al. (2012) argue, exist as a result of the conflicting and contradictory institutions discussed in Chapter Six, and can impede, hinder and inhibit market functioning and participation. This section considers the processes MEDEP follows in recruiting individuals as the first step in creating entrepreneurship and considers how the organisational objectives of MEDEP may constrain or enhance the emancipatory potential of entrepreneuring (Rindova et al., 2009) (Table 7.1).

Table 7.1 Thematic Categories of Facilitating Entrepreneurship

Categories	Raw Data Examples
The role of MEDEP in venture creation	"They came to the village looking for people who were struggling economically. They visited everyone and asked us questions." (*Keshika, 32, Dalit)* "No, they [MEDEP] came here. I couldn't go to them! How can I approach Sirs at MEDEP? They spoke to us; the Enterprise Development Facilitator visited me. They told me about the programme's aims and purpose and I said I was interested." (*Sohini, 39, Magar)*
Emancipatory declarations	"We were already growing vegetables. When MEDEP came to the village, they asked if we wanted help to make it a business." (*Rupali, 26, Dalit)* "When MEDEP said to me, you can do it and we will help, I felt happy." (*Naina, 28, Dalit)* "The woman at MEDEP said to me 'Okay, sit down, we are giving priority to Dalit women and we can help you set up a business." (*Alpana, 35, Dalit)*

7.2.1. The Role of MEDEP in Venture Creation

MEDEP follows two stages to recruit entrepreneurs: the identification of programme implementation locations and the identification and selection of entrepreneurs. Stage one constitutes a preparatory assessment of the environment that incorporates business, spatial, institutional and social dimensions of context (Welter, 2011). Specifically, to ascertain the suitability of MEDEP intervention, the assessment reviews resources including materials, skills, socio-economic indicators and market access. While MEDEP is responsible for the preparatory stage, the programme is supported by local consultants, District Development Committees (DDC) and District Enterprise Development Committees (DEDC). The DEDCs have been formed under the pre-existing DDCs, as a direct result of the activities of MEDEP and operate in all the districts where MEDEP are present, indicting a level of local embeddedness that is required by successful EEOs (Smith et al., 2016). This stage is only an assessment of

context; little consideration is given to the communities or individuals that inhabit the geographic region. As such, potential entrepreneurs have no involvement during this stage.

During Stage 2, which identifies and selects individuals for involvement, PRA is adopted to map poverty and detailed household surveys are collated to generate demographic profiles incorporating employment details, income sources, land ownership information, assets, capital, income levels and management of food. Based on responses, unemployed household members are surveyed to ascertain their levels of literacy and education, skills, interests, economic sources, family background and whether they are members of community groups. It is interesting to note that, with the exception of considering internet access, which is very low in the Rapti Zone in particular (Table 6.5), the surveys completed during Stage 2 consider, among other criteria, education, previous employment, subsistence work and the extent of the respondents' social networks – criteria which, Smith et al. (2016) argue, determines whether individuals have been sufficiently exposed to expert venture scripts. Indeed, the interviews highlight that, during the initial intervention and as part of stage two of their processes, MEDEP played the active role in catalysing entrepreneurial behaviour in the recruitment of potential entrepreneurs:

> "They came to the village looking for people who were struggling economically. They visited everyone and asked us questions." *Keshika, 32, Dalit*
>
> "Sir from MEDEP came here through the Women Development Office. The Women Development Office told them about our

> Cooperative[12] and Sir from MEDEP came to our cooperative and told us about the project." *Hasina, 24, Chhetri*

> "No, they [MEDEP] came here. I couldn't go to them! How can I approach Sirs at MEDEP? They spoke to us; the Enterprise Development Facilitator visited me. They told me about the programme's aims and purpose and I said I was interested." *Sohini, 39, Magar*

In particular, Stage 2 places a clear focus on the social context – the dimension of context which is particularly important for entrepreneurs operating in hostile environments, women entrepreneurs and traditionally excluded groups (Welter, 2011), all relevant considerations for the entrepreneurs in this research. During Stage 2, the involvement of the potential entrepreneurs is limited to participation in household surveys. Further to this, their future involvement in the programme is determined only by MEDEP and supporting organisations. Findings from interviews determined that all the entrepreneurs were recruited as is described in MEDEP literature; MEDEP is an active recruiter, the entrepreneurs are comparably passive.

As MEDEP's recruitment policy considers a potential entrepreneur's living standards, family background and traditional measures of poverty including household goods, access to healthcare and water, maternal and child mortality and school attendance (UNDP, 2015d), but does not consider traits typically associated with entrepreneurs

[12] Cooperative: Self-aware Women Development Income Generation Cooperative

(Klotz and Neubaum, 2016), this confirms that the programme is focused on promoting general economic activities among the rural poor to facilitate poverty alleviation and bring about qualitative change in the lives of rural people. Indeed, according to MEDEP literature, 'participants are selected according to poverty criteria' (MEDEP, 2010a, p.10). Previously developed entrepreneurial ability, experience and skills or scrips are not a prerequisite for inclusion on the programme. Smith et al. (2016) argue that successful EEOs do not assume that their target groups are informed and creative but, instead, apply expert venture scripts to facilitate their market participation. As such, it is clear that MEDEP are not recruiting entrepreneurs with the intention to facilitate 'high growth potential ventures' (Smith et al., 2016, p.917) in line with Smith et al.'s (2016) theory indicating the need to substantively adapt entrepreneurial scripts to the context.

7.2.2. Emancipatory Declarations and Authoring

Emancipatory entrepreneurship literature stipulates the importance of making declarations (Rindova et al., 2009). MEDEP literature identifies change creation as the intention of their model; the purpose of intervention is to bring about qualitative change in the lives and livelihoods of rural people. Further, as MEDEP literature links grassroots MED to national economic indicators, the programme directly contrasts with traditional top-down approaches to development and growth that rely on trickle-down effects. Rather than viewing the entrepreneurs as beneficiaries of the programme, the women are viewed as active participants effectively shaping their own

lives; MEDEP is a supportive actor, helping the women to realise participation in markets:

> "When MEDEP said to me, you can do it and *we will help*, I felt happy.'
> *Naina, 28, Dalit* (emphasis added)
>
> "The woman at MEDEP said to me 'Okay, sit down, we are giving priority to Dalit women and we can *help you* set up a business.'" *Alpana, 35, Dalit* (emphasis added)

However, all the entrepreneurs unambiguously identified income generation as their intention of entrepreneuring, albeit as a means to an end. According to gender expert and former government minister, SYK, placing a priority on income generation is common for rural women entrepreneurs in Nepal because it represents a fundamental psychological constraint (Rindova et al., 2009).

> "Women entrepreneurs think that income generation is the most important… and it *is* important because if a woman has enough to eat, and if she knows that her children are full and getting two or three meals a day, she has time to think about other things. Otherwise, she isn't mentally free to do anything else but worry about the next meal for herself and for her children and this is often the case… Just go and sit in their kitchens and talk and that will be the issue: about what will they eat, what they will eat for dinner and if they have a proper roof over their head. It is fundamental poverty." *SYK, Gender Expert and Former Government Minister*

As Chapter Six described, the EWEs have, through entrepreneuring, begun to achieve departure from pre-existing economic, psychological, social, institutional and cultural

constraints within their contexts indicating that, despite their initial declarations, emancipation is an undeclared outcome of their entrepreneuring. A further element of the theory of emancipatory entrepreneurship is authoring. Authoring requires engaging with others in the entrepreneurial process to pursue change. Intermediaries such as MEDEP, have a crucial role in constraining or enhancing emancipatory potential (Al-Dajani et al., 2015). Indeed, their involvement can, because of conflicting organisational objectives, introduce new constraints that limit emancipatory potential. On paper, at least, the organisational objectives of MEDEP should not constrain the emancipatory potential of the NWE's and EWE's entrepreneuring. The extent to which this occurs in practise will be considered throughout the remaining analytical themes of this chapter.

7.3. Exposure to Expert Venture scripts

The decision to exploit an entrepreneurial opportunity relies on the development of action-based knowledge structures or expert venture scripts (Mitchell et al., 2000). Smith et al. (2016) argue that three types of expert knowledge scripts are required for the formation of new ventures: venture arrangement scripts, venture willingness scripts and venture ability scripts. Where individuals have not been sufficiently exposed, as is the case with the EWEs and NWEs, EEOs can provide knowledge, resources and skills through socially transmitted and shared entrepreneurship specific expert scripts. Though the proliferation of expert venture scripts, it is argued that there is the potential to link the productive entrepreneurship of ordinary entrepreneurs to economic development, the potential for transformative effects, including emancipatory

entrepreneurship, and moving away from dependence on EEOs and other outside assistance (Smith et al., 2016). The following sections consider MEDEP's role as an EEO and considers the necessity of their involvement and how the programme exposes entrepreneurs to venture arrangement scripts, venture ability scripts and venture willingness scripts (Table 7.2.). This section describes the entrepreneurs' exposure to expert venture scripts at the beginning of their entrepreneuring (for EWEs) and to date (for NWEs). In this section, the extent to which expert scripts have been successfully diffused and entrenched by EWEs and NWEs is not considered.

Table 7.2. Thematic Categories of Exposure to Expert Venture Scripts

Categories	Raw Data Examples
Venture arrangement	"Back then, I didn't know anything. I am not well educated. I was just surviving… then, I went through the enterprise training and I thought 'why not complete skill training?'" (*Sohini, 39, Magar)* "I had wanted to set up a business [before MEDEP came] but there was no one to help… I thought 'I don't have an education, I don't have any money. How can I start a business?" (*Keshika, 32, Dalit)*
Venture ability	"Miss asked us to think about what there is in our village and what we could do with it. For example, there isn't enough bamboo here to make bamboo stools. There isn't enough bimal to weave mats. So, after analysing everything and with Miss's recommendation, I chose the doughnut business." (*Pari, 26, Chhetri)* "Sir and Miss from MEDEP said 'we have done a market survey and, based on what we have found, it would be better for you if you set up a noodle enterprise." (*Hasina, 24, Chhetri)*
Venture willingness	"I think that until I have other options, I will continue with this work [the enterprise] to help with income." (*Charu, 44, Magar)* "It would be good to have a job… if I had better opportunities and it would make my life more comfortable than this, I would [close my business], yes." (*Naina, 28, Dalit)*

7.3.1. Venture Arrangement Scripts

Venture arrangement scripts are the knowledge individuals possess that allow them to engage in entrepreneurial behaviour. That is, an entrepreneurial idea, access to resources, venture specific skills and a venture network (Mitchell et al., 2000, Smith et al., 2016). Without these scripts potential entrepreneurs are 'less able to physically create a venture' (Mitchell et al., 2000, p.978). The elements of venture arrangement scrips, as defined by Mitchell et al. (2000), are discussed below. Again, interview responses relate to the early stages of the NWEs's and EWEs's entrepreneuring. Within Mitchell et al.'s (2000) research, having a protectable entrepreneurial idea relates to high-growth, high-wealth-creation businesses identifying an opportunity that can be protected from imitation. Here, in recognition of the need to substantively adapt scripts to context (Smith et al., 2016), a much more basic definition is used. That is, being able to identify any entrepreneurial opportunity. As such, their ability to identify opportunities through new means-ends relationships will be considered under venture ability scripts.

Access to Resources

Business resource scripts relate to a potential entrepreneur having possession of, access to and use of financial, human and other necessary assets to form a venture (Mitchell et al., 2000). MEDEP encourages the establishment of enterprises that require 'locally available raw materials, indigenous technology and small capital investment' (Younghang, 2013, p.78) indicating a level of embeddedness that acknowledges the potential for poor business resource scripts. Further, prior to involvement, MEDEP

require all potential entrepreneurs to complete a survey to assess financial capacity. Indeed, Naina indicated that low capital investment was a key consideration in venture formation.

> "[MEDEP personnel] said that noodle production needed more investment while doughnut production needed less investment and that we could do either doughnut or noodle training. He said that we should be investing in our business ourselves so we decided to go with the enterprise that needed a lower investment." *Naina, 28, Dalit*

All the entrepreneurs indicated that MEDEP had facilitated access to resources for their businesses that they were unable to obtain themselves due to pre-existing economic, social, institutional and cultural constraints. These were fixed movable assets (machinery and equipment) and financial assets (formal and internal loans and capital). Where necessary, MEDEP provided machinery and equipment required by EWEs and NWEs to start operating and were continuing to maintain machinery for one group of NWEs. These assets ranged from low cost utensils to produce doughnuts (Naina and Pari), to foot pedal sewing or handheld hemming machines (Keshika, Maliha, Tanushri and Priyanka) and a large hand powered machinery to produce egg noodles (Alpana, Charu, Hasina). Further resource support in the form of capital was provided to cover the rent or part thereof for NWEs and EWEs if they required it (Alpana, Charu, Hasina, Tanushri and Priyanka). The assets required and provided by MEDEP were second hand and sourced from the local area. That the women entrepreneurs themselves were unable to make such low investments in their businesses indicates the extent of the contextual constraints present. MEDEP also facilitated loans by providing assistance through the application process for illiterate

entrepreneurs (Naina, Pari, Sohini, Ashika and Ruchira) and, although not sanctioned by MEDEP, a DMEGA provided 'borrowed money' to an entrepreneur to facilitate asset procurement in a district in Dang (Kanta). According to a representative of MEDEP, this provision of unofficial 'internal loans' from DMEGAs operating budget was made available because, despite regulative institutions that grant equal property rights, women entrepreneurs were unable to provide collateral against loans.

> "We sometimes lend money to entrepreneurs to help them. The banks ask for collateral for loans so that's why we have been providing internal loans." *MDK, Local MEDEP representative*

Officially, however, MEDEP's role is to provide technical support and services and, according to MEDEP literature, the programme 'does not provide direct cash' (MEDEP, 2012, p.8). Without the support of such proto-institutions that help the women entrepreneurs circumvent institutional voids – in this case, weak property rights and lending facilities – the potential for venture creation may be reduced.

Venture Specific Skills

MEDEP require all individuals to complete a survey to assess skills, training and interests prior to commencing enterprise training. All the entrepreneurs interviewed underwent entrepreneur orientation training through the Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) programme. Training of Potential Entrepreneurs (TOPE) and Training of Starting Entrepreneurs (TOSE) are the first of four packages provided under SIYB and focus on enterprise development, the selection of an 'appropriate' enterprise, the production of a business plan, profit and loss and marketing skills

(MEDEP, 2012, p.8). The training, which considers low literacy levels and illiteracy, was valued by the entrepreneurs:

> "I felt good after training… it gave me knowledge." *Maliha, 26, Dalit*
>
> "We learned about the process of buying and selling, about income, profit and loss, attracting customers… before the training, if had sold some of my vegetables, I wouldn't do any calculations but, after training, we were able to calculate how much we were spending and how much we were earning." *Sanjula, 27, Dalit*
>
> "Back then, I didn't know anything. I am not well educated… I was just surviving. I just sold alcohol, earned some money and survived. Then, I went through the enterprise training and I thought 'why not complete skill training?" *Sohini, 39, Magar*
>
> "I learned a lot. I learned that by running a business, I can make money and be independent." *Keshika, 32, Dalit*

The importance of providing venture specific skills through exposure to expert arrangement scripts was made clear by SYK, Former Government Minister and Gender Officer. Women entrepreneurs with no market experience nor opportunities to access such knowledge do not have the skills to create productive and sustainable ventures:

> "It is so important to give these women training in how to run a business, like a business. They often don't even know what their profits are. You know, they spend money, invest a bit of money, they have an expense, they make a capital investment, then they have another expense. They should know what their profits are and how much they make every month. They don't. They should be saving money and some of it should go into improving the business. There isn't much in

> the way of growing, you know, they just carry on with their lives and they sell their food every day and so it goes on." *SYK, Gender Expert and Former Government Minister*

Upon completion of enterprise training, the selected entrepreneurs all received technical training relative to their selected 'appropriate' enterprise. Tanushri, Priyanka, Keshika and Maliha received practical training in the manufacture of garments; Rati, Rupali, Sanjula received training on pesticides and crop rotation; Kanta received training on basic veterinary care; and Sohini, Ruchira, Ashika, Pari, Naina, Alpana, Charu and Hasina received training on hygienic production of their products. The previous chapter has highlighted that the extension and commercialisation of roles and the exposure to male gendered space has helped develop Nepali women in the periphery and should be considered as a crucial first step.

Venture Networks

The final element of venture arrangement scripts relates to venture networks – having and using essential and unique social contacts (Mitchell et al., 2000) – which are critical in weaker institutional environments (De Clercq et al., 2010). Expanding social networks beyond 'tightknit ties' exposes potential entrepreneurs to arrangement scripts but can also increase risks and cause distrust (Smith et al., 2016, p.912). MEDEP encourage entrepreneurs to establish networks in two ways. The first is in the formation of group enterprises and the second is in the establishment of micro-enterprise groups. Only two of the entrepreneurs, Sohini and Kanta, were working individually; eleven of the women were part owners of group enterprises and three

were part of a large cooperative vegetable cultivation enterprise, involving fifty entrepreneurs. Sohini was originally part of a group enterprise; her other group members had chosen not to continue with the business because insufficient profit was being generated to support all group members. While entrepreneurs indicated that working as a group affects their ability to generate sufficient income (Alpana, Charu, Hasina) or better income (Rati and Sanjula), the benefits of remaining as part of a group enterprise were discussed:

> "We should not have to be alone. If I am working alone, I can only think about things but, in a group, we can share our feelings and we can work while we are talking… we share in our happiness and problems and offer consolation to our friends." *Charu, 44, Magar*

> "We get help as a group. We don't get help individually. I don't want to separate myself from the group. Every one of us gets help, every one... when we started working together, we started a group and became a family. I enjoy working in this group." *Priyanka, 26, Janjati*

> "We solved any problems that we faced as a group. We had good cooperation in our group and we solved our own problems and everyone put in some money. We didn't always ask for help from MEDEP. We solved problems ourselves… With the help and courage of our group members, we continue to be motivated to run the business and we manage." *Tanushri, 40, Newar*

In fact, Priyanka stated that she valued being part of a group more than the potential to generate income. As an unmarried woman, her enterprise group provided familial contact. MEDEP literature indicates that group micro-enterprises have been more successful in establishing linkages with 'other actors and stakeholders' (MEDEP,

2010a, p.v) and, as a result, MEDEP actively promotes group enterprises, encouraging women to work together particularly during the initial establishment:

> [About Alpana, Charu and Hasina] “They don’t have to work in a group all the time. There are benefits though. Maybe they will be able to expand the business together – they are yet to expand the business. A day may come where they will be generating a lot of income, there will be more sales, the business will be busy. They will need more people. Maybe then they will want to work individually.” *MDK, Local MEDEP representative*

MEG and DMEGA groups were designed as forums because poor household lack access to mainstream associations. All entrepreneurs were members of DMEGA or MEG groups which offer a savings and credit facility, a forum to share enterprise experiences, a social space to meet friends, the maintenance of linkages with VDC and other service providers, training opportunities and the opportunity for entrepreneurs to share market information and discuss risks. It is argued that providing the women a space where they can belong offers an opportunity for the development of sense of self and self-reliance (Mair et al., 2012). Of all the activities, access to credit and the ability to save income were most used and valued by the entrepreneurs. MEDEP literature confirms the propensity for the entrepreneurs to focus on the saving and credit facility but places a focus on ensuring that the entrepreneurs are provided with a platform ‘to share experiences and to pass their problems and constraints to MEDEP’ (MEDEP, 2010a, p.47).

