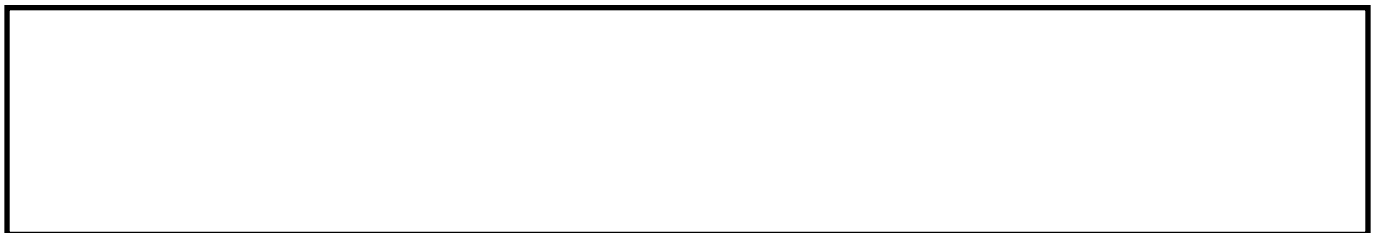


# Social enterprising informing our concept: exploring informal micro social enterprise.

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## **Social enterprising informing our concept; exploring informal micro social enterprise**

### **Introduction**

We encountered an interesting phenomenon, micro social enterprise. These very small, 'owner managed', enterprises address very specific local social needs and are remarkably informal in terms of regulation, organisational structure and operation. The paper considers whether we have stumbled upon a new genre of social enterprise, a scaled down, micro version of conventional social enterprise or something completely new. In terms of purpose and outputs, these micro enterprises focused on distinctively social goals (Peredo and McLean, 2006), yet their nature and practices had unique features. Some characteristics seemed related to size, others to informality; but we were continually reminded of the 'localness' of practice and outcomes. Such anomalies are 'surprises' that prompt and trigger academic enquiry and explanation. We believe that examining these micro social enterprises may help shed some theoretical light on social enterprising more generally. Our analysis identifies themes from features of their practices, allowing us to compare and contrast operations and the nature of social enterprising. Helen Haugh (2012) reminds us the purpose of theory is to understand the phenomenon. Theory 'joins up' concepts into explanations and we believe that analysing the thematic concepts of micro, local, informal and social demonstrated by these organisations may help develop better theory.

This enquiry stemmed from a scoping study of social enterprise project in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), a poor northern province of Pakistan. We became intrigued when colleagues described very small scale social enterprises that behaved differently from what we expect of a social enterprise. The detail was fascinating; informal rather than structured, bricolage rather than resource driven; very enterprising but not typically business like; extremely localised and distinctively shaped by context. They were 'owner' operated, but deeply engaged with, and embedded in, local social relationships. They demonstrated ingenuity and enterprise, but few had a conventional 'business' model; they had a 'social' model for delivering social value. They were not 'organisations', but emphasised organising. We saw how rather than directly offering welfare, they seemed to create an opportunity space aimed at the long term benefit of their clients; often through a social innovation. This led us to examine more examples and to critically observe the nature and practices of these micro social enterprises.

### **Rationale for the study**

Examining this interesting phenomenon is descriptively useful, yet there is also a contribution in using the cases to consider how well we conceptualise social enterprising (Steyaert and Dey, 2010). Although social enterprise takes many forms, their practices may be culturally embedded and reflecting an adaptive capacity (Steiner and Teasdale, 2017) to fit local needs. However, we may unconsciously enact particular views of what constitutes social enterprise and exclude the 'other'. Indeed, social enterprise is a contested concept whose meaning is politically, culturally, historically and geographically variable (Teasdale, Lyon and Baldock, 2013). Mauksch et al (2017;114) suggest that we need to move 'beyond accounts which frame social enterprise as pre-ordained, ready-to-use and thus decontextualized'. Dey and Steyaert (2012) point out how social enterprises are multi vocal and again call for us to go 'beyond'. Moreover, Dey and Teasdale (2016) describe the normalizing power within expectations of what a social enterprise should be (Kay et al, 2016), whilst Nicholls and Teasdale (2017) talk about imposing neo-liberalism by stealth. Indeed, Dey and Steyaert (2018) discussing myths of social enterprise, note how they can legitimise, and even be more symbolically important than what a social enterprise actually does. Accordingly, we apply an open, rather than a normative, approach to what constitutes social enterprising to what may be extreme (Anderson and Obeng, 2017), but exemplary cases (Munoz et al, 2016).