There is a clear lack of the necessary venture arrangement scripts among the entrepreneurs in this research indicating the necessity for MEDEP, as an EEO, in the lives of these ordinary or created entrepreneurs. That potential entrepreneurs are less able to establish businesses without venture arrangement scripts, including skills, resources and an entrepreneurial idea, is confirmed by Keshika; Keshika indicated that she was interested in establishing an enterprise but did not have the required venture arrangement scripts that would facilitate her involvement in entrepreneurship:

> "I had wanted to set up a business (before MEDEP came) but there was no one to help. To run a business, you need money. Where would I get money? I thought 'I don't have an education, I don't have any money. How can I start a business?'" *Keshika, 32, Dalit*

For Keshika, MEDEP's involvement resulted in the identification, evaluation and exploitation of an opportunity (which was based on Keshika's personal interests), the provision of resources (a handheld hemming machine and food pedalled sewing machine), business management training and venture specific skills training and the introduction of venture networks through the establishment of a group enterprise (with Maliha) and a local DMEGA. Given Keshika's background – an uneducated, unskilled, socially ostracised, widowed Dalit and single mother with no experience of non-subsistence employment – the potential for developing the knowledge required to facilitate engagement in entrepreneurial behaviour alone is very low. At the same time, however, the opportunity of entrepreneurship is crucial for Keshika. As a widow, Keshika is the sole breadwinner for her household; she is the very definition of a forced entrepreneur – an individual that establishes an enterprise following a negative

experience or event such as the death of a spouse or facing financial hardship (Patel, 1987).

7.3.2. Venture Ability Scripts

Venture ability scripts relate to an individual's capabilities, skills, attitudes and behaviours that are required to identify and evaluate an opportunity through the identification of new means-ends relationships (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000, Smith et al., 2016), understand the entrepreneurial process and apply previous market experience. With the exception of Sohini, who had previously run a small food and drink enterprise, none of the entrepreneurs had market experience. Indeed, the previous work experience of most of the entrepreneurs was limited to subsistence work (small scale agriculture and daily labouring work), an indicator of not being sufficiently exposed to the skills, knowledge and resources required to create productive ventures (Mitchell et al., 2000, Pryor et al., 2015, Smith et al., 2016). Four entrepreneurs, Ashika, Ruchira, Kanta and Priyanka, had identified opportunities, or an entrepreneurial idea, but were not able to create productive ventures alone because of limited resources, knowledge, skills and confidence. Priyanka had, through the local disability association, received advanced tailoring training but, in the absence of relevant scripts, was not able to establish a business.

> "After I attended a six-month training course [with the disability association], I sat and home and thought 'how can I start a tailoring business?' Maybe the training course was not comprehensive, but I doubted myself and my abilities. I sat at home for two years." *Priyanka, 26, Janjati*

MEDEP's role was in the evaluation and in aiding exploitation of Ashika, Ruchira, Kanta and Priyanka's identified opportunities. In the case of the vegetable cooperative, MEDEP's role was to form enterprise groups and facilitate the commercialisation of the subsistence agriculture of women in a remote geographical area:

> "We were already growing vegetables. When MEDEP came to the village, they asked if we wanted help to make it a business." *Rupali, 26, Dalit*

All other entrepreneurs did not have an entrepreneurial idea and relied on MEDEP to provide this. As part of the programme's model, MEDEP personnel assess the existing businesses that operate in the area in order to identify potential markets and market demand. This opportunity identification and evaluation constitutes a key element of Shane and Venkataraman's (2000) entrepreneurship nexus and confirms MEDEP's role as an EEO. Further, MEDEP do not assume that the created entrepreneurs are informed, creative and possess appropriate venture ability scripts that are required to identify and evaluate an opportunity. Many of the entrepreneurs indicated that MEDEP had been the driving force behind the identification and evaluation of opportunities and, further to this, many of the entrepreneurs were led by the findings of the market survey and established enterprises based on the results.

> "At first, Sir from MEDEP did a market survey. He said that there were two opportunities here: doughnuts or noodles." *Naina, 28, Dalit*

> "Sir and Miss from MEDEP gave us many options: cultivation of Sichuan pepper, making doughnuts, noodles, loom work… We had a few options but, after training, we chose noodles. We thought the noodle business would be easier." *Alpana, 35, Dalit*

> "Sir and Miss from MEDEP said 'we have done a market survey and, based on what we have found, it would be better for you if you set up a noodle enterprise." *Hasina, 24, Chhetri*

Further, one entrepreneur agreed to establish a business selling a product of which she had no knowledge indicating no previous market experience and a real reliance on MEDEP to assume the active role in identifying and evaluating entrepreneurial opportunities through the identification of new means-ends relationships.

> "I hadn't seen a doughnut before. I was curious about them. I knew what noodles were but I hadn't ever seen a doughnut… maybe if Miss had said that we could have tailoring training, we might have chosen that. We just agreed with what Miss told us." *Pari, 26, Chhetri*

At the same time, however, potential entrepreneurs are encouraged to identify business interests and propose potential products and services during orientation training. Indeed, the entrepreneurs indicated that MEDEP had asked the women to consider the local resources available and explained the entrepreneurial processes involved in identifying and evaluating opportunities, thus developing the venture ability scripts of the created entrepreneurs.

> "Miss asked us to think about what there is in our village and what we could do with it. For example, there isn't enough bamboo here to make bamboo stools. There isn't enough bimal to weave mats. So, after analysing everything and with Miss's recommendation, I chose the doughnut business." *Pari, 26, Chhetri*

Pari is the same entrepreneur that proceeded to establish a business selling a product that she had no knowledge of indicating her lack of capability, knowledge and skills. Overall the interviews demonstrated that the ordinary entrepreneurs recruited by MEDEP did not, at the beginning of their entrepreneuring, have sufficient capabilities and skills that are required to identify opportunities. Further, as the entrepreneurs have little or no previous market experience or, indeed, experience of non-subsistence work, the involvement of MEDEP as an EEO is clearly critical in exposing the women entrepreneurs to required venture ability scripts throughout the entrepreneurial process.

7.3.3. Venture Willingness Scripts

Venture willingness relates to a commitment to engage in entrepreneurship (Mitchell et al., 2000), the propensity to take risks and, when facing uncertainty, the ability to take action and remain motivated (Mitchell et al., 2000, Smith et al., 2016). The previous chapter has indicated that all the entrepreneurs were reticent to establish their businesses due to prevailing normative institutions related to gendered space and that they were fearful of the business failing. For two EWEs, Ashika and Ruchira, MEDEPs intervention occurred after they had ceased operating:

> "We didn't know what we were doing… back then, there was no MEDEP. We did it by ourselves… It was a very small business. Very basic. I used to say 'we have to quit this business. There is no money in it, we have to carry all our products to market on our backs and we don't sell anything…' We stopped operating twice because we didn't think we could continue with the business. Then, one day, at last! The

> Micro Enterprise Development Programme came here." *Ashika, 29, Gurung*

The necessity for developing venture willingness scripts is clear; without willingness, individuals are not motivated or committed to creating or sustaining ventures, as was the case with Ashika and Ruchira's joint enterprise. Indeed, with little market experience, the NWEs are currently demonstrating uncertainty and a lack of commitment to engage in entrepreneurship.

> "I think that until I have other options, I will continue with this work [the enterprise] to help with income." *Charu, 44, Magar*
>
> "It would be good to have a job… if I had better opportunities and it would make my life more comfortable than this, I would [close my business], yes." *Naina, 28, Dalit*

Indeed, the EWEs indicated that during the early stages of their entrepreneurship, they were risk averse and struggled to remain motivated. Ruchira and Ashika were initially scared and "worried about the business not doing well.., worried about not doing things properly.., scared that we wouldn't succeed.., worried that we'd fail and lose respect" (Ashika, 29, Gurung) and this feeling was shared among the EWEs:

> "It was difficult in the beginning. I was uncertain whether the spice would sell or not. I used to fear whether… [pause] I had taken loan out and I feared that my business wouldn't be able to pay off the loan. I was scared that it wouldn't be profitable." *Sohini, 39, Magar*
>
> "I used to be scared about whether I could do or not. I used to worry that diseases would attack our crops or vegetables… I worried that I

> would lose that money. I felt scared because I didn't think my enterprise would go well." *Rati, 31, Magar*
>
> "I used to worry about whether my business would bring shame or dishonour to me and my family. I wondered whether I would win people over… scared that we wouldn't succeed. I was worried that I'd fail and that we'd lose respect." *Ashika, 29, Gurung*

The previous chapter has determined that the entrepreneurs in this research have few alternative opportunities to generate an income. In the absence of education, driven by sex bias, discrimination and economic poverty, as well as forces in the spatial and business contexts that limit available industries, there are few alternative opportunities to better their lives. Their assumption of their roles as 'entrepreneur' risks what limited assets they have, increases their workloads and threatens their position in society as well as their family's *ijaat*. The women potentially have a lot to lose in committing themselves to entrepreneurship, explaining the fear they share as NWEs or shared as EWEs.

The thematic categories discussed have highlighted the fundamental necessity for the involvement of an enabling organisation in the entrepreneuring of the NWEs and EWEs. Because of their limited exposure, an outcome of economic, psychological, social, institutional and cultural constraints present within the context, the potential for market participation and the creation of productive ventures without MEDEP was very limited. With few alternatives to generate an income, given the spatial, social and institutional context, the fundamental importance of encouraging their participation is

clear. The experiences of the NWEs and EWEs indicate that programme implementation reflects the emancipatory declarations of MEDEP's organisational objectives; the organisation and their personnel operate to bring about qualitative change in the lives and livelihoods of the entrepreneurs.

7.4. Social Protection

In addition to providing access to economic opportunities, MEDEP's interventions also provide 'adequate social protection' to the entrepreneurs (UNDP, 2015d, p.10). This protection from hostile and unsupportive institutions is a central element of Smith et al.'s (2016) 'proto-institutions'. There are two categories under this theme: counselling and hostile institutions and the normative acceptance of entrepreneurship (Table 7.3).

Table 7.3 Thematic Categories of Social Protection

Categories	Raw Data Examples
Counselling and hostile institutions	"If anyone says anything about me being Dalit, I would go to the MEDEP office and complain. I would tell my office. The office gives us strength, it helps." (*Charu, 44, Magar)* "We spoke to the MEDEP office about this issue [caste discrimination]. At the office, they put together a case against her [the agitator]… The people in the office looked after us during that time." (*Naina, 28, Dalit)*
Normative acceptance of entrepreneurship	"Without MEDEP, it would be difficult to be recognized as an entrepreneur. If we go through MEDEP, then all the micro-entrepreneurs can meet and have a name." (*Tanushri, 40, Newar)* "It is true wherever you go; if you are well known and people recognise you as an entrepreneur, they will be attracted to you. They will know us and our prestige will increase." (*Maliha, 26, Dalit)*

7.4.1. Counselling and Hostile Institutions

The interviews highlighted that it was, to a greater extent, normative institutions that constitute hostile or unsupportive institutions; the previous chapter has indicated that all the entrepreneurs had, through their adoption of behaviours that conflict with normative institutions, experienced inimical reaction from the community and their families. All the entrepreneurs indicated that MEDEP had provided valued protection from hostile institutions within their social (family support) and spatial contexts (power relations and legitimacy for women entrepreneurs).

> "We spoke to the MEDEP office about this issue [caste discrimination]. At the office, they put together a case against her [the agitator]… The people in the office looked after us during that time." *Naina, 28, Dalit*

> "If anyone says anything about me being Dalit, I would go to the MEDEP office and complain. I would tell my office. The office gives us strength, it helps." *Alpana, 35, Dalit*

> "If we encounter any problems, we call them. We ask them to come here and they do. They show us the way, they give us counselling." *Ashika, 29, Gurung*

> "It was much easier with MEDEP's help. MEDEP have also influenced our family. Our families also support us. They thought that if MEDEP supported what we did, then why shouldn't they support us?" *Tanushri, 40, Newar*

Further to this, prior to MEDEP intervention two entrepreneurs, Ashika and Ruchira, had experienced negative discrimination from the community who questioned their capability to run an enterprise and told them that they "wouldn't be operating for long" (Ashika, 29, Gurung). Because of such hostilities, and an absence of venture scripts,

Ashika and Ruchira closed their business "two or three times". However, since being involved with MEDEP, the proto-institutions have insulated them from any negative discrimination.

The interviews also highlighted the potential for regulative institutions to be unsupportive in terms of the channels of communication between the state and the entrepreneur. Of the entrepreneurs who were aware of the necessity to register their businesses, the illiterate women were not able to complete the process and required MEDEP to act as an intermediary to aid in the completion of government forms. The interviews also highlighted that MEDEP acted as an intermediary during official loan applications and during communication with CSIDB. It is not the regulative institutions that are unsupportive, as such. It is the entrepreneurs' lack of education and their exclusion – a result of prevailing normative institutions – that affect the entrepreneurs' ability to access regulative institutions. Because of their inability to engage with regulative institutions, and the poor implementation and enforcement of relevant laws and state processes, the influence of regulative institutions on the entrepreneurs in this research is minimal. However, Gender Specialist and Entrepreneurship Development Advisor, PBK, indicated that projects like MEDEP, or other EEOs, are necessary for women entrepreneurs because of constraining regulative institutions that are overly bureaucratic:

> "If the women are left to their own devices, it would be overly difficult for them to engage… these entrepreneurship development projects must be involved in some way or another to facilitate their

> involvement." *PBK, Gender Specialist and Entrepreneurship Development Advisor*

7.4.2. Normative Acceptance of Entrepreneurship

The protection provided by MEDEP also offers affirmation or validation for the entrepreneurs. Their involvement in the programme immediately assigns them the title of entrepreneur. A valued profession in Nepal, entrepreneurs are perceived as diligent, hardworking, skilled and more successful and the value creation, creativity and initiative displayed by entrepreneurs is valued and admired (Pyakuryal, 2000).

> "Without MEDEP, it would have been difficult to be accepted as an entrepreneur here." *Priyanka, 26, Janjati*
>
> "Without MEDEP, it would be difficult to be recognized as an entrepreneur. If we go through MEDEP, then all the micro-entrepreneurs can meet and have a name." *Tanushri, 40, Newar*

By placing a value on entrepreneurial behaviour, normative institutions provide social pressure to perform or not to perform. For the entrepreneurs, being viewed as an entrepreneur is positive. This supports Pyakuryal's (2000) argument that Nepalis living in poverty in particular value entrepreneurship:

> "I want to be a successful entrepreneur to earn more money... and also just to be called 'successful entrepreneur'." *Sohini, 39, Magar*
>
> "I want to be identified as a good entrepreneur. I want everyone to know me as Tanushri Sister, micro-entrepreneur. Micro-entrepreneur, Tanushri! I want to be identified as Micro Entrepreneur, Tanushri [surname]! For prestige, yes." *Tanushri, 40, Newar*

> "It is true wherever you go; if you are well known and people recognise you as an entrepreneur, they will be attracted to you. They will know us and our prestige will increase." *Maliha, 26, Dalit*

Therefore, while it may be true that EWEs had a lot to lose by demonstrating venture willingness and committing to their enterprises (in terms of their limited assets, workloads, position in society and family *ijaat*), there is also an opportunity cost in not committing. Where there is normative acceptance of entrepreneurship, the potential transformative effects, including emancipatory dimensions, of their engagement is clear; entrepreneurship offers the women the opportunity to secure and advance their societal position whilst maintaining family *ijaat*. In immediately terming a programme participant: 'entrepreneur', MEDEP are, because of the normative acceptance of entrepreneurship, contributing to the transformation of their position in society from unvalued, subordinated and repressed (as women) to valued, respected and admired (as entrepreneurs). While the previous chapter has demonstrated that this change does not occur immediately as behaviours conflict with gender roles and gendered space, over time, social and institutional contexts have accepted the women as entrepreneurs.

> "There is a vast difference [in people's perception of me]. Before, people thought that I could only work in agriculture and nothing else. But now…(pause)… it's hard to appreciate myself but, if I go to nearby houses then most people say 'Namaste' to me [acknowledge me with respect]." *Ruchira, 32, Magar*

While MEDEP literature makes no reference to the normative acceptance of entrepreneurship, their use of the title 'entrepreneur' only adds to the emancipatory

potential of the women's entrepreneuring, particularly if the women can see themselves as valued.

7.5. 'Optimal' Impacts of EEOs

Smith et al. (2016) argue that when local embeddedness, as an endogenous force for change, and bridging social capital, as an exogenous force for change, are combined, the impact of transferring and diffusing expert scripts is optimised. This section considers these forces under one analytical theme, through two categories (Table 7.4), to understand the potential effectiveness of the programme. This section concludes with a discussion regarding the potential for exogenous forces undermining the organisational objectives and emancipatory declarations of MEDEP.

Table 7.4. Thematic Categories of Optimal Impacts of EEOs

Categories	Raw Data
Embeddedness and trust	"I even lied to the people from MEDEP twice. I told them that my business was running fine; that I didn't need their help. But, after some time, because they came from a place near our village and because they shared things about themselves, I felt comfortable talking to them about my problems and feelings." (*Ashika, 29, Gurung)* "Why would I want to be without my father and mother [MEDEP as parent]? If something bad were to happen, if something bad were to occur, we know that we can talk to them, go to them and get help. We can get as much help as we need." (*Ruchira, 32, Magar)*
Bridging social capital	"I also got the opportunity… to go to a trade fair and an agricultural trade fair in Kathmandu. MEDEP gave me a travel allowance and daily subsistence allowance; it covered my bus fare and my hotel expenses." (*Sohini, 39, Magar)* "People recognized us as entrepreneurs – not tailors – and they knew us from the trade fairs and, in future trade fairs, they would visit us again." (*Tanushri, 40, Newar)*

7.5.1. Embeddedness and Trust

Being able to trust is central to the development of freedom (Sen, 1999). Indeed, achieving the freedom to trust constitutes an important dimension of the means and ends of development and is important in the development of a framework that encourages a market economy and fosters development (Shirley, 2005). The previous chapter has highlighted that while there is a lack of trust between the regulative framework – the government – and the entrepreneurs, the entrepreneurs indicated that, over time, a strong rapport had been established with the MEDEP personnel; they had developed a trusting relationship with the organisation and they have respect for the MEDEP personnel and the organisation as a whole. With little experience of market based systems and social networks mostly comprising family ties, ordinary entrepreneurs can view interactions with EEOs as overly risky (Smith et al., 2016). However, where EEO teams are deeply embedded in the local context and interact repeatedly with the ordinary entrepreneurs, EEOs are, it is argued, viewed as legitimate, trustworthy and no longer outsiders (Smith et al., 2016). Indeed, the importance of repeated interaction in establishing trust is clear:

> "I even lied to the people from MEDEP twice. I told them that my business was running fine, that I didn't need help. But, after some time, because they came from a place near our village and because they shared things about themselves, I felt comfortable talking to them about my problems and feelings." *Ashika, 29, Gurung*

Indeed, during the interviews, Ashika indicated that she viewed MEDEP as her foundation and parental figure:

> “Why would I want to be without my father and mother [MEDEP as parent]? If something bad were to happen, if something bad were to occur, we know that we can talk to them, go to them and get help. We can get as much help as we need.” *Ashika, 29, Gurung*

The entrepreneurs communicated a level of appreciation in being involved in the programme and acknowledged that the MEDEP had provided them the opportunity to better their own lives. Indeed, they did not see themselves as recipients of aid but viewed themselves positively as agents of change in their lives and lives of others. Further, as the programme had allowed them to make positive changes to their lives, they indicated that they trusted and respected the programme and the programme staff. This is in direct contrast with their feelings toward the state – that of a potentially negative force in their lives. For the EWEs, in particular, the programme had given them autonomy and a drive never to again rely on organisations for the betterment of their lives.

7.5.2. Bridging Social Capital

In addition to the importance of embeddedness, it is argued that EEOs must bridge social capital to successfully transmit expert scripts through weaker ties (Smith et al., 2016). Attendance at district, regional and national trade shows constituted the only evidence of social bridging between EWEs and NWEs and experts who are potentially ‘socioeconomically, geographically or ethnically dissimilar’ (Smith et al., 2016, p.914) in this research. Attendance at tradeshows is facilitated by the National Micro-Entrepreneurs’ Federation of Nepal and entrepreneurs are exposed to Business

Member Organisations and private sectors. However, MEDEP literature confirms that facilities have been introduced and are being developed further to establish linkages between the entrepreneurs and 'improved technologies, linkages to more sophisticated market networks and advocacy' (UNDP, 2015d, p.17) indicating that MEDEP do, within their programme, bridge social capital and introduce exogenous forces of change for entrepreneurs that have completed the Training of Growing Entrepreneurs (TOGE) package – a further training package for entrepreneurs focusing on expansion (MEDEP, 2012). Sohini, Tanushri and Priyanka have attended trade shows with their enterprises and value the experience but, rather than relating their attendance at trade shows to establishing links with sophisticated market networks and improved technologies, the EWEs saw value in generating further income and in being acknowledged as entrepreneurs:

> "At the trade fairs, we were recognised as entrepreneurs, not tailors. People became aware of us at our first trade fair and, when we attended other trade fairs, those people would visit us again." *Tanushri, 40, Newar*

For the entrepreneurs in this research, the level of bridging social capital is low. Indeed, for the entrepreneurs, information flows derive from interaction with locally embedded actors – the four services that are introduced early in their entrepreneuring: financial services provided by MFI or banks and supported by DMEGA; training provided by BDSPOs and supported by MEDEP; technology services provided by BDSPOs and supported by MEDEP; and general assistance services including marketing linkages and business counselling provided by DMEGA and supported by

MEDEP. As such, there is a risk the entrepreneurs are being exposed to a narrowed range of choices, knowledge and views (Smith et al., 2016). However, while it may be true that where levels of bridging social capital and local embeddedness are high, proto-institutional expert venture scripts are better transmitted, diffused and entrenched, it is argued here that, to deliver the organisational objectives of MEDEP without constraining emancipatory potential, a low level of bridging social capital is sufficient at this stage in the women's entrepreneuring. In this scenario, where embeddedness is high but bridging social capital is low, Smith et al. (2016, p.916) argue that a 'narrow range of expert venture scripts' may be institutionalised and that there is little potential in developing 'expert entrepreneurs' because subsistence entrepreneurs are working with 'purely domestic' EEOs. The development of expert entrepreneurs that can produce ventures with high growth potential is not the objective of MEDEP; rather it is to bring about qualitative change in the lives and livelihoods of rural people. In fact, it is argued here that the emancipatory declarations of MEDEP may be lost if exogenous forces of change are pursued to generate high growth entrepreneurs.

7.6. Gaining Autonomy

This analytical theme, gaining autonomy, relates to the development of the EWEs as better informed individuals with greater market experience. As such, the objective is to understand whether the EWEs have begun to assume the active role in discovering, evaluating and exploiting opportunities without relying on the involvement of EEOs or others. There are two categories under this theme: evidence of successful transfer

and diffusion and the reduced reliance on EEOs or other supportive organisations (Table 7.5).

Table 7.5 Thematic Categories of Gaining Autonomy

Categories	Raw Data Examples
Evidence of script transfer and diffusion	"I can run my business without MEDEP. I enjoy running it." (*Kanta, 22, Chhetri)* "Sometimes, I wish I had some more training and support but I don't think it is wholly necessary, I learned how to run this business by doing it." (*Ashika, 29, Gurung)*
Reduced reliance on EEOs or others	"If MEDEP goes, another programme will come and we can get new skills." (*Alpana, 35, Dalit)* "I don't think we would be able to run our business without MEDEP. If we cannot develop our skills, we cannot run it properly. We would definitely encounter many problems." (*Maliha, 26, Dalit)* "We do things by ourselves because we shouldn't rely on MEDEP for everything. I used to be scared because we didn't really know what we were doing back then. We hadn't run a business before. Now we do not feel scared." (*Tanushri, 40, Newar)* "I have to say, I wouldn't feel unhappy if MEDEP had to close because they have made us strong. We will never forget MEDEP and we have great respect for MEDEP. We will always remember what they have done for us. But, if they had to close, it… it wouldn't be a catastrophe." (*Ruchira, 32, Magar)*

7.6.1 Evidence of Script Transfer and Diffusion

Developing entrepreneurial expertise without the intervention or support of EEOs can, it is argued, take up to ten years (Smith et al., 2016). All the EWEs have been operating, under MEDEP, for four to six years. Previous sections have demonstrated that the EWEs have, through their repeated interaction with MEDEP personnel, been exposed to expert venture scripts. This section considers the extent to which the EWEs, as better informed individuals with greater market experience, have developed the

skills, resources and knowledge to facilitate their participation in markets without the support of MEDEP. In other words, this sections presents evidence to suggest that expert venture scripts have been successfully transferred and diffused among the EWEs. Their responses are compared with those of NWEs.

Venture Arrangement Scripts

If venture arrangement scripts have been successfully transmitted and diffused, the entrepreneurs would have the knowledge to engage in entrepreneurial behaviour. That is, having access to resources, venture specific skills and a venture network (Mitchell et al., 2000, Smith et al., 2016). Having an entrepreneurial idea is considered under venture ability scripts. All the EWE enterprises were in possession of, had access to and were using financial, human and other assets and resources to develop, expand and improve the profitability of their businesses. Unlike the NWEs, all EWEs were generating a profit and reinvesting these financial assets in their businesses. Further, having access to human resources, in the form of daily workers, while having the financial resources to recruit and remunerate the workers is a development shared only by the EWEs (Ruchira, Ashika, Sohini, Tanushri, Priyanka, Sanjula, Rati and Rupali). Where entrepreneurs do not have access to assets, they are 'less able to physically create a venture' (Mitchell et al., 2000, p.978) and, as such, because the EWEs have sustained, expanded, developed and established further businesses (in the case of Sohini), it is clear that over the course of their entrepreneuring (four to six years), they have gained better or sufficient access to resources.

All the EWEs indicate that they have developed the venture specific skills required to attain a level of competitive advantage within their business contexts (Mitchell et al., 2000). Conversely, the NWEs all discussed their lack of venture specific skills and felt that they were yet to develop sufficient skills specific to their businesses – practical skills and business skills. Further, they were only relying on MEDEP to deliver these venture specific skills, despite the availability of alternative training organisations, indicating a true reliance on MEDEP.

> "If we can get further training, it would be better for us… our customers wouldn't return the clothing we make… It causes me great stress when customers want new designs but we don't know how to make them. That's why we have requested training but we don't know what MEDEP will say." *Keshika, 32, Dalit*

> "We need more than three months training. When we started, I requested more training from MEDEP and I still think three months training is not enough for us to run our tailoring enterprise well." *Maliha, 26, Dalit*

In fact, if the venture specific skills of the EWE tailors, Tanushri and Priyanka, and the NWE tailors, Keshika and Maliha, are compared, there is a considerable difference. Indeed, in line with Mitchell et al.'s (2000) theory, to attain competitive advantage through expansion and diversification, Tanushri and Priyanka have recognised and developed the competences required. These skills, which include dyeing, knitting, weaving, manufacturing clothing and soft toys and training other women, have developed from the very basic skills currently demonstrated by Keshika and Maliha. All training opportunities have been provided by MEDEP.

While all EWEs and NWEs were members of DMEGAs or MEGs that offer the women a space to belong, share market information and discuss risks because they lack access to mainstream associations, none of the entrepreneurs indicated that they made full use of these venture networks. In fact, of all the activities available through these groups, access to credit and the ability to save income were most used and valued by the entrepreneurs. Nevertheless, MEDEP places a focus on ensuring that the entrepreneurs are provided with a platform to share experiences with other entrepreneurs and pass problems and constraints to MEDEP. All the women entrepreneurs indicated that a lack of time meant that they were not able to engage with DMEGA or MEGs; workloads of women in Nepal are, according to Komatsu et al. (2015), higher than Nepali males and higher than women in other developing countries including Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ghana and Mozambique. Indeed, all the entrepreneurs indicated that, as well as their involvement in entrepreneurship, they had household responsibilities that took a lot of time.

> "When there are opportunities to go to programmes in different places, [DMEGA] call me. I am a member of DMEGA but I don't really know everything that's going on with DMEGA now because I don't have the time to attend or walk to the programmes." *Ruchira, 32, Magar*

Indeed, Ruchira indicated that, because of a lack of time, she has asked her husband to attend DMEGA programmes in her place. According to SDK, this is common practice among rural women entrepreneurs in Nepal.

> "Women have excessive workloads. When it comes to training, because they don't have time, they send their husbands. All the husbands would go and learn to cook but then the women were cooking

> at home and in their businesses. For them, the benefits are all going to the men and the hard work is being done by the women." *SDK, Gender Officer, South Asian NGO*

Their excessive workloads are, according to SDK, the "main issue" for most rural women in Nepal and constitute a clear barrier for participation in DMEGA and MEG for the entrepreneurs in this research. Despite limitations on their time, EWEs Tanushri, Priyanka and Kanta indicated a desire to expand their venture networks and be renowned in other districts. An interesting dimension of workloads relates to the entrepreneurs prioritising the education of their daughters. For many of the women, the traditional assumption, driven by sex bias (Echavarri and Husillos, 2016), that girls need not attend school resulted in their assuming household responsibilities at a young age; indeed, it is accepted that educating a daughter is like 'watering someone else's garden' (Crawford, 2014, p.235).

> "I wanted to go to a literacy class so that I could read letters. Our parents were not educated at all and they would only give an education to my brothers, not me… I had to do a lot of work at home when I was young and I wasn't allowed to use my brain." *Alpana, 35, Dalit*

> "I didn't get the opportunity to read. There was no one else to do the housework so I couldn't go to school." *Ashika, 29, Gurung*

In recognising the value of education, the women entrepreneurs were all educating all their children, regardless of their gender.

> "I want to educate my children. I cannot read, I can't get an education now… if they read, maybe something good will happen for them… I

> want to invest in their education as much as I can… I want to make my children independent." *Ashika, 29, Gurung, mother to four daughters and one son*

While the entrepreneurs are prioritising the education of their children to break the 'vicious circle' of raising girls to be wives and mothers, an outcome of their daughters attending school and not assuming a share of household responsibilities is an increased workload for the entrepreneurs. Further research is required to fully explore this emerging phenomenon.

Venture Ability Scripts

If venture ability scripts have been successfully transmitted and diffused, entrepreneurs would have the capabilities, skills, attitudes and behaviours required to identify and evaluate an opportunity through the identification of new means-ends relationships (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000, Smith et al., 2016), understand the entrepreneurial process and apply previous market experience. All the EWEs displayed indications of developed venture ability scripts by identifying, evaluating and exploiting further opportunities through the identification of new means-ends relationships. Sohini started a mobile tea shop, where her husband now works indicating an application of previous market experience from her involvement with MEDEP but also her previous experience in a food and drink based business; Tanushri and Priyanka's group enterprise has expanded their product offering from basic clothing to all items of clothing, dyed fabric, knitted and woven goods and, most recently, soft toys made from fabric offcuts to limit wastage. They also run twice daily

training classes from their workshop and are installing a shop front on the main street of their town. Kanta has expanded her market by identifying opportunities to market alternative products to daily labourers as well as bulk orders to larger restaurants. She was, at the time of interviewing, installing pens for goats. Ashika and Ruchira have plans to introduce alternative products although they struggle to meet demand for their dried noodles. Finally, Rati, Rupali and Sanjula's vegetable cooperatives have begun exporting their goods to India and introduced a vegetable collection centre for buyers with the support of MEDEP. In running their businesses, the EWEs have developed a sound understanding of the entrepreneurial process. Two entrepreneurs from the same enterprise, Charu and Hasina, indicated that they had identified an entrepreneurial opportunity (production of candles), but were yet to exploit the opportunity due to a lack of venture arrangement scripts (resources and asset procurement).

Venture Willingness Scripts

If venture willingness scripts have been successfully transmitted and diffused, entrepreneurs would demonstrate a commitment to engage in entrepreneurship (Mitchell et al., 2000). Indications of this would include an improved propensity to take risks and, when facing uncertainty, the ability to take action and remain motivated (Mitchell et al., 2000, Smith et al., 2016). It is important to acknowledge that, for all the entrepreneurs, taking action has meant facing financial uncertainty and also facing the enforcement mechanisms of normative institutions, risking their and their families' positions in the community. Over time, because of their continued participation in markets and resulting income increases, and because of changing normative expectations of gender roles and their resilience, EWEs have developed venture

willingness scripts that have allowed them to remain motivated as entrepreneurs explaining their continued involvement in their businesses years later.

The development of venture willingness scripts is particularly noticeable in Ruchira and Ashika. During start up and in the early stages of their enterprise, they had faced threats of GBV from the community, Ruchira was accused of witchcraft and her husband was unsupportive of her business. They had closed their business 'two or three times'. However, at the time of interviewing, Ruchira and Ashika had been operating with the support of MEDEP for five years and demonstrated that they had developed venture willingness scripts. Initially scared, these entrepreneurs state that they are running their business well, that they are planning to expand, purchase further assets and are no longer afraid to operate as entrepreneurs demonstrating their commitment to engage in entrepreneurship, a propensity to take risks and, when facing uncertainty, an ability to act and remain motivated.

There is a clear distinction between the EWEs and NWEs in this research in terms of their developed venture scripts. The previous sections have indicated that the EWEs have, despite their lack of education and limited access to the internet, developed market experience and extended their social networks by operating their businesses under MEDEP. They have developed field specific knowledge structures that have allowed them to engage in productive entrepreneurial behaviour. Specifically, they have developed venture specific skills, access to resources and venture networks (venture arrangement scripts); the capabilities, skills, attitudes and behaviours required

to identify and evaluate an opportunity through the identification of new means-ends relationships (venture ability scripts); and, finally, the ability to take action and remain motivated in uncertain times (venture willingness scripts). The NWEs do not demonstrate similar development of venture scripts. In fact, with their lack of market experience, they have weak venture specific skills and are yet to develop a strong venture network. None of the NWEs understand the entrepreneurial process and are yet to identify new means-ends relations or evaluate and exploit further opportunities. Finally, the NWEs communicate uncertainty in continuing with their businesses. They demonstrate weak venture willingness and are less motivated than EWEs in terms of their futures as productive entrepreneurs.