#### Purpose of the study

We do not use the case exploration to engage the social enterprise definition debate (Datoon and Kalakay, 2016; Doherty, 2018). Indeed Gallie (1955: 169) explains how our contested concept "inevitably involves endless disputes about their proper uses on the part of their users". One single accepted definition is unlikely (Choi and Majumdar, 2014), and for conceptualising practices there is already a long list of social enterprise typologies (Diochon and Anderson, 2009) so identifying another type may not be theoretically useful. Furthermore, we question if conceptualisations of social enterprise are universal or practices generalisable beyond context. Hence rather than examining definitional 'fit', we are prompted to ask what is going on here; how can we explain it? A process viewing seems appropriate for appreciating the organising of social change, especially in context (Newth and Woods, 2014). Indeed, there is a powerful argument about social enterprise reflecting national characteristics (Defourny and Nyssens, 2017). For example, Karanda and Toledano, (2012); Jeong,(2015); Hwang et al (2017); Hazenberg et al (2016); Claeve (2017) and Johnsen (2017) all describe the distinctive national character of social enterprises. Kerlin (2013) argues that variations in social enterprise are in part due to their connection with the specific socio-economic conditions of their context (Mair and Marti, 2006). Monroe-White et al (2015) make a similar point, relating context and informality. Potentially then, closely examining the social context of social enterprising has explanatory promise (Gaddefors and Anderson, 2017).

#### Our approach

However Bacq and Janssen (2011) suggest such connections are not well theorised (Haugh, 2005). Ribeiro-Soriano (2017) proposed an essence of entrepreneurship is to create ways to connect resources and growth across cultures, policy contexts, economic conditions and

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3 political situations (Anderson, Dodd and Jack, 2012). Following this reasoning, we believe the  
4 distinctive localness and social embeddedness (McKeever et al, 2014) of our sample may  
5 also offer some critical conceptual leverage about the nature of this social enterprising.  
6 Accordingly, our approach is to examine what they do and how they do it; we reflect on  
7 these practices by identifying characteristic themes with explanatory potential.  
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## 10 Research design and method

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14 Our original intention was to report on social enterprise in the region, but as the data  
15 developed we became curious about the unusual patterns that became evident. We  
16 redirected our efforts towards understanding the interesting phenomenon of micro social  
17 entrepreneuring. We first used the literature to help us identify and refine the nature of the  
18 research problem. Put simply, what did the literature have to tell us about micro social  
19 enterprise? As Munroe-White et al (2015) note, the literature on social enterprises often  
20 documents intriguing case studies and stories of individual social entrepreneurs.  
21 Nonetheless, it appeared the idea itself was novel, yet the literature had many useful and  
22 informed accounts of dimensions of the characteristics we had seen. This led us to adopt a  
23 post-positive method (Karatas-Ozkan et al, 2014), because entrepreneurship is characterised  
24 by complex, dynamic and emergent processes and the interplay between actors, processes  
25 and contexts. Post-positivistic approaches offer the opportunity to examine subtleties of the  
26 phenomenon of entrepreneurship by placing emphasis on a range of its dimensions and the  
27 interplays between dimensions. Such post-positivistic research aims to develop concepts  
28 and theory which enhance our grasp of social phenomena in natural settings. In contrast,  
29 the dominant positivistic approach (McDonald et al, 2015) using for example surveys, is  
30 poorly suited to our purpose of exploration and discovering. Moreover, without a developed  
31 hypotheses to test, analysis would be impossible.  
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37 Our sampling became convenience, but was theoretically informed. In short, we looked for  
38 accessible cases that had the characteristics that interested us. Saunders and Townsend's  
39 (2016) suggest that for relatively homogeneous populations, between six and 12  
40 participants, should be adequate. We wrote up the data as case stories, attempting to  
41 capture what we saw as important; process in context (Kerlin, 2012; Felicio et al, 2013).  
42 These qualitative data were analysed inductively by looking for patterns, regularities *and*  
43 inconsistencies across cases; but not tabula rasa, instead we were informed by the literature  
44 (theoretically sensitised - Corbin and Strauss, 2014). The analysis, using the constant  
45 comparative techniques, involves a recursive sense making of the data (Jack et al, 2015).  
46 Analysing is the iterative inductive comparisons within cases, across cases, with theory and  
47 the literature; a constant to-ing and fro-ing until some satisfactory explanation is reached.  
48 Analysis thus involves a recursive sense making of the data. As such it attempts to identify  
49 themes, patterns of similarity and differences that may be conceptually linked to form  
50 explanations. Importantly, themes surface within context (Anderson and Jack, 2015), but  
51 must be recognised by the researcher. Ukanwa et al (2017) explain how identified themes,  
52 the patterns of similarity, may then be conceptually linked to form explanations. Iterations  
53 between data and data, data and theory are essentially trial and error, a craft rather than  
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3 science, and very dependent on the researcher's inductive skills. The 'test' for this type of  
4 analysis is if we are convinced by the analysis. Then, as Haugh (2012) suggested, explanation  
5 emerges by relating these conceptual themes. Formally, this is the constant comparative  
6 method (Jack et al, 2015), focusing on what Steyaert and Dey (2010) call situated reflexive  
7 enquiry. Our data are presented as revelatory cases (Yin, 2017).  
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#### 9 The contribution