7.6.2. Reduced Reliance on EEOs and Others

By interacting with expert venture scripts and gaining market experience, it is argued that created entrepreneurs will develop the knowledge, skills and resources required to be able to identify, evaluate and exploit opportunities to create productive enterprises without the support of EEOs. Without the development of these expert scripts, a continued dependence on MEDEP or other supportive organisations is not sustainable:

> "What happens if it [MEDEP] is taken away? Would women still be capable of running their businesses or doing it themselves or being self-reliant? Women have to internalise that they are capable. They have to see themselves as entrepreneurs." *PBK, Gender Specialist and Entrepreneurship Development Advisor*

In 2010, 2305 Social Welfare Council (SWC) affiliated organisations, including NGOs and other membership-based organisations, were delivering 'women services' across Nepal (Social Welfare Council, 2012); this number had increased to 2957 by 2014 (Social Welfare Council, 2015). In Dang, Rolpa and Rukum, 793, 165 and 158 SWC affiliated organisations were delivering services across nine working sectors in 2014 (Social Welfare Council, 2015). During the Village Hall meeting, to understand the influence of 'others', the entrepreneurs confirmed that a range of external organisations had operated in their remote communities over the years. In fact, members of the cooperative had received support and assistance from a range of programmes under eleven organisations since 2003. At the time of interviewing, only two were operating: MEDEP and a women's empowerment office. The transitory nature of NGOs was highlighted by the entrepreneurs:

> "If MEDEP goes, another programme will come and we can get new skills." *Alpana, 35, Dalit*

> "Other organisations come here, they leave and don't think about us again. But MEDEP, they came and they helped us. The people that don't look back… most organisations are like this. They come with a selfish agenda. We know they do." *Maliha, 26, Dalit*

> "I only heard this month. I phoned them. I had phoned to hear how he was doing. I wanted to hear whether my son had passed or failed his classes. Then the man on the phone said that the programme had finished. He asked me what I wanted to do with my son. I depend on CWIN… I can't afford to educate my children myself." *Keshika, 32, Dalit (in relation to her son being in the care of an NGO that had not secured sufficient funding to continue)*

The continued reliance on organisations, including EEOs and NGOs, is unsustainable. Prior to the government of Nepal assuming responsibility for MED in Nepal through MEDPA, MEDEP's activities were funded by international donors including UNDP, DFID, AusAID and NZAID (MEDEP, 2010b) and, during data collection, the programme had yet to secure funding for the next phase. The interviews indicated that NWEs are yet to develop venture scripts and rely on MEDEP to facilitate their entrepreneurship while providing supportive proto institutions to insulate them from hostile normative institutions.

> "For me, MEDEP showed me the way; before they came, I didn't know that I could run a business. They taught us how and now, I understand more. If I can continue to get support, it would be better for me." *Charu, 44, Magar*

> "It causes us stress when customers want new designs but we don't know how to make them. That's why we have asked MEDEP for training but we don't know what the organisation are going to do... we just think 'what are we going to do? What can we do? What should we do?' And so on…" *Keshika, 32, Dalit*

One group of entrepreneurs, Naina and Pari, indicated during the interviews that they were operating at a loss because, despite an increase in ingredient costs, they did not have the necessary skills to revise the business plan developed by MEDEP personnel during their initial training. However, the EWEs are beginning to adopt attributes of Shane and Venakataraman's entrepreneur (2000) as the active player in the entrepreneurial process.

> “We do things by ourselves because we shouldn’t rely on MEDEP for everything. I used to be scared because we didn’t really know what we were doing back then. We hadn’t run a business before. Now we do not feel scared.” *Tanushri, 40, Newar*

> “Yes, I can run my business without MEDEP. I enjoy running it.” *Kanta, 22, Chhetri*

> “Today, I don’t ask for much help but, in the beginning, when I didn’t know how to run the business, I asked for help a lot... I don’t use MEDEP labels anymore. My product is marketed as ‘[business name]’ but on the MEDEP packaging, it only says ‘Gift Spice’ so I don’t want to use them.” *Sohini, 39, Magar*

However, it has also been identified that normative institutions remain extremely powerful and, despite facing less resistance to their involvement in entrepreneurship and the adoption of non-traditional gender roles, there is a discrepancy between the cognitive institutions of the EWEs and the normative institutions. Because of this, where EWEs indicated that they continue to ‘need’ the programme, MEDEP’s role was reduced to that of a safety net. As such, for the EWEs at least, MEDEP fulfils a reduced role; a supportive role focused less on expert venture scripts and more on the proto-institutions that continue to provide insulation from unsupportive institutions in social and spatial contexts.

> “I want to stay part of the programme. That’s why I still have ‘Micro-Enterprise’ on our sign, because they have contributed to our business.” *Ashika, 29, Gurung*

7.7. Conclusions

This chapter assessed the role of MEDEP as an EEO, in the lives of created nascent and established women entrepreneurs. All the entrepreneurs were, indeed, 'located, motivated, encouraged and developed through Enterprise Development Programs' (Patel, 1987, p.175) and had exploited opportunities for entrepreneurial activities that were identified and/or evaluated by the EEO. The pre-existing economic, psychological, social, institutional and cultural constraints that have limited relevant skills, knowledge and resources of the EWEs and NWEs indicates the necessity for MEDEP intervention. Through repeated interaction with locally embedded personnel and through market experience, EWEs display indications that they have developed expert knowledge scripts and were beginning to adopt roles that made them the active player in the entrepreneurial process.

This chapter also provided further evidence of the emancipatory potential of their entrepreneuring. That is, through their involvement in MEDEP and because of the normative acceptance of entrepreneurship within their context, the women's position in society is raised and the family *ijaat* preserved, removing pre-existing constraints on behaviour and allowing the women to act independently, actively improving their lives and livelihoods. Indeed, the organisational objectives and the programme implementation of MEDEP only serve to enhance the emancipatory potential of entrepreneuring. Their involvement in the programme has resulted in the EWEs developing autonomy from MEDEP and other organisations; no longer relying on the next transitory NGO to better their lives, the EWEs were actively improving their lives,

indicating the potential for entrepreneurship to act as an adequate opportunity in the achievement of aspirations. This is considered in the subsequent chapter, under the third and final objective.

CHAPTER EIGHT

AGENCY, ASPIRATIONS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

8.1. Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to better understand the relationship between the Capability Approach (CA), and poverty alleviation and capability expansion, and entrepreneurship. Capabilities are defined as notions of freedom, their ability to achieve (Sen, 1987, p.36) and the real opportunities an individual has (Robeyns, 2000). Capability expansion, as the underpinning focus of the CA, is demonstrated by improved life quality, the removal of obstacles in life and what people are able to do and be (Robeyns, 2005). The overarching focus of CA evaluations is understanding whether individuals 'have more freedom to live the kind of life that, upon reflection, they have reason to value' (Robeyns, 2005, p.94). As such, in evaluating the success of their involvement in entrepreneurship (in relation to capability expansion), it is important to understand whether the established women entrepreneurs (EWEs) as better informed individuals with greater market experience have more freedom to live a valued life.

This objective draws on the findings from objectives one and two to understand whether entrepreneurship, as an adequate opportunity (Clark, 2009), and the provision of an enabling environment, the proto-institutions developed by EEOs, has

transformed the women entrepreneurs into agents of change. A central condition of the CA's definition of poverty alleviation is the requirement of an enabling environment where individuals need not face sources of unfreedoms or obstacles (Sen, 1999). These sources of 'unfreedoms', which include social deprivation, substandard public facilities, tyranny, intolerance and indicators of poverty are akin to the pre-existing constraints within the emancipatory entrepreneurship literature; the CA discusses the 'removal of major sources of unfreedom' (Sen, 1999, p.3) while emancipatory entrepreneurship discusses the 'noticeable departure from pre-existing constraints within their environments' (Jennings et al., 2016, p.83). Both approaches rely on the development of an understanding of context to identify and facilitate the removal of unfreedoms or pre-existing constraints.

The findings discussed in Chapter Six indicate that, by demonstrating a 'noticeable departure' from the economic, social, institutional and cultural constraints present in the business, spatial, institutional and social context, that previously viewed the women as 'nurturer' and confined them to the female space (the private home), obstacles in the lives of women have been removed. Further, findings from Chapter Seven indicate that, through the introduction of proto-institutions, MEDEP, as an EEO, have contributed to the development of an enabling environment and the facilitation of a real and appropriate opportunity – entrepreneurship – that that has the potential to offer continued and further emancipation as the entrepreneurs develop the skills, resources and knowledge to participate in markets and exercise autonomy and agency.

The objective of this chapter is to consider further elements of the CA in relation to the entrepreneurs in this study. As such, this chapter focuses whether the entrepreneurship of these women entrepreneurs has been transformative: if their quality of life or well-being has improved, what the EWEs, as better informed individuals with greater market experience, are able to do and be, if the women entrepreneurs better able to realise aspirations (Frediani, 2006), and, finally, whether entrepreneurship has allowed, or is allowing, the entrepreneurs to have the freedom to identify and pursue a valued life and/or shape the lives of others (Robeyns, 2005). As it is agency that defines 'what a person is free to do and achieve in pursuit of whatever goals or values he or she regards as important' (Gammage et al., 2016, p.4), the extent to which the entrepreneurs are free to act and bring about change is considered.

The responses of the EWEs were coded in terms of the contributions entrepreneurship has made to lives since establishing their businesses and over time, their aspirations and desires for their futures and the futures of their children. The responses of the NWEs were coded in terms of the contributions they hope entrepreneurship will make to their daily lives, their aspirations and the aspirations for their children. Data were coded under two analytical themes: agency and aspirations. These themes are explored below. The chapter closes with a brief case study of Sohini (39, Magar) to demonstrate how, through the application of the CA, individual differences can be acknowledged, enabling individuals the opportunity to pursue a life they have reason to value.

8.2. Agency

By taking a CA based, broad and agent-oriented view of development, individuals are no longer considered as recipients or beneficiaries of development programmes. Instead, with adequate opportunities (Clark, 2009) and an enabling environment, individuals are agents of change, effectively shaping their lives and the lives of others through action to realise aspirations (Sen, 1999, Frediani, 2006, Frediani, 2008). That individuals develop and exercise agency to facilitate the achievement of aspirations is a precondition for the CA and capability expansion; without agency, individuals are constrained, subjugated, passive and unable to take action to shape lives (Alkire and Deneulin, 2009). There are three thematic categories under Agency (Table 8.1.): attributing advances in well-being to self; effective power – shaping the lives of girls; and effective power – shaping the lives of other women.

Table 8.1. Thematic Categories of Agency

Categories	Raw Data Examples
Attributing advances in well-being to self	"I can help myself through my enterprise. Maybe I didn't have the capacity to achieve then. I didn't have a good brain then… today, the very same people that used to come to my restaurant, drink, eat and then verbally abuse me now say 'Namaste' to me and give respect." (*Sohini, 39, Maga)r*
Effective power – shaping the lives of girls	"We face a lot of difficulties because we don't have an education. So, if we can offer a better education to our children, they will have more opportunities. I have had so many problems because of my illiteracy; I want to educate her." (*Alpana, 35, Dalit)* "The most important thing is to provide an education to my children because I was not able to get a good education… if I had, maybe my life would have been different." *(Rupali, 26, Dalit)*
Effective power – shaping the lives of women	"I'd also like to work on the social development of other women… I want women from different villages to be inspired by us. I want them to be able to start their own small enterprises and make them bigger too." (*Tanushri, 40, Newar)* "It's important in all areas… it's important that people know that women can do these things." (*Kanta, 22, Chhetri)*

8.2.1. Attributing Advances in Well-being to Self

The development of agency is central to the promotion of individual capabilities (Deneulin and Shahani, 2009) but also 'qualified and constrained by the social, political and economic opportunities that are available' (Sen, 1999, p.xii). Indeed, the presence of supportive structures or bodies is critical to enable individuals to acquire agency and exercise choice (Deneulin, 2008). Chapters Six and Seven have indicated that the proto-institutions of MEDEP facilitated a level of departure from pre-existing constraints. However, for the development of agency in the entrepreneurs, it is crucial that the entrepreneurs begin to attribute their emancipation, or the removal of unfreedoms, to their actions, self-direction and autonomy (Alkire and Deneulin, 2009), rather than the activities and actions of MEDEP as an EEO. This acknowledgement enables the entrepreneurs in this study to exercise their agency in line with valued aspirations and functionings. Sen (1999) indicates that women's earning power and economic roles outside the household are contributory factors to women's voice and agency.

Chapter Seven has indicated that EWEs have begun to adapt the role of active player in the entrepreneurial process and have, over time, developed autonomy from MEDEP and other organisations, indicating that they are beginning to assume the active role; the EWEs in this research demonstrate ownership of their own well-being and achievement of these fundamental capabilities, including health, nutrition and valued employment (demonstrated through exercised functionings and discussed further at

8.3). Further, there is evidence to suggest that the EWEs do attribute life quality improvements and their departure from pre-existing constraints to their own actions.

> "I can help myself through my enterprise. Maybe I didn't have the capacity to achieve [before]. I didn't have a good brain then." *Sohini, 39, Magar*
>
> "If we dedicate ourselves to something, we can do it. I have to say, I wouldn't feel unhappy if MEDEP had to close because they have made us strong. We will never forget MEDEP and we have great respect for MEDEP. We will always remember what they have done for us." *Ruchira, 32, Magar*
>
> "We do things by ourselves because we shouldn't rely on MEDEP for everything." *Tanushri, 40, Newar*

If the EWEs have begun to see themselves as agents of change and are successful in exercising their own agency in realising capabilities, then they are more likely to realise functionings or valued beings and doings (Crocker and Robeyns, 2010), thus allowing them to shape their own lives. Within the CA, agents of change shape their own lives but also shape the lives of others; it is noteworthy that as early as 1792, Wollstonecraft argued that women had a responsibility to look beyond their own well-being and consider their children, others and society in relation to the rights of women (Fraser, 1999). The roles adopted by entrepreneurs in the lives of their daughters and other women are considered below.

8.2.2. Effective Power – Shaping Lives of Girls

If there is to be sustainable change for Nepali women, Girl Effect literature argues that investment must be made in the 'under-utilised talent pool' (Sensoy and Marshall, 2010 p.300) of girls as the most powerful force to affect such change (de Carvalho and Schia, 2011 p.14). When considering children under the CA, a focus should be placed on the development of capabilities that are relevant for adulthood (Tikly and Barrett, 2011). Indeed, it is argued that consideration must be given to the freedom a child has in the present as well as the freedom they will have in the future (Saito, 2003).

Education is both instrumentally and intrinsically important in terms of capability expansion; instrumentally, education supports livelihoods, generates incomes and reduces human insecurity (Tikly and Barrett, 2011) and intrinsically, education is a capability in its own right because it informs and cultivates the ability to 'imagine, think and reason' (Nussbaum, 2001, p.78). Further, it is argued educating girls positively affects maternal and sexual health, reduces domestic violence and sexual harassment and also increases civic and political participation, among many other benefits (Murphy and Carr, 2007). While the government state that basic education (grades one to eight) is free in Nepal, this is often not the case; illegal tuition fees, textbook fees, compulsory uniforms and parental contributions to cover teacher deficits are common (Kattan and Burnett, 2004, Pherali et al., 2011). Despite the costs of enrolling children and despite economic constraints (for the NWEs in particular), all the entrepreneurs in this research placed value on education; all their school-aged

children were attending school. For the nascent entrepreneurs, even supplying their children with pencils and jotters was beyond their capability.

> "Sometimes I can't even give them a jotter and a pencil. When they ask bigger things of me… how am I supposed to make them doctors and pilots? I cannot meet their simple needs today." *Naina, 28, Dalit*
>
> "If the business starts making money, I'd like to be able to give pencils and paper to the children for school." *Alpana, 35, Dalit*

Further, the children of EWEs had been enrolled in for-profit private schools that offer higher educational standards (Thapa, 2015b). Chapter Seven highlighted the effect that sex bias, son preference and gendered behavioural norms have had on the lives of the EWEs and NWE; their lack of education has limited their opportunities. That sons are preferred in Nepal is widely accepted and rooted in Hindu beliefs (Koolwal, 2007, Crawford, 2014). Traditionally, having a son is both a practical necessity – because sons care for parents in old age – and religiously significant – because only sons can perform death rites (Koolwal, 2007). Despite the entrepreneurs indicating that sex bias is less common today, Kanta indicated that, within her community at least, male sons are still preferred:

> "When I had my son, the other women in the village gave birth to daughters. I was the only one that had a son. Everyone said that I was so lucky. I don't know about that." *Kanta, 22, Chhetri*

Therefore, by prioritising the education of their daughters, despite the detrimental effect on their workloads and individual well-being, the entrepreneurs are shaping the lives of the next generation of Nepali women.