10 We identified *structural* themes- relevance, embeddedness and informality; and *practice*  
11 themes- bricolage and effectuation, frugality and social responsibility. Analysis allowed us to  
12 reach several conclusions. First, that these are undoubtedly socially focused enterprises, but  
13 that informality, similar to that of informality in commercial enterprises, shapes what they  
14 *can* do. Secondly, that the context, prevailing socio-economic conditions shapes what they  
15 *choose* to do. Moreover, the variety in approaches to social value creation simply reflects  
16 the idiosyncrasies of the enterpriser's knowledge and experiences. However, these micro  
17 social enterprises are not only socially situated, but they are socially enacted and socially  
18 enabled; hence they respond to context and are likely context bound (Pret and Carter,  
19 2017). This has implications for scalability and transfer. Moreover, as micro social  
20 enterprising driven by a personal sense of social responsibility (Omoredede, 2014), like many  
21 small businesses, they reflect their 'ownership' (Anderson and Ullah, 2014). This is manifest  
22 in the strong sense of social purpose typical of social enterprises (Germak and Robinson,  
23 2014), but engagement and micro level actions practice is driven by founder experience.  
24 Thus, just as small firms are not miniatures of large firms, these micro social enterprises also  
25 behave differently. On the positive side, this means their actions are deeply locally  
26 embedded; on the negative, they depend on the energy, drive, ability and social capital of  
27 the founder  
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32 We concluded that they are social enterprises, but a distinctive form. We base this on the  
33 evidence and argument that they are entrepreneurial and profoundly socially orientated. A  
34 broad view of entrepreneurship describes it as creating value *from* an environment  
35 (Korsgaard et al, 2016); and value creation is very evident. However, they are clearly social in  
36 that they also create value *for* the environment in which they operate. Purpose and  
37 processes are about community engagement (Anderson and Lent, 2017), so that the  
38 outputs, the value generated is profoundly social. Because of informality and scale, their  
39 emphasis is on organising, rather than being an organisation. Nonetheless, the structuring of  
40 what they do is a response to local conditions.  
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43 We now describe these local conditions, then continue by describing two of our cases and  
44 offer our thematic analysis and discussion. This is followed by interesting questions raised by  
45 the analysis. Finally we propose additions to our social enterprise research agenda.  
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#### 49 **The social and economic context for social enterprising**

50 Pakistan is poor, 38.8% of the population lives in poverty. In KPK, half of the population,  
51 49.2% of 30 million suffer from acute poverty and deprivation. Underdevelopment prevails;  
52 the literacy rate is 53%, but falls to 33% for women (Pakistan Government, 2016). Moreover,  
53 women are culturally deterred from full economic participation. Reflecting the multiple  
54 dimensions of poverty, Shirazi and Obaidullah (2014) using the broad measures of the  
55 Human Development index, which includes health, education as well as economic indicators,  
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3 found Pakistan ranked 146<sup>th</sup> out of 187. All the dimensions of poverty and its consequences  
4 are present, and socio-economic needs are high.  
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8 The region has historically suffered from attempts to control its isolated, strategic location  
9 with the Khyber Pass. The British Raj knew it as the North West Frontier and for the  
10 ferocious independence of the Pashtun people. More recently, terrorism has an ominous  
11 presence in KPK and the neighbouring Tribal Areas. Terrorism caused 50,000 deaths and two million  
12 displaced people. KPK, especially the rural areas, is traditional and often adheres to cultural  
13 practices strongly influenced by religious interpretations. The presence of the Taliban  
14 coerced adherence to these practices, especially limited women's participation. Terrorism  
15 has also brought corruption, such that even many NGO's are perceived as corrupt (Owais et  
16 al, 2015). One consequence is that human development has been largely neglected. Haugh  
17 and Talwar (2016) describe 'emancipatory' social enterprise which seeks to address such  
18 problems. Their interest was to further the agency of women, but the concept could be  
19 extended to all those disenfranchised, such as the poor of KPK. This role, freeing up the  
20 poorest from the constraints of poverty, might be seen as a structural role for the agency of  
21 social enterprise; one with long term benefits.  
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26 We were also aware that some 74% of all Pakistanis employees work in the informal sector,  
27 where micro enterprises are typical (Williams, Shahid and Martinez, 2016) yet provide some  
28 35% of GDP. Self-employment is high at 23% (Pakistan Government, 2016), probably  
29 reflecting the lack of jobs. Nonetheless, informality and micro size are local business norms  
30 (Williams and Shahid (2016) and seem to also apply to social enterprising.  
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### 33 34 **The Case Stories** 35

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37 Space prevents us describing all of the cases, so we selected two contrasting cases,  
38 purposefully sampled (Hlady-Rispal and Jouison-Laffitte, 2014; Neergaard, 2007) as  
39 exemplary cases (Weerawardena and Mort, 2006; Yin, 2017). However, Table 2 provides a  
40 description of our other 13 cases.  
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#### 43 44 Case story- A school for street kids, Amira Sadaq 45

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48 Amira Sadaq was encouraged by her aunt to do something for the impoverished children  
49 who spend their days begging, or as child labour. Every day she saw the wretchedness of  
50 these kids, their deprivation and struggle to scrape an existence from the floor of society.  
51 Well educated, Amira believed ignorance reproduced poverty and caused these children to  
52 become socially and economically excluded adults. She decided to set up a free school,  
53 where some education could improve their wretched circumstance. Amira had few material  
54 resources, save her own education. Her idea was to simply hold a school in a park; no  
55 formalities, furniture or facilities, just open education. Because the park was public, she  
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3 sought permission. A local politician had a better idea and offered free use of a disused  
4 room in his office building. Amira acquired a rug, some paper and books and opened the  
5 school; but no kids appeared.  
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9 For two weeks no kids attended; frustrated, Amira went out and, as she put it, 'grabbed' her  
10 first three pupils off the street. This worked a little, but the kids were hungry and had poor  
11 attention spans. Amira added a daily meal to the curriculum and more kids came. Parents  
12 began grumbling about the loss of income from the kids' begging and labouring. As she put  
13 it, *"if the kids don't earn well they get a beating from their parents"*. Amira began to pay the  
14 kids for attending school, only a few rupees but more kids came to school. This social  
15 innovation was well received; *"parents are pressurizing their children now to come to the  
16 academy because of the financial help"*.  
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20 The school, eighteen months later, has 65 kids learning to read and write. But more than  
21 literacy, Amira tries to teach civic sense. *"We give them education about lying, stealing and  
22 bad habits.....we teach them what's right and what's wrong."* She thanks Allah, *"we provide  
23 each child with milk and food every day and thankfully we have never had a single day that  
24 we missed due to limited funds. I don't know from where I am getting all these funds"*.  
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28 Somehow, this enterprise works towards its end purpose of helping form independent good  
29 citizens. They have no formal planning, only action and have no formal funding. Some  
30 outsiders may 'sponsor' a child and they have lots of volunteer helpers. *"We are getting  
31 funds from places we can never expect"*. Amira's relatives help too; but continuity and  
32 security of the modest funding is uncertain, yet not deemed a problem. Amira explained,  
33 *"We have free room provided by Nazim, we have funds, we have volunteers. We started  
34 enrolling other underprivileged children, such as orphans and it increased our strength."*  
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38 As we see it, Amira has made it her business to help and develop others. This is not just  
39 charity- giving. It is a knowledge based, value creating, informal social organisation (Munoz  
40 et al, 2015) that enterprises the social (Anderson and Lent, 2017)  
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#### 44 Case story- Cultivating attitudes and growing a business, Arman Kushan 45 46