> "Oh, if I couldn't provide an education to my daughters, it would kill me. I will give them an education in any way I can. Even if my enterprise wasn't profitable, I would sell my land and invest that money in my children's education. I will do my very best and invest in their education." *Ashika, 29, Gurung, mother to four daughters and one son*

> "We face a lot of difficulties because we don't have an education. So, if we can offer a better education to our children, they will have more opportunities. I have had so many problems because of my illiteracy; I want to educate her." *Alpana, 35, Dalit, mother to one daughter and one son*

> "The most important thing is to provide an education to my children because I was not able to get a good education… if I had, maybe my life would have been different." *Rupali, 26, Dalit, mother to two daughters and one son*

> "I think that if the children are educated, they will be able to anything with their lives and they will be able to avoid hardship. Even if they decide not to get a job and they run a small retail shop or something, no one will be able to cheat them out of money because they will understand accounting and mathematics. I hope they will do something with their lives if I invest in their education." *Ruchira, 32, Magar, mother to four daughters and one son*

Research by Walker (2006) in sub-Saharan Africa identified eight capabilities that are directly associated with gaining an education. If the next generation of Nepali women develop these capabilities – autonomy; knowledge; social relations; respect and

recognition; motivation to learn and succeed; voice; bodily integrity and health; and emotional integrity and emotions – by gaining an education, this would represent true departure from the intellectual, psychological, economic, social, institutional or cultural constraints (Rindova et al., 2009) that have, over the years, inhibited the actions of their mothers. While all entrepreneurs with school aged children were providing their children with an education, their involvement in entrepreneurship, and the removal of economic constraints, has allowed the EWEs in particular, to shape the lives of their children through their enrolment at private schools with raised standards. For most of the entrepreneurs, education meant autonomy and being unrestricted, indicating further awareness of the constraints on women and other socially excluded groups:

> "We wouldn't worry about them [if they were educated]. They would be independent and able to look after themselves." *Hasina, 24, Chhetri, mother to one daughter*
>
> "Life will be easier for them if they can stand on their own two feet. It would make me feel good too." *Alpana, 35, Dalit, mother to one daughter and one son*
>
> "If you educate your children, they will be independent and it will be good for them." *Keshika, 32, Dalit, mother to two sons*
>
> "If I give her better education, she will study hard and she will have a better future. If she has better future, she will be able to stand on her own two feet and, if she can stand on her own two feet, it will be better for her." *Ashika, 29, Gurung, mother to four daughters and one son*
>
> "You [about PT] have a good education, that's why you are riding in a car and visiting us here. We are limited, we have to stay at home." *Rupali, 26, Dalit, mother to one son and two daughters*

By investing in the 'under-utilised talent pool' (Sensoy and Marshall, 2010 p.300) of girls, the Girl Effect literature argues that the entrepreneurs are contributing to a powerful ripple effect that drives social and economic development to end poverty (Switzer, 2013). Indeed, by investing in their education, the entrepreneurs are breaking a vicious circle that perpetuates gender norms and raises girls to fulfil the roles of wives and mothers, as Rati identifies:

> "I want them to study well at school. In our village, our daughters often marry before the SLC examination. I want my daughters to study hard and not marry before their SLC. I want them to be known for this. I don't want them to be married like I was in grade eight or nine. I just want them to avoid a life like ours; working on the land and doing back breaking work." *Rati, 31, Magar, mother to two daughters and one son*

8.2.3. Effective Power – Shaping Lives of Women

Beyond advancing individual well-being, the development of agency can contribute to community development (Alkire and Deneulin, 2009). Indeed, it is argued that agency can 'deliberately bring about radical change through improving societal organisation and commitment' (Sen, 2004, p.vii). However, the importance of collective action is noted by Deneulin (2008); in practice, an individual's ability to live the life they have reason to value relies on others sharing the same values and providing collective support. The interviews have determined that, over time, social and institutional contexts have accepted EWEs occupying male gendered space and fulfilling non-traditional gender roles and yet, other women within their communities continue to face discrimination and are subject to forces present within patriarchal society including GBV. That women represent the subordinated population was recognised by

the entrepreneurs and, for EWEs Sohini, Tanushri, Ashika, Priyanka and Ruchira, a value was placed on using their developed agency to contribute to the lives of others.

> "If I can do something to help others make their lives better, I would like to do that. I don't think I could get an office job now but, maybe through community work, I could do something good now for the welfare of others. I have also faced hardship and come out the other side. So, I know I could support those facing hardship. I could help them, give advice" *Ruchira, 32, Magar*

> "I'd also like to work on the social development of other women… I want women from different villages to be inspired by us. I want them to be able to start their own small enterprises and make them bigger too" *Tanushri, 40, Newar*

> "I wish that I will be able to teach my sister-in-law how to manage this tailoring enterprise better so that she can follow in my footsteps. So that she is a better tailor, so that her life is better." *Priyanka, 26, Janjati*

Through their involvement in entrepreneurship, the EWEs have begun demonstrate the agency required to shape their own lives. Their developed agency is a result of the agency of others: MEDEP and their goal to bring about qualitative change in the lives and livelihoods of rural people. By initially adopting a minor role between programme formation and execution (as the passive created entrepreneur), the entrepreneurs exercised indirect agency (Crocker and Robeyns, 2010) but, as the entrepreneurs begin to consider the lives of others and assume an intentional role in bettering the lives of others, they are exercising direct or participatory agency (Crocker and Robeyns, 2010). Further to this, as the EWEs begin to assume direct agency to better lives by replicating

entrepreneurship in other women, they share the same intention as MEDEP and thus, are participating in collective agency (Kippax et al., 2013).

> “We *should* leave our homes and learn about the outside world so that society will know that women can do things because women are dominated. There may be other sisters are facing similar problems and, if they have the training that I have had and if they set up their own business, maybe they will become as happy as I am.” *Tanushri, 40, Newar*

Indeed, if this desire to help other women is an outcome of their involvement in entrepreneurship and is shared by other entrepreneurs benefitting from MEDEP intervention, their collective agency has the potential to be a powerful force in advocating, initiating and implementing change and demonstrating the emancipatory potential of entrepreneurship for the entrepreneurs themselves but also for other women that benefit from such collective agency. As the entrepreneurs’ freedom to live a valued life increases, so does their ability to ‘help themselves and also to influence the world’ (Sen, 1999, p.18). This, Sen (1999) argues, is central to the process of development.

Agency is a critical condition for the capability approach to poverty alleviation. Chapters Six and Seven have ascertained that the NWEs are, while the EWEs were (at the beginning of their involvement in entrepreneurship), constrained, subjugated, passive and unable to exercise agency to take action because of the pre-exiting constraints, or unfreedoms, that have affected their opportunities to engage and

exercise agency. MEDEP, as a supportive structure that facilitates participation and economic and social opportunities, has contributed to an environment that enables individuals to acquire agency and exercise choice. The EWEs have demonstrated that they have, over time, developed direct and collective agency that is required to take action to shape their lives, and the lives of other women, and realise aspirations. Aspirations are considered below, under the next analytical theme.

8.3. Aspirations

Agency, it is argued, is exercised with respect to the goals, or aspirations, that an individual values and has reason to value. Being able to identify aspirations is crucial in the pursuit of a valued life while the achievement of aspirations contributes to well-being and life quality. However, arguments relating to the adaptation problem or satisfaction paradox raise questions regarding the elasticity of aspirations and the extent to which individuals facing hardship are able to articulate and demand a better form of life (Neff, 2009). Clark (2011) argues that adaptation can be triggered by past experience, future expectations, new opportunities, social comparisons with others or exogenous shocks. Under this analytical theme, there are three categories: downward adaptation and the volatility of poverty; upward adaptation – new opportunities; and upward adaptation – role models (Table 8.2). These are explored below.

Table 8.2. Thematic Categories of Aspirations

Categories	Raw Data Examples
Downward adaptation	"We have to be satisfied whether our lives are good or not otherwise, how would we cope?" (*Alpana, 35, Dalit)* "Sometimes I can't even give them a jotter and a pencil. When they ask bigger things of me… how am I supposed to make them doctors and pilots? I cannot meet their simple needs today." (*Naina, 28, Dalit)*
Upward adaptation – new opportunities	"When we started the business, we had completely different dreams and what we have today is totally different to what we had dreamed about. It's hard to understand what has happened to us." (*Ashika, 29, Gurung)* "The enterprise has done amazing things for me. I can train anyone and I'm comfortable meeting people and I think I can go anywhere, visit anywhere. My attitude has changed." (*Priyanka, 26, Janjati)* "I'm always dreaming because, if you don't dream, nothing good will happen." (*Ruchira, 32, Magar)*
Upward adaptation - role models	"We have seen other women taking on different roles from usual. We thought we'd like to be like them. They have progressed and offered equal opportunities to their sons and daughters." *(Alpana, 35, Dalit)* "If we do something good, maybe we can be an example to the women of remote villages. Maybe they will see our achievements and maybe they will be motivated to try and do it themselves." (*Tanushri, 40, Newar)*

8.3.1. Downward Adaptation and Volatility of Poverty

Desires, Griffin (1986) posits, are shaped by expectations and circumstances. That 'people's actual desires are often unrelated to what is good for them' because of a lack of exposure, information and analysis (Qizilbash, 2006b, p.84) was recognised by Gender Specialist and Entrepreneurship Development Advisor, PBK:

> "I don't know what they [rural entrepreneurs] would value… what can women want when they have not seen beyond the four walls of their homes? What could they want? They could only want what's in the room." *PBK, Gender Specialist and Entrepreneurship Development Advisor*

In 'desperate circumstances', to mitigate cognitive tension, individuals learn to be satisfied with less (Qizilbash, 2006a, p.21). As a result, insufficiently exposed individuals with few opportunities facing such hardship engage in downward adaptation, distorting self-assessment of well-being and demoting what they perceive as achievable. The CA's emphasis on individuals identifying the lives they have reason to value is undermined by the satisfaction paradox (Neff, 2009). Indeed, interview findings indicated that, as a result of the 'sheer necessity of uneventful survival' (Sen, 1997b, p.309), NWEs have, throughout their lives, adjusted aspirations to what they perceive as attainable; the NWEs have to continually 'live peacefully with persistent deprivation' (Sen, 2009, p.283).

> "I don't know if our dreams are achievable… we have to be satisfied whether our lives are good or not otherwise, how would we cope?" *Naina, 28, Dalit*
>
> "I think others used to say 'I want to study hard and get a job' but I never did… all through my life. I don't know why but maybe it's because I knew it wasn't achievable." *Keshika, 32, Dalit*
>
> "If I think about all these problems, it will be too much for me to cope with. I don't like thinking about those things." *Alpana, 35, Dalit*

It is argued here that while poverty, as capability deprivation, has shaped their circumstances and aspirations throughout their lives, the NWE's awareness of their susceptibility to the volatility of poverty continues to shape their expectations which, in turn, shape aspirations. The volatility of poverty relates to vulnerability and the potential for individuals, and particularly individuals in moderate poverty, to fall back into absolute poverty because of exogenous forces within dimensions of context. Such

exogenous forces can include economic shocks, including the loss of a job, ill health, extreme weather or natural disasters (Boyle and Boguslaw, 2007), such as the earthquake which struck Nepal in April 2015 (Watson, 2016).

Where poverty definitions are economic, they fail to consider individual differences and place a focus on income generation as the ends, and not means, of poverty alleviation (Sen, 1999). While it is acknowledged that income is instrumentally significant, rather than intrinsically, in poverty alleviation (where poverty is a deprivation of capabilities), a sudden inability to generate an income through entrepreneurship would have a substantial impact on capabilities and capability expansion because the business and spatial contexts offer few alternative employment opportunities to the entrepreneurs in this research. This lack of alternatives underpins a feeling of fear related to facing hardships again - their vulnerability to poverty.

> "Our past hardships motivate us; we want to work hard." *Hasina, 24, Chhetri*
>
> "If we run a business, it will be easier to eat and have clothes. We shouldn't have to ask others for money to survive." *Keshika, 32, Dalit*
>
> "If we have an enterprise, we can make money but if we don't, where will the money come from? …Before I was involved in this business, we didn't even have on one paisa or two paisa. It was hard." *Alpana, 35, Dalit*
>
> "Every day, we have to think about food. We have a hand-to-mouth problem… Sometimes, if we have to deal with something, something else suffers. There is a real lack in other areas of life. There is a lack of money to survive. I have to continually think about money. If I had

> some money, I wouldn't be worried about everything. If we had money it would be good for us and our children." *Naina, 28, Dalit*

Achieving fundamental instrumental and intrinsic capabilities, such as health, nutrition, well-being and valued employment, means that individuals are more likely to have developed an ability to identify and achieve valued doings and beings. For the NWEs in particular, their focus remains on attaining basic capabilities, including adequate shelter, good health, being adequately nourished and having bodily boundaries (Nussbaum, 2001), reflecting real deprivation, low life quality as well as downward adaptation (Clark, 2009). Indeed, in response to questions regarding motivations behind running their own business, 'having enough to eat' was the most common answer among the NWEs. Without an ability to generate income as a means to achieving these capabilities, they are very much at risk of falling back into the absolute poverty that qualified them for involvement in the programme to begin with. Gender Expert and Former Government minister, SYK, argues that this focus on income represents a very real psychological constraint on their behaviour:

> "[Income generation] is important because if a woman has enough to eat, and if she knows that her children are full and getting two or three meals a day, she has time to think about other things. Otherwise, she isn't mentally free to do anything else but worry about the next meal for herself and for her children." *SYK, Gender Expert and Former Government Minister*

It is noteworthy that motivations and aspirations behind NWEs' involvement in entrepreneurship relate to avoiding previous circumstances: being free of hardship,

hunger, and the necessity to borrow money to survive; they are aware of their vulnerability to the volatility of poverty and they fear it. However, the motivations behind the EWEs's involvement in entrepreneurship relate to imagining a better life. Indeed, after 'income generation' in response to questions regarding motivations behind running their own business, 'educating the children', 'saving money for old age' were the most common answers among the EWEs. It is important to note that, in line with the MEDEP's aims, all entrepreneurs were living in economic poverty prior to their involvement. The responses of EWEs appear to indicate that they are no longer fearful of facing previous hardships; they no longer feel vulnerable to the volatility of poverty.

8.3.2. Upward Adaptation

While Clark (2009) acknowledges the phenomenon of downward adaptation, he also argues that individuals, when faced with new opportunities and the achievement of others, are capable of articulating and demanding a better life even in the face of hardship. This section presents evidence of upward adaptation and discusses the importance of the achievements or actions of others. In recognition of the fact that individuals adapt aspirations based on what they consider to be feasible (Sen, 1999), the identification of valued (and unvalued) functionings indicates their self-assessment of well-being. All the entrepreneurs (EWEs and NWEs) were asked to think about what they wanted in life; what they thought a 'good' life was. Because valued functionings can range from the very basic to more abstract, the women were asked to consider these questions for a follow up interview where they would be discussed

further. This list (Table 8.3) should not be read as a full and exhaustive presentation of all functionings valued by NWEs and EWEs. Unsurprisingly, given economic constraints, the immediate response to defining a good life always related to economics; better income, more money. After discussions regarding the instrumental value of money, there was a clear distinction between the NWEs and EWEs in terms of concrete and abstract responses and the range of valued functionings identified.

While most of the valued functionings identified by NWEs related to physical and safety needs (Rajasakran et al., 2014), including food, shelter, health and warmth, the EWEs identified valued functionings that also relate to material security (prosperity and belongingness) and social virtue (esteem developed through accomplishment) (Rajasakran et al., 2014). One entrepreneur, Sohini, identified valued functionings that related to living a meaningful life and a pursuit of higher thought, in line with religious beliefs. The individual differences between entrepreneurs are discussed further at 8.4.

Table 8.3. Valued Functionings of NWEs and EWEs

Functioning	NWEs	EWEs
To eat/ feed family	Alpana; Charu; Hasina; Keshika; Maliha; Naina; Pari;	
To be able to buy soap/ be clean	Alpana; Charu; Keshika;	
To have better clothes (not worn/ old)	Keshika; Maliha	
To be free of negative community comments	Alpana; Charu; Hasina; Keshika; Maliha;	
To gain help from other organisations	Alpana; Charu; Hasina; Keshika; Maliha;	
To not have to borrow money	Alpana; Charu; Hasina; Keshika; Maliha; Pari	Ashika; Ruchira
To avoid working in the sun/ labour	Alpana; Charu	Rupali; Priyanka
To earn own money	Alpana; Hasina; Naina; Pari	Rati; Rupali; Sanjula; Sohini; Tanushri; Ashika; Ruchira; Kanta
To educate the children (primary/ secondary)	Alpana; Charu; Hasina; Keshika; Maliha; Naina; Pari	Rati; Rupali; Sanjula; Sohini; Tanushri; Ashika; Kanta; Ruchira;
To construct own home	Alpana	Sohini; Tanushri; Ashika; Ruchira; Priyanka
To save money for old age	Charu	Rati; Rupali; Sanjula; Sohini; Tanushri; Ashika; Kanta; Priyanka; Ruchira
To develop skills/ learn	Hasina; Naina; Pari	Sohini; Tanushri; Kanta; Priyanka
To make independent decisions	Alpana; Charu	Rati; Rupali; Sanjula; Sohini; Tanushri; Ashika; Kanta; Priyanka; Ruchira
To expand business	Pari	Rati; Rupali; Sanjula; Sohini; Tanushri; Ashika; Kanta; Priyanka; Ruchira
To eat three meals a day		Rati; Rupali; Sanjula; Sohini; Ashika; Kanta; Ruchira
To eat meat		Rati; Rupali; Sanjula; Tanushri; Kanta
To not eat meat		Sohini
To educate the children (further education)		Rati; Sanjula; Tanushri; Ashika; Ruchira
To arrange marriages for the children		Tanushri
To not keep animals (reduced workload)		Sohini; Tanushri
To visit places/ visit friends/ travel		Rati; Rupali; Sanjula; Tanushri; Ashika; Kanta; Ruchira
To be able to rest/relax/ live a restful life		Rupali; Sohini; Tanushri; Ashika; Ruchira
To grow vegetables		Ashika; Ruchira; Kanta
To have nice/ more clothes/ jewellery		Rati; Tanushri
To be recognised as an entrepreneur		Tanushri; Ashika; Kanta; Priyanka; Ruchira
To have a good standing/ prestige		Rati; Rupali; Sanjula; Sohini; Tanushri; Ashika; Kanta; Priyanka; Ruchira
To facilitate social/ skill development of women		Tanushri; Ashika; Priyanka; Ruchira
To avoid live a virtuous life/ religious service		Sohini
To learn more (non entrepreneurship)		Rati; Tanushri; Kanta;
To be a role model		Sohini; Tanushri; Ashika; Priyanka; Ruchira

Despite the significance of adaptation, there is limited evidence of aspiration adaptation in the CA literature, particularly in terms of downward adaptation (Clark, 2009, Clark, 2011). Indeed, to gain a true understanding of aspiration adaptation, in terms of drivers, rates of change and relationships to well-being, a longitudinal approach would have to be adopted to account for individual differences. Notwithstanding, the EWEs all stated that, over time, their aspirations had changed.

> "When we started the business, we had completely different goals and what we have today is totally different to what we had dreamed about. It's hard to understand what has happened to us. I'm always dreaming because, if you don't dream, nothing good will happen" *Ashika, 29, Gurung*

Comparing current situations with past expectations allows individuals to evaluate life satisfaction (Clark, 2011). Further to this, they unambiguously attributed this change to their involvement in entrepreneurship, indicating that for the EWEs in this research, entrepreneurship can be considered as a new possibility or opportunity capable of driving upward adaptation, thus furthering the argument that entrepreneurship can be transformative.