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48 This case contrasts Amira in that it is commercially orientated. Arman uses business to  
49 provide livelihoods. From Arman's perspective, it shares Amira's social purpose of changing  
50 attitudes. As with Amira, the goals are long term and shares the belief in improving the  
51 human capital of the poor to create some sustainable advantage. It is also similar in that it  
52 uses a short term means of directly alleviating poverty to build the long term ambition of  
53 social improvement. Whereas Amira fed and paid her 'customers', Arman provided a means  
54 of their earning a livelihood. Both however, can be seen to open up an opportunity space.  
55 Both were motivated by a sense of social responsibility for others.  
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5 Arman comes from a well-off family. In 2012, he was sent to Australia to complete a masters  
6 degree because of the security situation and Taliban in his village. Although Arman's social  
7 worker father was murdered by the Taliban, Arman was motivated to return to the village to  
8 create a business that would provide employment and hence reduce the influence of the  
9 Taliban on the unemployed. He despaired of those who migrated to a safe country,  
10 complaining about conditions in KPK, but did nothing. Like many social entrepreneurs, he  
11 wanted to do something.  
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15 His experience of Australia was a cultural shock, especially the need for a middle class  
16 student to work while studying. In KPK, a student working was seen as undignified, reflecting  
17 badly on the family. In Australia, working was the norm; Arman himself cleaned houses.  
18 Worse still was the Pakistani middle class expectation of a 'suitable' white collar job after  
19 graduation. *"All work is respectable"* but graduates *"feel ashamed in doing work which is not*  
20 *up to the status of which he/she imagined they should have. Some low skilled jobs are looked*  
21 *down upon and are considered as jobs only for illiterate people.* In contrast, Arman's view  
22 saw dignity in work and merit of achievement. *"No matter how much we study, we are still*  
23 *living in an under developed country"*. For him, culture created a kind of dependency, a  
24 culturally created trap that limits possibilities. Arman explained, *"In the market in Pakistan*  
25 *the cheapest labour right now is an educated (fresh graduate) one. A normal day labourer,*  
26 *you can't hire him for less than 30 thousand a month (\$300) but a good MBA graduate will*  
27 *work for you for 17-18 thousand (\$170) a month. The reason for that is that because that*  
28 *MBA has no real-world experience."*  
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33 Again we see intentions like Amira's of breaking out of prevailing conditions, but here it is  
34 not a circuit of despair, but one created by limited cultural expectation. Again we see the  
35 idea as opening up an opportunity space. Unlike Amira, he was convinced that employing  
36 others and providing the right kind of experience was a critical social responsibility. Yet he  
37 too used his education and 'experience' as a tool to achieve these ends. *"I can provide*  
38 *employment for 15-20 people by doing business. But in the eyes of society that is nothing. It's*  
39 *better to work for someone else rather than be your own boss"*.  
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43 Arman first saw an opportunity in the local availability of cheap, but arid land. He bought 50  
44 acres, levelled the ground with his tractor, then installed solar panels to pump water from  
45 the bore holes he drilled. He grows peaches on some of the irrigated land, but leases most  
46 of it to poor families for half the going rate. The enterprise now supports 6 families, creating  
47 a higher standard of living. The objective is to become fully organic and market  
48 internationally. Meantime, the project earns a modest profit.  
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52 Arman also opened a large general store in the village, offering a range of goods at  
53 reasonable prices. What is unusual is that all the staff, including the manager, are school  
54 students working part time. *"Working in the store trains them for life outside school."* Arman  
55 explained two benefits, an income and experience. *"They do a part time making 10*  
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3 *thousand rupees (\$100 a month) and making some (money). By the time he is finished with*  
4 *his bachelors, he will have a good idea (on what to do next). He will be able to save some*  
5 *money and start a small business. The degree is something else, it's for knowledge."*  
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9 Arman tells about being castigated by an elderly lady who saw him working in the shop. She  
10 was appalled that such an educated fellow did manual work and told him that it was  
11 demeaning. *"If you studied so much then why did you open a shop? I mean this mentality*  
12 *exists here. I just smiled at her and said then if I had not opened this shop, where would you*  
13 *go for shopping in this small village?"* The ideal is a government job, far less of employing  
14 others, has become an entrenched social attitude that Arman works to change by example.  
15 He told us about one student employee, *"Bashir started as a security guard and then*  
16 *through promotions he is now working as a sales manager. He is also about to graduate. So,*  
17 *in the next (venture) when I start it I will make him my partner".*  
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21 Interestingly, when describing how he supported honest local politicians as a way to protect  
22 himself from corrupt officials, Arman explained *"Machiavelli said the ends justified the*  
23 *means."* We believe this philosophy of using all available means also applies in how he  
24 operates his social enterprise.  
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### 27 28 **Themes from the analysis**

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31 Our objective was to try to understand the nature and practice of these micro enterprises.  
32 We saw two descriptive categories in the thematic analysis that helped us to identify what  
33 they do and how they do it, thus offering us some insights about the distinctiveness of their  
34 organising and operating practices. Structural and practice (operational) categories reflected  
35 the social, cultural and economic positioning of the social enterprise. By structural, we mean  
36 features that shaped the organisation of the micro social enterprise; by practice, the  
37 features affected how they delivered. We believe that themes within these descriptive  
38 categories enable us to appreciate, and move towards understanding, the nature of micro  
39 social enterprising. We offer detailed analysis from the two cases and illustrations from the  
40 other cases we collected.  
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### 43 44 **Structural Themes**

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48 The first theme was relevance. We saw relevance as the appropriateness of social value  
49 creation ambitions and as responses to the environment. Accordingly, the relevance theme  
50 explains how the enterprise 'fits' local contexts. It could be argued that relevance also  
51 describes the 'opportunity', not least in that a social enterprise opportunity is a reflection of  
52 local needs. Moreover, social opportunity is framed, perhaps even determined, in the  
53 interactions between the entrepreneur and the experienced context (Lent and Anderson,  
54 2017). Accordingly, relevance reflects the match between local needs and what is provided  
55 by the micro social enterprise.  
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### **Relevance**

Amira addresses a local social malaise, the prevailing laissez faire tolerance of the wretched predicament of the beggar kids. Yet she also taps the Islamic ethic of giving (*zakat*) to support her mission. Social relevance is evident in the human development of the kids. Illiteracy handicaps the poor, but especially poor women. Her social mission of ethical appreciation, learning why it is wrong to steal, addresses social problems of petty crime. The enterprise is dependent on the cultural fit of *zakat* as a practice.