> "The more we work on this business, the more desires I have for my life… the enterprise will help me and I have faith in my enterprise that it will. But even if I cannot fulfil these wishes entirely through my enterprise, I can contribute half and my husband will contribute half and then, I think we will be able to achieve what we want." *Tanushri, 40, Newar*

> "I can achieve anything I want by working hard. Before, I used to dream a lot but, today, I know that we can achieve anything through

> the business. Before, if I dreamed, I couldn't attain what I thought about but, today, without even really thinking about it, I know I can do lots of things." *Ruchira, 32, Magar*

Agency is exercised through upward adaptation and goal attainment. As the entrepreneurs continued to engage in entrepreneurship and attain goals, their aspirations and the kind of life they have reason to value change and adapt. As new opportunities arise and/ or as others achieve or exploit opportunities, this drives further upward adaptation and opportunities to exercise agency to shape their lives and the lives of others. The importance of the achievement of others is discussed below, both in terms of the existence of role models for the entrepreneurs but also in terms of the entrepreneurs acting as role models for other women.

8.3.3. Role Models

In addition to the influence of new opportunities on upward adaptation, it is argued that meaningful comparison with others also drives upward adaptation of aspirations (Clark, 2009).While there is limited literature within the CA in relation to the influence of others on adaptation, the theme of role models was raised throughout the interviews. While NWE Alpana identified the influence of role models on her aspirations,

> "We have seen other women taking on different roles from usual. We thought we'd like to be like them. They have progressed and offered equal opportunities to their sons and daughters." *Alpana, 35, Dalit*

EWEs, Tanushri, Sohini, Priyanka, Ashika, Ruchira, discussed the importance of social comparison and, further to this, identified themselves as role models for other women.

> "If people say 'a woman can run an enterprise and become successful' other women may think they can be employed and stop being unemployed. I want to be known as a person who contributes to employment by reducing unemployment and being an example of a woman to other women… once people know about my success, the people who say to themselves 'I can't do it' may hear about me and say 'oh, if she can do it, so can I!'" *Tanushri, 40, Newar*

> "When people see other people having lots of property, lots of things, they want them. I don't know, maybe it's down to prestige or popularity." *Sohini, 39, Magar*

> "I know that some people say 'oh, she is running her own business from her home. You could also do that!' to other women. So, I am an example. I've even heard it said myself. I've heard men say to their wives 'you can't cook rice well but she… she is running her own business well. Do you think you could do that instead?' They say that to their wives!" *Ashika, 29, Gurung*

> "We wonder whether other women will do as we are doing, whether other women will be inspired by me, by us, by our business. This is how we think." *Priyanka, 26, Janjati*

It is argued here that their desire to act as role models for other women is as a result of an underlying aspiration to better their own lives by being acknowledged as an entrepreneur. That local dimensions of context value, respect and admire entrepreneurs has been ascertained. Further, that the EWEs are, through direct and collective agency, transforming their position in society from unvalued, subordinated and repressed, as women, to valued, respected and admired, as entrepreneurs, has also been ascertained.

Finally, that this transformation does not occur immediately has also been established. It is argued here that declaring that they aspire to act as role model and help shape other women's lives, and exercising their direct agency to attain this desire, is part of a greater aspiration to better their own lives, improve life quality and be recognised and accepted as valued, respected and admired as entrepreneurs, rather than viewed as unvalued and dominated. Indeed, this drive to be respected and celebrated in their communities was discussed by many of entrepreneurs – EWE and NWEs.

> "The most important thing we can get is prestige in our community." *Naina, 28, Dalit*

> "After we were earning money, we start to think about how we are going to get a name for ourselves. Maybe some fame." *Priyanka, 26, Janjati*

> "I want to gain recognition, I want to earn more money and I want to people to know my name." *Tanushri, 40, Newar*

Whatever the declared motivations behind their aspiring to be role models, there are several implications of the EWE's desires, beyond less altruistic aspirations to improve their own position in society. Firstly, and in relation to the upward adaptation of other women, if meaningful comparisons with others do raise aspirations, as Clark (2009) posits, the EWEs in this study are prepared to act as roles models to inspire other women to better their own lives. Faced with the achievement of the EWES and the availability of new opportunities (entrepreneurship), introduced through the collective agency of MEDEP and EWEs, other women may be able, even in the face of hardship, to articulate and demand a better life.

Further, if, through the normative acceptance of entrepreneurship, the EWEs are able to transform their position in society, then it may be that, over time, dimensions of context begin to view women – and not just these women entrepreneurs – as valuable. If this is the case, while entrepreneurship has been directly transformative and emancipatory for the EWEs in terms of breaking free of constraints and the development of agency, for other women in their communities, the transformation of these EWEs, and the resulting change in the position of women in general, may offer new, previously unavailable opportunities. As a result, entrepreneurship has been indirectly transformative and emancipatory. Cleary, the normative acceptance of entrepreneurship is a precondition for these arguments.

8.4. The Capability Approach in Practice

While the CA has been discussed philosophically within academia (Robeyns, 2005), it has also been adopted in empirical studies and provided the theoretical foundations for the human development paradigm (Fukuda-Parr, 2003). However, the 'multidimensional-context-dependent-counterfactual-normative nature' (Comim, 2008, p.159) raises questions related to the practicality of operationalising the approach (Hick, 2012). While this may be the case, it is argued that CA research should focus on "what people are able to do and be, on the quality of their life, and on removing obstacles in their lives so that they have more freedom to live the kind of life that, upon reflection, they have reason to value" (Robeyns, 2005, p.94). This section presents a brief case study of one entrepreneur, Sohini, to demonstrate how the

CA can enable individuals to shape lives, realise aspirations and live the kind of lives they have reason to value.

8.4.1. Individual Differences: Sohini

Considering identified valued functionings is important to determine what NWEs and EWEs consider achievable and reflects their aspirations and well-being. From a policy perspective, however, in operationalising the capability approach, a focus should be placed on capability expansion rather than functionings; capabilities reflect what people are able to do, functionings are what people choose to do through the application of their capability set (Robeyns, 2006).

The responses of one entrepreneur highlight this well. An Om Shanti devotee, Sohini, identified valued functionings that relate to spiritual liberation (Rajasakran et al., 2014) and indicated that while most people desire a life free of economic poverty, she 'learned through Om Shanti that you shouldn't have such dreams'. Instead, Sohini placed an emphasis on being a 'good person in this life' to achieve a better life in her reincarnation. As such, she states 'I don't have many desires. What I have is enough for me. God came, he showed me the way'. Sohini's religious beliefs place a focus on gaining an understanding of reality; individuals should not focus on material pursuits or earn more than is required to achieve self-realisation (Audretsch et al., 2007, Ariyo et al., 2015). In discussing the ways in which her religious beliefs influence her entrepreneuring, Sohini confirms that Hinduism, in its most traditional sense, conflicts with capitalism and consumerism:

> "Before I learned what I learned at Om Shanti, I dreamed about being very, very rich, about having lots of jewellery to wear. I dreamed about having two or three more sets of jewellery. One to wear one at home, one to wear outside the home. I dreamed about having the chance to wear very, very good saris, about being able to build a concrete house, with not only one bedroom but two or three. I dreamed about having some vehicles and some cars. But, after I learned what I learned at Om Shanti, I no longer have these desires. I want to live a virtuous life, a sin-free life. So, with a clear heart, I wanted to run a business to live a comfortable life. I won't do any bad things to get more income. If I can earn more money by continuing with my honest work, then that would be very good. But I will not sin to earn more money." *Sohini, 39, Magar*

The 'bad things' Sohini refers to are raising her profit margin and producing a less pure product by grinding more coriander in her spice mixes to reduce costs, thus increasing her income. As a result of her religious devotion, Sohini valued abstaining from eating meat, something five other EWEs identified as a valued functioning. Further, Sohini indicated that, while she has the capability to continue her youngest daughter's education, one of her aspirations relates to her daughter devoting herself to religion through Brahma Kumaris.

> "I dream that my youngest daughter will become Brahma Kumari because I am Om Shanti. I have no desire to further her education. She is perfectly capable now. She has been to school, she has reached the twelfth grade. Her father and I think that she has had enough education." *Sohini, 39, Magar*

Indeed, her responses highlight the individual nature of the capability approach, the importance of acknowledging that individual differences exist and accepting that, despite developing capability sets that support eating meat and educating her daughter further, Sohini's religious beliefs influence her valued functionings and define the life she has reason to value. It is important to acknowledge that Sohini's daughter does not share the aspirations of her mother, nor does Sohini intend to exercise her agency at the cost of her daughter's aspirations.

> "My daughter says that she wants to keep studying, she wants to go further. If my daughter does not want to become a Brahma Kumari and she wants to study instead, she can and I will continue her education…if she wants to study, I will not snuff out her interest. If she *really* wants to, we will invest in her education. We cannot force her to become Brahma Kumari if she doesn't want to." *Sohini, 39, Magar*

If Sohini's entrepreneurship was considered under the modernisation school (1945-1971), which championed Rostow's (1960) growth model, such religious beliefs would constitute a 'barrier to progress' (Peredo et al., 2004) and calls would be made to assimilate. Under the CA, however, there is no focus on economic growth nor a belief in the trickle-down effect. While it may be that Sohini values a life framed by religious beliefs and has the freedom to live this life, she could also, through her developed capability set, choose to live a life comparable to that of Tanushri or Rati, who both place value on having and wearing new jewellery and having new saris. Transition to identified valued functionings from capabilities reflects life choices (Robeyns, 2000). What an individual chooses to do with their capability sets is immaterial; the importance lies in their ability to make choices and live the kind of life

they have reason to value. The overarching impact of this is freedom. The CA, in viewing individuals as agents of change, acknowledges and allows for individual differences. Rather than relying on benefits of development initiatives trickling down, development is seen as a process of expanding human freedoms and relies on 'the removal of major sources of unfreedoms' (Sen, 1999, p.3). The achievement of these freedoms constitute the real end and principal means of development (Sen, 1999).

8.5. Conclusions

This chapter presented the results and analysis of the final research objective by considering whether involvement in entrepreneurship has provided the EWEs with the freedom to identify and pursue 'the kind of life that, upon reflection, they have reason to value' (Robeyns, 2005, p.94). While Chapters Six and Seven presented findings that relate to the requirement of an environment free of sources of unfreedoms or constraints, the objective of this chapter was to consider further elements of the CA and poverty alleviation within the CA. Capability expansion, the true purpose of poverty alleviation, is demonstrated by improved life quality, the removal of obstacles in life and what people are able to do and be (Sen, 1999).

The findings identified that the EWEs, as better informed individuals with greater market experience, have, through their involvement in entrepreneurship, as a new opportunity (Clark, 2009), begun to see themselves as agents of change, taking action to shape their own lives. Further to this, as they have begun to exercise their agency, the entrepreneurs are, through shared intention, participating in collective agency to

‘deliberately bring about radical change’ (Sen, 2004, p.vii) to the lives of other women, including other women in their communities and next generation of Nepali women: their daughters.

The findings also provided evidence of the under-researched satisfaction paradox or adaptation problem. Indeed, in terms of downward adaptation, it is argued that an awareness of their vulnerability to the volatility of poverty motivates the NWE to adjust their aspirations downward to what they perceive as achievable while living ‘peacefully with persistent deprivation’ (Sen, 2009, p.283). As such, identified value functionings of NWEs reflect the influence of this psychological constraint; that is, the entrepreneurs define a ‘better’ life as one where you meet basic needs, including food, shelter and warmth. In terms of upward adaptation, findings suggest that, through market participation and developed agency, EWEs had, over time, adapted their aspirations upward; no longer focused on basic needs, the EWEs were driven to achieve increasingly abstract desires. The findings also revealed the importance of role models in aspiration adaptation, another under-researched area, and discussed the influence of the normative acceptance of entrepreneurship on the aspirations of the entrepreneurs in this study. The findings demonstrated that, while the EWEs entrepreneuring is directly contributing to their emancipation and transformation – from unvalued to valued individuals, the EWEs entrepreneuring has the potential to, through exercising agency, indirectly facilitate the emancipation other women in their communities by transforming how women are perceived in society.

The final section commented on the CA as an alternative approach to the abolition of poverty. While the practicality of operationalising the CA has been questioned due to its 'multidimensional-context-dependent-counterfactual-normative nature' (Comim, 2008, p.159), this study has highlighted that it is this very nature that facilitates a human understanding of development and poverty alleviation while considering individual differences. If the purpose of development is expanding human freedoms and the means and ends of development are human, then there is only one reality that counts (Chambers, 2009); the realities of those living in poverty who assume the role of agents of change, taking action to identify aspirations and pursue valued lives for themselves and for others.

In conclusion, the findings of this chapter indicate that, for the EWEs in this study, entrepreneurship can be considered as a real and adequate opportunity to enable the development of direct and collective agency, thus allowing the EWEs to identify and pursue aspirations to live the kind of lives that they have reason to value. Further, the potential for entrepreneurship to indirectly emancipate and transform the lives of other women – girls and other women in the EWEs's communities – was highlighted.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSIONS

9.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions of the thesis. The chapter starts by presenting a summary of the main research findings. Thereafter, the implications of these findings and the study's contribution to theory and empiricism is considered. Following this, the study's implications for policy and practice are presented. Finally, this chapter ends by outlining some of the limitations of the study and recommendations for further research.

9.2. Summary of Main Findings

The aim of the study was to better understand the potential for entrepreneurship to act as a real and appropriate opportunity to facilitate in the expansion of the capability sets of rural Nepali women in order for them to be able to live the lives they have reason to value. This aim was addressed through three objectives: Firstly, embedding the research in context and understanding the 'nature, richness and dynamics' of entrepreneurial behaviour, the study considered how and to what extent the institutional environment affects women and women entrepreneurs in a region of rural Nepal. Secondly, the study focused on gaining an understanding of the role of the

Micro Enterprise Development Programme, as an entrepreneurship enabling organisation, in the lives of nascent and established ordinary entrepreneurs and assessing the extent to which expert venture scripts (action-based field specific knowledge structures (Mitchell et al., 2000)) were successfully diffused and entrenched to ascertain whether established women entrepreneurs were sufficiently equipped to act independently of the Micro Enterprise Development Programme. Thirdly, the study sought to understand the impact of entrepreneurship on the lives of the women entrepreneurs; whether their involvement allows them to develop and exercise agency and to identify and pursue a life they have reason to value.

9.2.1. Context and Women Entrepreneurs of the Rapti Zone

That women represent the subordinated population in Nepal was confirmed by the interviews. Indeed, all the women were aware of the expectations placed on their behaviour that originate from deep-rooted and structure inequalities based on feudal Brahminical rule which 'disparages women in relation to men' (Yami, 2007, p.15) and are perpetuated by the social and spatial context. Through entrepreneurship, both experienced and nascent women entrepreneurs are extending traditional roles and occupying male gendered space and, as a result, their behaviour challenges gendered norms within their communities. This has had two outcomes. For experienced women entrepreneurs in particular, community perception regarding what they should and should not do has been altered over time and, further to this, the women's self-perception is also changing; they are beginning to believe that women can do more than is defined by normative institutions. Additionally, through the adoption of non-

traditional roles by way of commercialisation, the experienced women entrepreneurs have demonstrated a noticeable departure from the economic, social, psychological, institutional and cultural constraints (Jennings et al., 2016) that previously defined their roles as wives, mothers and homemakers and represent 'major sources of unfreedoms' (Sen, 1999, p.3). As such, this chapter highlighted that, for these women entrepreneurs, there is true potential for their entrepreneurship to deliver a degree of emancipation.

9.2.2. Entrepreneurship Enabling Organisations and Ordinary Entrepreneurs

The study findings indicate the value of an entrepreneurship enabling organisation to individuals who, because of a lack of education, experience of non-subsistence work, lack of internet access and limited social networks, are unable to engage in market participation and create productive ventures alone (Mitchell et al., 2000, Smith et al., 2016). The findings indicate that, while entrepreneurial opportunities may be objective (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000), dimensions of context have introduced 'inequality of entrepreneurial opportunity' (Baker and Powell, 2016, p.43). The findings also indicate that, over time and through repeated interaction with locally embedded Micro Enterprise Development Programme personnel, the established women entrepreneurs have developed the expert scripts required to establish and maintain enterprises and remain committed and motivated when facing uncertainty. This study also indicated that the structure and organisational objectives of the Micro Enterprise Development Programme did not undermine the emancipatory potential of entrepreneurship. Rather than focusing on, or prioritising, a form of entrepreneurship that relies on social

bridging, is high-growth and traditionally linked to national economic objectives, the focus of the programme remains on bringing about qualitative change in the lives and livelihoods of rural people. Finally, the findings also indicated that, through their involvement with the Micro Enterprise Development Programme as an entrepreneurship enabling organisation and because of the normative acceptance of entrepreneurship within their communities, the women's roles as entrepreneurs were valued within the community, contributing to their position in society, thus representing further departures from pre-existing psychological and cultural constraints on their behaviour.

9.2.3. Agency, Aspirations and Entrepreneurship

The final objective explored further elements of the Capability Approach to poverty alleviation, with specific regard to personal agency and aspirations. That the women entrepreneurs are able to see themselves as agents of change is critical to the Capability Approach. Indeed, Chapter Eight discussed the extent to which established women entrepreneurs, as better informed individuals with greater market experience, have developed and begun to exercise agency; the established women entrepreneurs are taking action to shape their own lives and are, through shared intention, participating in collective agency to shape the lives of others in their communities. By recognising that women represent the subordinated population, the established women entrepreneurs are taking action to catalyse radical change and encourage other women and their daughters to adopt less traditional roles. For other women, that meant acting as role models to catalyse further entrepreneurship and, for their daughters, it meant

taking steps to break a vicious circle of raising Nepali girls only to be wives and mothers. Indeed, by facilitating their education, the entrepreneurs interviewed in this study were developing the capability sets of their daughters, potentially offering the next generation true departure from the intellectual, psychological, economic, social, institutional or cultural constraints that have, over the years, inhibited the actions of their mothers (Rindova et al., 2009).

Chapter Eight also presented evidence of the satisfaction paradox or adaptation problem that often undermines participatory approaches to research and the Capability Approach in particular. While it may be true that the nascent women entrepreneurs were adapting their aspirations to reflect their circumstances and in recognition of their vulnerability to the volatility of poverty, the established women entrepreneurs had, over time and through their market participation, adapted their aspirations upward. The more experienced women entrepreneurs were better able to identify, define and, by exercising agency, pursue a better life - a life they had reason to value. Further, by acting as role models, the established women entrepreneurs were fulfilling a condition of upward adaptation for other women in their communities; that is, their entrepreneurship was indirectly facilitating the emancipation of other women by transforming how women are perceived in society.

9.3. Contributions of the Study

This thesis makes three unique contributions. Firstly, and directly related to Gries and Naudé's (2011) argument that entrepreneurship scholars place a focus on the who,

what and how of entrepreneurship rather than the impact of entrepreneurship, this study places a focus on the effect, or impact, that entrepreneurship has upon individual lives. Secondly, through the application of institutional theory (North, 1990, Scott, 2005) and Welter's (2011) dimensions of context, this study is deeply embedded and answers calls to better understand 'nature, richness and dynamics' of entrepreneurial behaviour (Zahra, 2007, p.451). Finally, this study identifies an alternative approach to poverty alleviation; that is, entrepreneurship as an adequate opportunity to facilitate the expansion of capability sets, contributing to dialogue on international development initiatives and poverty alleviation. The findings from the research study are considered below in relation to their theoretical, methodological and empirical contributions.

9.3.1. Theoretical Contributions

Through the achievement of the three research objectives, and by considering the findings presented in Chapters Six to Eight, the study contributes to a better understanding of the potential for entrepreneurship to act as a real and appropriate opportunity to facilitate the expansion of the capability sets of rural Nepali women.

The conceptual framework (Figures 4.1 and 4.2) developed in this study has relevance beyond the context of Nepal. Indeed, the dimensions of the framework, including institutions and institutional theory, the capability approach and emancipatory entrepreneurship, inequality, the relationship between entrepreneurship enabling organisations and ordinary entrepreneurs, agency and autonomy and the pursuit of valued lives, are applicable to disparate contexts where market participation is

hindered by inequality of entrepreneurial opportunity. The framework presented in this study contributes to both the entrepreneurship literature – in terms of enabling entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship in the context of development, institutional theory and understanding the transformative potential of entrepreneurship – and the development literature – in terms of considering poverty and development through the capability approach, in considering the practical role and potential of entrepreneurship and, finally in terms of operating in contexts where institutional voids may hinder participation.

The conceptual framework applied is based on the Capability Approach being concerned with what individuals, as the reference unit of the approach (Comim, 2001), are able to do and be, what they value, their aspirations and the freedoms to achieve them (Deneulin and Shahani, 2009). It is argued that with an enabling environment and new opportunities (Clark, 2009), individuals are agents of change, shaping their lives and the lives of others, through action, to realise aspirations (Frediani, 2006, Sen, 1999, Frediani, 2008). For the Capability Approach, poverty is capability deprivation and, as a result, poverty alleviation involves the expansion of capability sets. Chapter Six explored context to understand whether their environment could be considered 'enabling' – a condition for capability set expansion.

Chapter Seven contributed to this discussion through the consideration of an entrepreneurship enabling organisation's proto-institutions that protect the entrepreneurs from hostile or unsupportive institutions and, in addition to this,

explored the established and nascent women entrepreneurs' entrepreneuring as the necessary 'new opportunity'. Chapter Eight considered the critical and significant aspects of agency (indirect, direct and collective) and the aspirations which rely on new opportunities and the achievement of others. The expansion of capability sets relies on a multidimensional mix of factors. Indeed, while the development and application of agency relies on opportunities, opportunities are defined by context and institutions which can, in turn, constrain individual aspirations and define behavioural expectations that often limit the development of agency.

The introduction of a new opportunity (entrepreneurship) enabled an extension to traditional roles, provided the social protection of an enabling environment and exploited the normative acceptance of entrepreneurship (whether by chance or design). The experienced women entrepreneurs demonstrated a noticeable departure from pre-existing constraints (Jennings et al., 2016) that represent sources of 'unfreedoms' (Sen, 1999). In so doing, their indirect agency has developed into direct agency and, through their continued market participation, women entrepreneurs have begun to exercise this agency to identify and pursue aspirations that, when considered together, define the kind of life that, on reflection, they have reason to value. Further, in acknowledging that women are socially oppressed within their communities, the established women entrepreneurs have shared intention and are participating in collective agency to bring about radical change in their communities, by indicating an intention to better the lives and livelihoods of other women. Finally, in prioritising the educations of the next generation of Nepali women, the nascent and established women entrepreneurs are all taking steps to break the vicious cycle of raising girls as wives and mothers,

representing true departure from the intellectual, psychological, economic, social, institutional or cultural constraints (Rindova et al., 2009) that have, over the years, inhibited the actions of their mothers. These findings contribute to a better understanding of what impact, or effect, entrepreneurship can have on the lives of the bottom billion (Collier, 2007, Gries and Naudé, 2011), answers a direct call to develop 'a deeper and engaged understanding of how impoverished female entrepreneurs starting informal ventures in contexts of deep cultural misogyny can improve their chances of survival and generate some degree of autonomy' (Welter et al., 2016, p.6) and contributes to the ongoing discussions of the relationship between entrepreneurship, the CA and imaging poverty as capability deprivation.

A further theoretical contribution relates to the importance of embedding and considering context in terms of both entrepreneurship and in initiatives designed to alleviate poverty. In developing an understanding of the 'nature, richness and dynamics' of entrepreneurial behaviour (Zahra, 2007, p.451) through the application of institutional theory (Scott, 2005, North, 1990) and Welter's (2011) dimensions of context, this research demonstrates the significance of context and responds to calls to consider the 'what' and 'when' of contextual dimensions (Welter et al., 2016, Welter, 2011). Further, to understand context is to understand the pre-existing constraints that limited capability set expansion among the women even prior to their involvement with the Micro Enterprise Development Programme. As early as 1901, Rowntree concluded that primary poverty – comparable to absolute poverty – existed as a result of society, a fault in the operation of society (Rowntree, 1901, Atkinson et al., 1981), indicating that, at the outset (and before development initiatives were compelled by

enlightened self-interest and the fear of communism (Kunz, 1997)), the relationship between poverty and the lack of an enabling context had been established. Overtime, and through the perpetuation of assumptions based on Western experience and driven by outside experts (Rostow, 1960, Leys, 2006, Saad-Filho, 2010), the importance of context has been somewhat lost within international development circles. The theme of context and embeddedness is further discussed under the methodological and empirical contributions and the policy and practical implications of the study.

9.3.2. Methodological Contributions

Arguably, only a qualitative and exploratory approach could have uncovered the findings of this research study and facilitated a greater understanding of the relationship between entrepreneurship and the Capability Approach. Indeed, as this research study contributes to under-researched areas, including impacts of entrepreneurship, everyday entrepreneurs, entrepreneurship enabling organisations, the Capability Approach and entrepreneurship as well as regions of rural Nepal, exploratory research was apposite. Through in-depth, semi-structured interviews, a deep understanding of the lives of the women entrepreneurs, their contexts and aspirations was gained. By interviewing both nascent and experienced women entrepreneurs, a clear distinction was noticeable in terms of their fear of their vulnerability to poverty, agency, aspirations and autonomy. Finally, by considering nascent and established women entrepreneur interviews alongside the interviews of the local experts, the entrepreneurs' responses could be considered in the national context. The interviewing process also highlighted two further implications: the

importance of building rapport and the value of involving a principal translator throughout the duration of data collection, translation and transcription.

Firstly, while the original justification for completing two interviews related to the potential difficulty in defining valued functionings and aspirations (particularly abstract functionings and aspirations), the research design also allowed a level of rapport to be established; the entrepreneurs were increasingly at ease during the follow up interviews and disclosed in much greater detail. Indeed, as Priyanka noted: “on Tuesday, we talked a little; today we talked a little more. Maybe if you visit again, we’ll talk much, much more”. Secondly, the value in engaging the same principal translator throughout the data collection process, from pilot interviews to the transcription process was threefold. Firstly, through involvement in the research design and process, as well as all meetings with Micro Enterprise Development Programme management and field personnel, the principal translator had a very strong understanding of the research aims and objectives. This was particularly valuable when taking the workloads of the entrepreneurs into account. I was able to trust, based on the pilot interviews, that the principal translator would follow the overall aim and objectives of the research. Secondly, because we spent a considerable amount of time together, the principal translator truly assumed the role of ‘key informant’, rather than a neutral transmitter (Temple and Young, 2004, p.170), challenging the research, explained meanings and language and provided opportunities for reflective discussions post-interview. Indeed, over time, a level of trust and rapport was established where the principal translator was comfortable challenging my interpretations, satisfying a level of participation in the research.

The study also contributes to discussions related to the satisfaction paradox or adaptation problem that undermines moral arguments to adopt participatory approaches to research and development because of the propensity for aspirations to reflect circumstance. Where individuals face hardship or ‘desperate circumstances’ (Qizilbash, 2006a, p.21), cognitive tension is mitigated by learning to be satisfied with less and, as a result, deprivation is distorted (Sen, 1999). This was certainly true of the nascent women entrepreneurs who remained vulnerable to the volatility of poverty – a situation that was reflected in their aspirations. Over time, however, and faced with new opportunities and the achievements of others (Clark, 2009), there is evidence of upward adaptation. This study found that the psychological constraints of being vulnerable to poverty and its effects upon aspirations are, as Neff suggests (2009), reversible. The implications of the adaptation problem, in relation to international development are considered under policy implications.

9.3.3. Empirical Contributions

This study developed and applied a conceptual framework that may be employed in diverse contexts. Indeed, institutional incongruence, which inhibits market participation, places groups in subordinated positions and defines acceptable behaviour, is not unique to the Rapti Zone, Nepal. Through the application of this conceptual framework, and the achievement of the research objectives, this study indicates the potential for entrepreneurship to act as an opportunity to allow individuals to pursue lives that, on reflection, they have reason to value. The expansion of capability sets is the underlying factor that facilitates this process. The empirical

contributions discussed here are the crucial role of entrepreneurship enabling organisations and the emancipatory impacts of entrepreneurship on the lives of women.

The first empirical contribution relates to the relationship between institutional voids, entrepreneurship enabling organisations and individuals that, due to inequality of entrepreneurial opportunity, are unable establish and maintain ventures alone. Indeed, the study has found that the Micro Enterprise Development Programme, as an entrepreneurship enabling organisation, plays a significant role in the entrepreneurship of the participants. The institutional incongruence in Nepal's regulative and normative institutions and the persistence of deep-rooted and structured inequalities continue to limit market participation, indicating inequality of entrepreneurial opportunity (Baker and Powell, 2016). As a result, the Micro Enterprise Development Programme's role in the establishment of productive ventures for individuals who 'would not have the resources, knowledge, or skills in order to do so acting alone' (Smith et al., 2016, p.1) has been crucial for the women in this research. Indeed, a number of the entrepreneurs had, prior to the arrival of the Micro Enterprise Development Programme, indicated entrepreneurial intention but had not exploited opportunities (Keshika, Kanta and Priyanka), or had been unable to maintain previous ventures (Ashika, Ruchira and Sohini); all established entrepreneurs in this research were beginning to act independently of the Micro Enterprise Development Programme, indicating that, over time, the women were beginning to value themselves as entrepreneurs, developing their agency and autonomy. This highlights the potential of similar entrepreneurship

enabling organisations, operating in disparate contexts, in developing the agency and autonomy of nascent or ordinary entrepreneurs.

Indeed, as Welter et al. (2016) seek useful research that understands how 'impoverished female entrepreneurs starting informal ventures in contexts of deep cultural misogyny can improve their chances of survival and generate some degree of autonomy' (Welter et al., 2016, p.6), there is value in understanding how entrepreneurship enabling organisations can facilitate market participation in the presence of institutional voids. It is clear that an important empirical contribution of this research is in presenting the Micro Enterprise Development Programme's approach to developing participants as autonomous entrepreneurs.

A further empirical contribution relates to emancipatory potential. The study has indicated that, through involvement in the Micro Enterprise Development Programme, the women entrepreneurs have demonstrated a noticeable departure from behavioural constraints. For the women in this research, it is the patriarchal psychological constraints that affect the pride, confidence and esteem of Nepali women (Sherpa, 2007) and, by demonstrating departure from such constraints, their entrepreneuring may be considered emancipatory (Rindova et al., 2009). Within the Capability Approach, departures from constraints is termed as the removal of sources of unfreedoms – the underlying argument of Sen's approach to development: development as freedom or development as a process of removing sources of unfreedoms. Therefore, an empirical contribution of this study relates to evidence of

the relationship between entrepreneurship and development, where development is freedom.

While the participants in this research were initially passive, relying on indirect agency and the emancipatory declarations of the Micro Enterprise Development Programme, over time, through repeated interaction with embedded personnel, through continued market participation and in pursuit of a valued life, the established women entrepreneurs have developed direct agency – a crucial element of the process of capability expansion and in shaping their lives. Further, in communicating a desire to facilitate the market participation of other women – sharing intention with the Micro Enterprise Development Programme – and in prioritising the education of their daughters, the established entrepreneurs are also participating in collective agency. Such collective agency has the potential to be a powerful force in advocating, initiating and implementing change and demonstrating the emancipatory potential of entrepreneurship for the entrepreneurs themselves but also for other girls and women that benefit from such collective agency.

9.4. Implications of the Study

This section considers the practical and policy implications of this research and considers whom may benefit from the insights and value of the study (Welter et al., 2016).

9.4.1. Policy

There are three inter-related policy implications of this study: considering development from a grass-roots perspective, ensuring that laws and bills are fully implemented to address the institutional incongruence that can undermine gender equality in practice, and the value of considering poverty as capability deprivation.

Where development initiatives are developed from a grassroots perspective, as the Micro Enterprise Development Programme has been, this is in direct contrast with the top-down, trickle-down, donor conditionality-driven and outside-expert led initiatives that relied on assumptions related to the economies of the West, typified early approaches to poverty alleviation and delivered mixed results (Gore, 2000, Deneulin and Shahani, 2009, Saad-Filho, 2010). Indeed, in taking a bottom-up approach, the ‘local, complex, diverse and dynamic’ (Chambers, 1995, p.173) realities of the poor become central to the initiative are while the ‘universal, reductionist, standardised and stable’ realities of researchers or professionals (Chambers, 1995, p.173) are constrained. As a result, grassroots approaches to development are immediately embedded, contextualised and have better potential to identify inequalities present in context (Baker and Welter, 2015, Baker and Powell, 2016). That entrepreneurship is a ‘broadly available social technology’ (Welter et al., 2016, p.7) indicates the extent to which entrepreneuring can be and is adapted to communities, regions and nations and their disparate dimensions, indicating the potential for micro enterprise development as a grass-roots approach to poverty alleviation.

While gender equality in Nepal exists on paper through the development of progressive gender laws, poor dissemination and implementation has resulted in institutional incongruence as normative institutions continue to perpetuate discriminations. While it may be true that the actions of the established women entrepreneurs are beginning to alter community perception of what women should and should not do, the rate of change of normative institutions is slow (Gordon, 2014, Shirley, 2005).

The influence of time has been discussed throughout this study, from the time-bound targets introduced by the millennium development goals (Sachs and McArthur, 2005, United Nations, 2014) to the rapid transformation of the Asian Tigers (Huff, 1995, Fine, 2001) and the effect entrepreneurship may have, over time, on the next generation of Nepali women. That the institutional dimensions of context of the entrepreneurs in this research are incongruent has been ascertained. Closing the gap between what is considered legal and legitimate relies on the alteration of societal beliefs (Shirley, 2005, Webb et al., 2009); normative institutions are modified slowly, over time, and only when other institutions force the change (Gordon, 2014, Shirley, 2005). There are two policy implications associated with this: the role of the government and the design of development initiatives. Just as the government of Nepal plays the crucial role in developing an environment that fosters entrepreneurial behaviour, their role in the effective implementation of gender laws and policies is as crucial to ensure that institutional incongruence is minimised over time. It is this focus on the underlying causes of inequality and discrimination that is often neglected where policymakers consider entrepreneurship a panacea for social, economic and environmental issues (Hall et al., 2010, Baker and Welter, 2015). Further, the

acceptance that normative institutional change is not rapid has implications for time bound development initiatives and targets, such as the Millennium Development Goals. Just as the Micro Enterprise Development Programme, as a grass-roots approach to development, is embedded in context, it is better able to evolve as institutions change and align over time.

While links have been made between entrepreneurship and national economic growth and development (Bruton et al., 2008, McMullen, 2011, Tobias et al., 2013), under the Capability Approach, there is no focus on national economic growth nor a belief in the trickle-down effect. In defining poverty as capability deprivation, income becomes instrumentally significant (Sen, 1999); the emphasis is placed on the lives that individuals have reason to value and their freedom to pursue them. While there may be few opportunities for the entrepreneurs in this research to develop high-growth enterprises that can contribute to national economic objectives, thus adopting the role of entrepreneurial gazelles (Welter et al., 2016), their entrepreneuring offers transformative effects, develops autonomy and agency, contributes to their well-being and, even at an individual level, makes them less susceptible to the volatility of poverty. Indeed, contributions to the next generation of Nepali women have also been discussed. The Capability Approach makes few assumptions regarding what constitutes a valued life. Indeed, what an individual chooses to do with their capability set is immaterial; if they are able to choose the life they have reason to value, the overarching impact of this is freedom. This is clearly demonstrated by Sohini’s story, presented at the close of Chapter Eight.

9.4.2. Practice

This section considers the practical implications of the study in terms of best practice in facilitating entrepreneurship as a grassroots approach to poverty alleviation. These findings build on work by Smith et al.'s (2016) model of entrepreneurship enabling organisations and, while these findings related directly to the Micro Enterprise Development Programme/ Micro Enterprise Development for Poverty Alleviation model, entrepreneurship enabling organisations operating in disparate contexts may find value in these findings. The significance of the Micro Enterprise Development Programme to the entrepreneurs in this research is clear; as a result of unequal access to entrepreneurial opportunities (Baker and Powell, 2016), the entrepreneurs in this research did not have the resources, knowledge, or skills required to establish productive enterprises alone (Smith et al., 2016, p.1). Specifically, there are five interrelated considerations under this section: mainstreaming emancipatory declarations; encouraging participation in social spaces; the importance of trust; the significance of social protections; and the explicit consideration of the normative acceptance of entrepreneurship.