Arman's relevance is on a different plain, largely directed towards what he saw as prevailing disadvantaging attitudes about the value of work. The cultural relevance is his subjective view about a misguiding culture. Yet his business have strong local economic relevance; the agricultural enterprise creates local income whilst the shop adds convenience and choice for locals. Employing only students, as he explains it, is cultural pioneering. Using the novelty of student work as experiential confronts established cultural practice. It 'fits' as a contradictory, but successful exemplar of what can be done.

### **Embeddedness**

Here we explain how relevance is created by the social enterprise's roots in local society. A broad view of embeddedness relates how the enterprise emerges from and with context (Kistruck and Beamish, 2010). Context shapes practices (Anderson and Gaddefors, 2017) and can form a localised sense of responsibility (Grube and Storr, 2018). The embeddedness theme thus describes the social entrepreneur's relationship to context.

Amira's concern was about poor kids, a group with whom she was socially disconnected. Yet she explained how she saw them every day and knew they were part of her city. Unlike most, she could not ignore them; treating them as external to her society. Her sense of social responsibility emanated from her embeddedness. Indeed her reliance on local friends and the politician is also an effect of embeddedness.

Spatial embeddedness applies to both Arman and Amira; they live here and are part of the fabric of society. Arman extends living to livelihood, he makes his living from the local agricultural resource and the locals in the village. The livelihoods he provides for the farming families and students support the local economic fabric. Moreover, it is one aspect of cultural embeddedness that he wants to change.

### **Informality**

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5 We see informality as a response to context. Informality is a descriptive theme that  
6 describes the mode of engagement and the style of entrepreneurial practice. In the  
7 literature informality is sometimes treated as 2<sup>nd</sup> class entrepreneurship, even although it  
8 may be typical (Williams and Shahid, 2016). Furthermore, informal enterprise can involve  
9 considerable enterprise and ingenuity, especially in less developed countries (Anderson et  
10 al, 2013). Moreover, conforming to regulations, even when they are intended to be  
11 supportive, can hinder development (Al-Balushi and Anderson, 2017). Informality may offer  
12 the simplest, easiest and most effective solution to institutional barriers or voids. It allows  
13 flexibility, the agility to adapt to emerging circumstances as they are encountered.  
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16 Being formally registered places constraints on what they can do. Instead, they have  
17 freedom to do what they see appropriate. Amira's original idea of a school in the park  
18 epitomises informality. As we saw her initial recruitment was very informal, pulling poor kids  
19 off the street. Yet the flexibility of offering meals and payment could only happen in an  
20 informal organisation.  
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23 Arman is more structured in his approach, targeting opportunities. Ownership of the land  
24 and shop structures possibilities, but within that framework we see adaptability arising from  
25 the flexibility inhering in his open approach. For example, he operates the peach growing  
26 business himself, but accesses labour from his tenant farmers. His proposal to make all the  
27 production, his and the farmers, organic, seems evidence of adapting to opportunity. We  
28 can describe both micro enterprises as agile, because of their informal structure.  
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31 For example, Arman told us, "*...the government in itself is a barrier instead of supporting*  
32 *you. For example, if I go to an office and tell them I am opening a shop, he won't think how I*  
33 *can help him out. The first thing he thinks is how can I get something out of this for myself?*  
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35 We note how informality allows independence in decision making. Informality avoids the  
36 influence of multiple stakeholders, especially funders (Anderson and Lent, 2017) and the risk  
37 of mission drift (Cornforth, 2014).  
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## 40 Practice themes

### 41 *Bricolage and effectuation*

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44 The related themes of bricolage and effectuation are about entrepreneurial practices and  
45 stress improvisation. We saw bricolage as a descriptive category, where we observed how  
46 they made do with what was ready-to-hand (Baker and Nelson, 2005). Bricolage describes  
47 how entrepreneurs manage to pull together limited, but available resources (Dodd et al,  
48 2013). In contrast, effectuation is a strategic practice (Anderson and Ronteau, 2017) and  
49 explains how available resources are aligned towards the entrepreneurial purpose.  
50 Korsgaard et al (2016) describe the *resourcefulness* of such strategic practices. Clearly,  
51 bricolage characterises what both respondents do. They operate using what they have or  
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3 can get hold of. Amira's practice is classic bricolage; the access to the politician's room,  
4 supplies of food for the kids and the thinking on her feet to address problems as they arise.  
5 Yet when bricolage is more than an event- becoming a practice- it is better understood as  
6 effectuation. We can see similar patterns in how Arman makes the most of what he has.  
7 The land improvements, solar panels and bore holes required capital. Yet he had family  
8 capital to power his social ambitions. The ready supply of students to staff the store is very  
9 effective. It attends to Arman's aspirations of providing the experience of work, yet also  
10 offers a flexible work force.  
11

### 12 13 14 15 16 **Frugality** 17

18  
19 Frugality refers to the careful stewardship of limited resources. The concept often surfaces  
20 in ethnographies of entrepreneurship (Dana, 2009; 1995), especially in characterising  
21 particular ethnic behaviours (Morris and Schindehutte, 2005; Anderson and Lee, 2009). It  
22 extends the ideas of bricolage and effectuation. Rather than simply making do with what is  
23 available, frugality is about making the most of what they have; an effective husbanding of  
24 resources.  
25  
26

27  
28 Both operations are very resource 'lean', yet they appear to use available resources very  
29 efficiently. Nothing is wasted, all their resources usefully contribute. Resources are  
30 prudently used; Arman's operation is tightly controlled by the shared interest of his 'clients'  
31 and his own. Amira has little to waste, so frugality husbands what she can access.  
32 Nonetheless, it strikes us that the effectiveness of what they do drives these enterprises.  
33  
34

### 35 36 37 **Social responsibility** 38

39  
40 Social responsibility refers to perceived obligations towards others who may share  
41 the same space, but are otherwise unconnected. It reflects how entrepreneuring is always  
42 socially situated (Anderson and Smith, 2007) and never merely an economic manifestation.  
43 It directs our attention to entrepreneuring as a socially situated practice that may arise from  
44 different kinds of motivation and different kinds of values generated. It is akin to the idea of  
45 corporate social responsibility, but the obligations are more deeply engrained because it  
46 offers direction and purpose.  
47  
48

49  
50 The motivation for Amira and Arman is their strong personal sense of social responsibility.  
51 They feel an obligation to others, especially those most disadvantaged. They channel this  
52 into action, but not just giving, but in trying to make things better.  
53  
54

## Discussion

We believe these themes help to explain the nature, the purpose and the actions of this group of socially focused enterprising people. For us, they capture what we saw going on, and go some way to understanding their actions and organising.

Although some elements of these informal micro social entrepreneurs lie outside what we expect of a social enterprise, we observed how well they addressed local social welfare. In effect, the SE's were tailored for and deeply embedded in context for practice and outcomes. Put differently, they are profoundly social. We note the extent of enterprise in the ingenuity demonstrated in obtaining resources and in their practices. We conclude that they are clearly enterprising. On balance, we conclude that the informality and bricolage combined with the absence of any business model suggest that this micro-social enterprise is a novel form of social enterprising. These practices seem to sit outside the grand narratives and neoliberal discourse (Ssendi and Anderson, 2009) that permeate the legitimacy of social enterprise. However, Dey and Teasdale (2016) point out that tactics need not confront institutions, but can 'make do' with the opportunities that institutions offer. In our case the tactic was to largely avoid formal institutions, sidestepping rules and regulatory burdens through informality.

Nonetheless, Nicholls and Teasdale (2017) propose a characteristic of a social enterprise is that they trade and conventional trading was not evident in the micro social enterprises. However, this commercial turn ascribed to social enterprise is challenged by Kerlin and Pollak (2011). It may be that trading can, like other dimensions of social enterprise, take on different forms to suits contexts, abilities and resources. In these cases, the 'values' of both inputs and outputs were social. Indeed we argue the very process itself was social.

## Conclusions

We saw how socially situated resources were mobilised to address situated needs. We were impressed by how these micro socials addresses causes, rather than simply the consequences of poverty. By any measure we saw entrepreneurial behaviour; but not in a form that we typically expect to find a social enterprise. There was an emphasis on entrepreneurial agency making things happen. But these were not amateurs (McElwee et al, 2018) but enactors. There was no financial profit making element, no conventional business model. These are modest endeavours which are unlikely to be scalable, they are too dependent on individuals and their concerns, abilities and connections (Johannisson, 2018). Yet, as with the enterprising element, they produce social welfare, but with a focus on ends rather than gathering means. We are also reminded of Edith Penrose's dictum about resources; that it is what you do with the resources that matters. Nonetheless, they are profoundly social and enterprising.

1  
2  
3 However, we do not think these are early stage versions of conventionally understood social  
4 enterprise. They are a genus of their own that fulfils an important role and position. Micro in  
5 size and scope, but with macro aspirations, they deserve to be understood and supported  
6 because of the close fit with local needs and local resources and the appropriateness, the  
7 usefulness of what they achieve. For theory development, we suggest these cases indicate  
8 that rather than pursuing a definition, we might understand the phenomenon better by  
9 forgetting the nouns and look at the verb, social enterprising.