Mainstreaming Emancipatory Declarations

Within the emancipatory entrepreneurship literature, unambiguously identifying change creation as the intention of entrepreneuring is critical (Rindova et al., 2009). However, relationships developed during authoring often introduce new power structures that constrain, rather than support, entrepreneurs (Rindova et al., 2009, Al-Dajani et al., 2015). While the interview findings demonstrate that such conflict may

not apply to the entrepreneurs in this research, as the Micro Enterprise Development Programme adopt the role of supportive actor, actively mainstreaming emancipatory declarations from project design to implementation would improve the potential of all the Micro Enterprise Development Programme entrepreneurs to demonstrate a noticeable departure from economic, social, psychological, institutional and cultural constraints (Jennings et al., 2016), representing true emancipation and the removal of sources of unfreedoms (Sen, 1999). Indeed, as an independent commission currently operates to deliver gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the institutional framework of Nepal, organisational bodies are in place to offer supportive systems. The mainstreaming of emancipatory declarations, it is argued here, is particularly apposite for Nepal where deep-rooted inequalities based on gender, caste and ethnicity persist in rural areas in particular (Government of Nepal, 2014). Such an approach would not have to be limited to the activities of entrepreneurship enabling organisations either.

Facilitating Participation in Social Spaces

It is argued that providing women a space where they can belong offers an opportunity for the development of sense of self and self-reliance (Mair et al., 2012), crucial in the development of agency and autonomy. While the Micro Enterprise Development Programme establishes District Micro Enterprise Groups as social spaces to meet friends and 'share experiences and to pass their problems and constraints to MEDEP' (MEDEP, 2010a, p.47), thus facilitating the development of local venture networks, the interviews indicated that high workloads limited the extent to which the women entrepreneurs were able to participate. Facilitating ease of participation would be

beneficial to the entrepreneurs particularly if linkages were established between established women entrepreneurs and nascent women entrepreneurs; providing opportunities for established entrepreneurs to act as role models would fulfil a condition of upward adaptation for nascent entrepreneurs. The practicality of facilitating improved participation, in terms of workloads, travel and childcare, for example, are not considered here.

The Importance of Trust

Being able to trust authoritative figures is central to the development of freedom (Sen, 1999); achieving the freedom to trust constitutes an important dimension of the means and ends of development. As the government of Nepal assumes full responsibility of microenterprise development by replicating the Micro Enterprise Development Programme under the Micro Enterprise for Poverty Alleviation initiative (UNDP, 2015d), attention should be paid to the introduction of institutions that encourage trust and openness, guarantee transparency, introduce an environment free of corruption and provide protective security to vulnerable groups (Sen, 1999). Indeed, while the entrepreneurs in this research were trusting of Micro Enterprise Development Programme personnel (unaware that the programme has always been a joint initiative of the government and the United Nations Development Programme), they placed little trust on the government. This lack of trust, which is also a contributing factor of gender based violence underreporting (Chhetri and Lama, 2013), could undermine the importance of repeated interactions with personnel of the entrepreneurship enabling organisations, once responsibility for micro enterprise development is transferred to the government.

Social Protection and the Normative Acceptance of Entrepreneurship

That the entrepreneurs valued the social protection provided by MEDEP, particularly in terms of caste and gender discriminations, was clear. Despite the prohibition of untouchability and caste discrimination (Bhattachan et al., 2009) and despite the introduction of progressive gender laws, poor implementation and dissemination resulted in a feeling of reticence among the entrepreneurs because of social expectations of behaviour and because of the threat of enforcement mechanisms. The social protection provided by the Micro Enterprise Development Programme was particularly valuable to the entrepreneurs as they begun to occupy the male gendered space through participation in markets and/or adopted roles that contravened practices of untouchability. While the provision of such protection is not directly related to the practical entrepreneurial action (transferred, diffused and entrenched through expert venture scripts (Smith et al., 2016)), the provision of social protection is, for the entrepreneurs in this research, as crucial to their continued participation in markets, given the contexts that they operate within. A further element of social protection relates to the exploitation of the normative acceptance of entrepreneurship. While the entrepreneurs and their social context admire the value creation, creativity and initiative displayed by entrepreneurs, other societies place little to no value on such behaviour and, as such, there is little normative acceptance of entrepreneurship (Busenitz et al., 2000, Stenholm et al., 2013). As a result, where individuals are operating in an environment that does not value entrepreneurial behaviour, they risk potentially harmful enforcement mechanisms if they chose to adopt roles that challenge normative institutions. This important consideration is a further indication

of the importance of considering context, particularly where micro enterprise development is viewed as a panacea for social issues (Hall et al., 2010, Baker and Welter, 2015).

9.5. Limitations of the Study

While the research design and adopted qualitative and exploratory approach developed a greater understanding of the relationship between entrepreneurship and the Capability Approach, practical considerations placed constraints on data collection. While it is acknowledged that repeated interaction with the entrepreneurs may have uncovered further understanding of the impacts of entrepreneurship, the data were collected from a region of rural Nepal with little infrastructure and gaining access to the entrepreneurs relied on assistance from the Micro Enterprise Development Programme who provided support personnel and a UN vehicle from their limited budget. Further, while a return visit to the Rapti Zone would have introduced a further dimension to the research, the devastating earthquake that struck Nepal in April 2015 and the subsequent aftershocks (Watson, 2016) forced amendments to the study. While the Rapti Zone was only lightly or moderately affected by the earthquake (REACH, 2015), MEDEP refocused efforts on enterprise recovery and developed a programme (Rapid Enterprise and Livelihoods Recovery Project) to provide support to micro entrepreneurs affected by the earthquake (UNDP, 2015a).

9.6. Further Research Directions

As an exploratory study, this constitutes an early contribution to understanding the role of entrepreneurship in the expansion of capability sets. While this initial research can offer a range of future research directions, three distinct directions are considered below.

Firstly, while this research indicates that entrepreneurship can be considered as an opportunity to identify and pursue a valued life while facilitating the development of agency and upward adaptation of aspirations of the established women entrepreneurs in this research, to fully understand the impact of entrepreneurship, replicating this research would be valuable to further explore this phenomenon. As the government of Nepal has plans to implement the Micro Enterprise Development for Poverty Alleviation programme across all 75 districts (UNDP, 2015d), there are opportunities to design a longitudinal study which could follow the programme throughout all stages, in similar contexts. This would facilitate a true understanding of the impact that entrepreneurship may have on the lives of everyday entrepreneurs in regions of Nepal. However, the application need not be limited to Nepal; in fact, application in disparate contexts may develop a better understanding of the transformative potential and impacts of entrepreneurship.

Secondly, follow up research on the nascent and established women entrepreneurs in this research may develop an understanding of the indirect effects of entrepreneurship. That is, how the entrepreneurship of the established women entrepreneurs has shaped

the lives of other women in their communities and their daughters. As five years have passed since data collection, many of their school aged daughters may have completed a secondary education. If their daughters are able to demonstrate that they have, through access to education, developed capabilities that represent true departure from intellectual, psychological, economic, social, institutional or cultural constraints (Rindova et al., 2009), further impacts of entrepreneurship may be understood.

Finally, while this study and proposed future research directions have focused on contexts where absolute economic poverty is a policy concern, the Capability Approach to poverty alleviation need not be limited to developing or subsistence economies. Indeed, the Capability Approach is also applicable to individuals living in relative poverty. An interesting future research direction could relate to the consideration of micro entrepreneurs, and perhaps indigenous entrepreneurs (Peredo et al., 2004), that represent the relative poor within developed economies. Indeed, where indigenous entrepreneurs operate within 'ethnic enclaves', the influences and constraints of their social and societal contexts may not be congruent with local, sub-national and national institutions, representing a rich context. Indeed, as the relative poor are often not a political priority (Boyle and Boguslaw, 2007), expanding poverty discussions to include consideration of the relative poor may add value to both the entrepreneurship literature and the literature related to the capability approach, international development and poverty alleviation.

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Appendix 5.1. Pilot Interview Schedule

INTRODUCTION: We are here to talk to women entrepreneurs involved with MEDEP to learn about your lives and about your businesses. If you have time today, I would like to talk to you about your experiences. I assure you that your responses will be confidential and that you will remain anonymous. The research is solely for a doctorate in the UK.

PLEASE – AS MUCH DETAIL AS POSSIBLE. ASK WHY, HOW, MORE DETAIL, LET THE WOMEN TALK.

General demographics

1. Surname and Age
2. Married and Children (number/ age/ gender)
3. Education/ literacy
4. People in household. Who is household head?

Business Information/ Employment history

1. Sole ownership/ group (members/ number)
2. Nature of business and length of ownership
3. Before business, what were you doing?
4. Has business changed since inception?

MEDEP (as Enabling Organisation)

1. Tell me about your involvement with MEDEP
2. First meet/ processes involved
3. Opportunity identification – process
4. Networks, resources and skills
5. On-going relationship – role of MEDEP
6. Other support?

Experience with business (Normative/ Regulative institutions)

1. How did you feel during set up/ early stages
2. How did your family feel? Husband? What did the community think?
3. Have you interacted with the government or officials? Registered business?
4. What difficulties have you faced, if any?

Aspirations (Entrepreneurship as an Adequate Opportunity)

1. When young, what did you want to be?
2. What did you want from life when you started your business?
3. What do you want from your children's lives?
4. What do you want from the business now?/ What do you hope your business will allow you to do?
5. How do you feel? About yourself/ about your family
6. About your business?
7. About today? Future? Past?

AS MUCH DETAIL AS POSSIBLE PLEASE. TAKE YOUR TIME AND ASK IF YOU NEED HELP.

Appendix 5.2. General overview of EWE Interviews

The purpose of the general overview was to provide a loose structure for the PT; it was not the intention to develop a fixed interview schedule. This approach allowed to entrepreneurs to guide the interviews.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">Established Entrepreneurs   April 2011</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Background demographics</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Business Set up</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Business and the Environment</td></tr>
<tr><td>Regulative</td><td>Normative</td><td>Cognitive</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Defining a valued life – retrospective</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Defining a valued life – present day</td></tr>
</table>

Appendix 5.3. General overview of NWE Interviews

The purpose of the general overview was to provide a loose structure for the PT; it was not the intention to develop a fixed interview schedule. This approach allowed to entrepreneurs to guide the interviews.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Nascent Entrepreneurs</td><td>April 2011</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Background demographics</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Business Set up</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Business and the Environment</td></tr>
<tr><td>Regulative</td><td>Normative</td><td>Cognitive</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Defining a valued life</td></tr>
</table>

Appendix 5.4 Summary of Research for Local Experts

The following text was emailed to the local experts if a detailed overview was requested.

"The overarching aim of the research is to determine whether involvement in entrepreneurship contributes to the expansion of the human capabilities of Nepali women. The aim is to understand the regulatory (laws, taxes, regulations, etc.), normative (values, traditions, religion, culture, etc.) and cognitive (internal, psychological, individual, etc.) aspects of the institutional environment and their effect upon:

- The opportunities for, and scale and scope of, entrepreneurship. Based on the influence of the institutional environment, is entrepreneurship a valued choice?
- The behaviours, opportunities, capabilities and freedom of all Nepali women
- Women entrepreneurs. Is entrepreneurship an appropriate choice for women in Nepal? Is it in-line with the constraints of the institutional environment?

To answer these questions, individuals who have an understanding of the effect of the Nepali environment up on women, entrepreneurs and women entrepreneurs will be contacted and interviewed. The goal is to gain a full understanding of how the environment interacts with these groups and to determine the implications of that interaction. The second branch of the research relates to women entrepreneurs. The intention is to focus upon rural women engaged in established or new businesses."

Appendix 5.5. Research Diary Excerpt

"Monday, 18th April 2011

Ghorahi, Dang Deukhuri District of Nepal

AM: Just about to go to breakfast with [PT]. Yesterday we met with [Sohini] at her spice shop on the main street in [Sohini's town, Dang] for her first interview. Last night, [PT] and I discussed the interview in depth during and after dinner; [Sohini]'s responses were very different from [Tanushri, Priyanka, Ruchira, Ashika and Kanta]'s interviews re Om Shanti. [Sohini]'s youngest daughter was in attendance. I discovered last night that [Sohini] was only 39 (looks older) but that her eldest child (a son) is 26 so she was a young mother. [PT] indicated that her mother was also young (15) when she was born. [PT] currently unmarried with no children at 25. We talked about [Sohini] valuing a different life and how her beliefs guide her life and her entrepreneuring. [PT] made note to get more detail on the relationship between Om Shanti and spice business at next interview – scheduled for end of April. This is our last day in Dang before we drive to [town, Salyan]. We're leaving for [town, Dang] soon to complete our first revisit interview with [Kanta]. She will probably be at her roadside shop since we'll arrive after midday."

Appendix 5.6. Example of a Raw Data from one Category (Role Models)

If the text is underlined, it is included in the main body of the thesis.

> "Oh, why is it important to me? [smiles] I don't know what to say. Being known is good for everyone. If other women know of me, they [women] can prove to themselves that they can also do whatever they want. They can do many things even if they have little support from their families. Women can work if they wish." (*Kanta, 22, Chhetri)*
>
> "If I can train others, visit places, teach other people and make them employed, life would be better. I am currently training other women in tailoring and in making soft toys and I do that to increase their employability. I want to keep doing that. I don't want anyone to face the difficulties as I faced. May they be able to earn and may they be employed like me" (*Tanushri, 40, Newar)*
>
> "The most important thing we can get is prestige in our community." (*Naina, 28, Dalit)*
>
> "Yes, we will be able to become their inspiration. Even our offspring will be motivated to run better enterprises than we did. They might think 'if our parents can do that much, then we can do more than that'" *(Tanushri, 40, Newar)*
>
> "We have seen other women taking on different roles from usual. We thought we'd like to be like them… They have progressed and offered equal opportunities to their sons and daughters" *(Alpana, 35, Dalit)*
>
> "People travelling on the buses, government officials and people from non-governmental organisations have come to this business. They say 'everything here is done by woman. Even the grinding and the packaging designs'. So, they like to come and see it." (*Sohini, 39, Magar)*

“When people see other people having lots of property, lots of things, they want them. I don’t know, maybe it’s down to prestige or popularity.” (*Sohini, 39, Magar)*

“I knew that there were other people running enterprises. I thought ‘I can do that too’” (*Sohini, 39, Magar)*

“And I want to be a successful entrepreneur to earn more money… and also to be called a ‘successful entrepreneur’” (*Sohini, 39, Magar)*

“I have faced difficulties in my life. There may be other sisters are facing similar problems and, if they have the training that I have had and if they set up their own business, maybe they will become as happy as I am” *(Tanushri, 40, Newar)*

“I want our group to be known farther afield, I want to be a good businessperson. I want my group to be identified as a model group – the best among others…We will all advance and our group will be able to invest in others so if some people can’t start their enterprises because they are facing hardships, we can solve that problem by investing in them” *(Tanushri, 40, Newar)*

“Once people know about my success, the people who say to themselves ‘I can’t do it’ may hear about me on the radio and say ‘oh, if she can do it, so can I!’” *(Tanushri, 40, Newar)*

“If people say ‘a woman can run an enterprise and become successful’ other women may think they can be employed and stop being unemployed. I want to be known as a person who contributes to employment by reducing unemployment and being an example of a woman to other women… once people know about my success, the people who say to themselves ‘I can’t do it’ may hear about me and say ‘oh, if she can do it, so can I!’” *(Tanushri, 40, Newar)*

“I want to highlight and prove that women are also able to do these things. “We *should* leave our homes and learn about the outside world so that society will know that women can do things because women are

dominated. There may be other sisters are facing similar problems and, if they have the training that I have had and if they set up their own business, maybe they will become as happy as I am." *(Tanushri, 40, Newar)*

"We wonder whether other women will do as we are doing, whether other women will be inspired by me, by us, by our business. This is how we think." *(Priyanka, 26, Janjati)*

"Yes, yes, we want to show that women can do it but, also, we want to show that women *have* to do it… If we do something good, maybe we can be an example to the women of remote villages. Maybe they will see our achievements and maybe they will be motivated to try and do it themselves. Yes, we will be able to be their inspiration." *(Tanushri, 40, Newar)*

Even our offspring will be motivated to run better enterprises than we did. They might think 'if our parents can do that much, then we can do more than that'" *(Tanushri, 40, Newar)*

"After we were earning money, we start to think about how we are going to get a name for ourselves. Maybe some fame." *(Priyanka, 26, Janjati)*

"To be known to the outer persons. I don't want to be confined to my household; I want to be known to society." *(Tanushri, 40, Newar)*

"if we can do something for society, then people will know us. If I don't go, don't talk and do not participate in those programs, then no one will know us." (*Hasina, 24, Chhetri)*

"If my business improves and progresses, my life will be better and life will be better for other people too. Others will see that by running a business, a person can support themselves. Maybe they will also learn." (*Alpana, 35, Dalit)*

"I know that some people say 'oh, she is running her own business from her home. You could also do that!' to other women. So, I am an example. I've even heard it said myself. I've heard men say to their wives 'you can't cook rice well but she… she is running her own business well. Do you think you could do that instead?' They say that to their wives!" *(Ashika, 29, Gurung)*

"Oh yes, without fear. Now I tell people about our business without fear. Yes, I do. I tell people about my business and I give advice to others." *(Ruchira, 32, Magar)*

"If you are an entrepreneur, people will know you. Even our children will be known. For example, people will ask them 'isn't your mother blah-blah-blah the entrepreneur?' Through that, it will give us fame. Not only for you and me but for the children too. Entrepreneurship is very good, it allows us employment and allows us to offer help to others. We are very lucky women" *(Priyanka, 26, Janjati)*