11  
12  
13 We had suggested earlier that we hoped to contribute towards elaborating the concept of  
14 social entrepreneurship through the analysis of these unusual cases. Although they did not  
15 look like a typical social enterprise, we were convinced they behaved as a social enterprise.  
16 This leads us to propose that the concept of social enterprise may be best conceived and  
17 understood by their actions, the practices of being – what they do. Emphasis on  
18 *entrepreneurship* with a social purpose seems much more useful than a checklist of  
19 definitional characteristics that struggles to define and comprehensively encompass what  
20 they *are*. We are obliged to the editor and associate editor, whose critique of an early  
21 version of this paper asked -so what, forcing us to think hard about implications. To take this  
22 notion of practices a little further, we suggest that a fruitful direction for social enterprise  
23 research may be to move towards a theory of social enterprise practice. The explanatory  
24 promise of such theorising lies in relating the shape of social enterprising to the institutions  
25 it encounters. Put differently, a focus on structures and enterprising agency seems  
26 promising. A theory of practice would build on what we already know. Institutions and  
27 institutional voids play a key role in social enterprise. We also know, as we described earlier,  
28 that social enterprises are influenced by context. If we were to consider the effects of  
29 context as surfacing in informal institutions, the interplay of formal and informal institutions  
30 may well offer us the basis for a productive general theory of social enterprise practice.  
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SE	Functions and Objectives
Miss K.Z.	The owner is a teacher and works as a social activist who runs the firm to generate income.
Weekend	Trains females to empower them and to help their minds grow,

Teasdale S., F. Lyon and Baldock, R. (2013) "Playing with Numbers: A Methodological Critique of the Social Enterprise Growth Myth", *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, Vol. 4 Issue: 2, pp.113-131,

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Table 2, the other cases

Celebrations	develop and prosper.
Mr. B. J. Falcon School	<p>Provides quality education at an economical price for middle class families of this area who cannot afford to study in an English medium school</p> <p>to provide kids with an equal opportunity at a quality life.</p> <p>Private schools that provide good education are charge \$100; a person earning 10\$ a day cannot afford to send his kids to such schools. Falcon school provides the same education (15\$ per month) thus improving quality of life.</p>
Miss M.S.C. Artistic Henna	<p>Henna art design and manufacturing business, provides free training for underprivileged women</p> <p>A responsibility towards the females who are living in strict conditions and does not have any support-both emotionally and financially</p>
Mrs. N.H. Stepping Stone	<p>A Montessori school designed that provides free quality education to the underprivileged kids</p> <p>To provide kids with an equal opportunity for a quality life. (gives special attention to those students that cannot understand English or Urdu)</p>
Miss N.H.K Natasha's Beauty Salon	<p>A beauty salon that provides beautician services and generates profit</p> <p>The SE provides free beautician trainings to underprivileged females and they are also financially rewarded. Once they are trained they are given a choice either to start their own business or work at Natasha's beauty salon</p> <p>To restore the confidence that women had lost through decades of self-neglect and absence in public spheres. The SE challenges a prevailing view that there is lack of opportunity for women.</p>
Miss S.W. Waqar Excellence Beauty Salon	<p>A beauty salon that provides beautician services to paying customers. Also gives free beautician training to underprivileged women; especially IDP's (people who left their homes due to war on terrorism and migrated to this area so that Pakistan army could fight the terrorists)</p> <p>To empower the underprivileged</p>

<p>Miss F. S.Y.</p> <p>Good Morning Pakistan</p>	<p>The clothing store provides vocational skill training and jobs for orphans, disabled and underprivileged girls at PGGA (Volunteer Pakistan Girl Guides Association)</p> <p>The SE works for the rights of women and represents them at different forums (media, conferences abroad etc). She also runs a local magazine "Good Morning Pakistan" to promote all the local hidden talent and new businesses of Peshawar.</p>
<p>Mr. A.A.</p> <p>Youth Entrepreneurs Organization</p>	<p>Provides mainly free, or very modestly priced training for online, freelance jobs.</p> <p>To enable them to work and earn from home anytime. (suits females who may not be allowed to leave the home, even for work)</p>
<p>Mr. H.H.</p> <p>1 on 1 tuitioners</p>	<p>Provides home based tutoring to children, youngsters at a very reasonable fee.</p> <p>After the Army public school terrorist attack on students (130 students were shot), parents are concerned about safety of their children. Tuition centers are small and still very vulnerable. So, home based tuition is much more in demand but expensive.</p>
<p>Mrs. N.S.</p> <p>Honey Academy</p>	<p>The academy provides vocational skill training for the women of KP so that they can be financially independent.</p> <p>To help change women's image in the KP society, includes driver and computer training as well as business skills.</p>
<p>Mrs. S. A.</p> <p>Fascino Couture</p>	<p>Improving business and social skills and income for poor rural women artisans in craft industries.</p> <p>To build incomes and capacity in this poor group.</p>
<p>Mrs. T. M.</p> <p>Fresh Diet Kitchen</p>	<p>Social Activist/ master trainer/ conducts training in preserved products, disaster risk management, community mobilization mostly free of cost. Fresh Diet Kitchen is a home delivery program that creates awareness about healthy food.</p> <p>To address the misfortunes of the women community of KP.</p>
<p>SOS institute of learning</p>	<p>The SE provides quality education to SOS children (orphaned and abandoned children living in SOS village that was opened in 2016 by the government KP)</p> <p>The ultimate goal is to create good citizens, survivors with ethical and civic sense.</p>