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Strategy and Entrepreneurship Group

**The Green Entrepreneur:
Visionary, Maverick or Opportunist?**

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Abstract

Given the importance of green entrepreneurs in the transition towards a truly sustainable society, this paper proposes frameworks for investigating the motives of entrepreneurs who set up green businesses. Different perceptions of 'green' are explored and although the paper focuses particularly on 'green-green' businesses, the scope for investigation encompasses all possible forms of green start-ups. The main approach taken in the paper is to review the literature on entrepreneurs generally, and approaches to classifying entrepreneurs with a view to gaining useful insights for the green context.

An exploratory typology of green entrepreneurs is proposed, which has been adapted and developed from Thompson's four dimensions of entrepreneurship (1998). The terms 'ethical maverick', 'ad hoc environpreneur', 'visionary champion' and 'innovative opportunist' are coined to describe different motives or orientations of the green entrepreneur. Frameworks are proposed to investigate the motives of, and influences on, green entrepreneurs. The ultimate aim is to gain insights for policy makers and educators into ways to foster green entrepreneurship.

Key Words: entrepreneur, sustainability, green, start-ups, motivation, champions, typology

Word Count: 5560

Introduction

This paper aims to establish a framework for investigating the motives of entrepreneurs who set up green businesses. Although the focus for our investigation is ‘green-green’ businesses – that is, businesses that are founded on the principle of sustainability (Isaak, 1998) – our scope encompasses all possible forms of green business. Isaak uses the expression ‘ecopreneur’ to mean individuals who found/set-up green-green businesses. He suggests that ecopreneurs pursue social and ecological goals by means of profit orientated businesses. Developing this theme, we suggest that one can then logically distinguish ecopreneurs from other types of green entrepreneurs who pursue profit goals by means of ecological or socially orientated businesses. In the context of the need to move towards a truly sustainable society, we support Isaak’s view that ecopreneurs are increasingly being seen as crucial change agents, or champions, driving the sustainability transformation process. But we also suggest that it is important to investigate the motives of all types of green entrepreneurs in order to gain insights for policy makers and educators into ways to foster green entrepreneurship.

Our approach is to explore the concept of entrepreneurship and existing approaches to classifying entrepreneurs to see whether these can assist us in moving towards a framework for investigating green entrepreneurs. First we offer various interpretations of the expressions ‘green’ and ‘green-green’, before providing our own definition of what we mean in this paper by green entrepreneurs. Drawing on existing entrepreneurship models, we develop an exploratory typology of green entrepreneurs.

Background / Context

Although there is much more attention being paid to the greening of SMEs of late (Hillary 2000), until recently there has been surprisingly little on green entrepreneurs in the UK literature, apart from numerous references to the high profile green entrepreneur success story of Anita Roddick and the Body Shop. Perhaps this lack of research is because intuitively, environmentalism (collectivist and communitarian orientated) and entrepreneurship (individualist, consumption orientated) can be seen

as intrinsically hostile (Anderson, 1998). But Anderson's theme is that environmentalism and entrepreneurship actually share commonalities in terms of social process and attitudes and that entrepreneurship is more likely to sustain environmentalism than any other form of imposed change. He argues that entrepreneurship is unique in that it is the only business form that can directly incorporate and consolidate the values of the individual, and that the moral dimension of environmentalism can empower entrepreneurship. Examples are provided of environmental entrepreneuring, whose common factor is that they 'sell' immaterial goods or culture; they extract both financial and moral value.

Most of the existing literature on organizational greening in general, and that specifically addressed at SMEs, focuses on greening existing businesses (see Business Strategy and the Environment journal; also for SMEs see Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management journal, and Hillary 2000). Academic perspectives on corporate environmental strategy and performance typically theorize stage models of corporate environmental improvement in which companies progress from a resistant/reactive stance to a sustainable or transcendent state (Roome 1992, Welford 1996). But clearly an additional and significant element of moving towards a sustainable future is new green business formations, or green start-ups. Ecopreneurs are increasingly being seen as crucial change agents, or champions, driving the collective learning process that society needs to engage in (Isaak 1998, Anderson 1998). Isaak presents a 'green-green time and risk reduction for sustainable development' learning curve that envisages society moving from *decadence* (preoccupation with instant present gratification and high risk-taking), through *reformism* (greening of existing businesses), and *creation* (epitomizing green values, green screens, green careers) to *green-green ecopreneurship* – ie. 'radically reducing risk to the natural environment by supporting only green-green ecopreneurship and sustainable economic growth.' (Isaak, 1998; pp.24). Whilst acknowledging that elements of all four of these 'stages' probably exist concurrently in the current business scene, the focus of this paper is businesses founded with the last stage vision in mind; in other words, green-green start-ups. The Body Shop and Ben & Jerry's are presented by Isaak (1998) as the epitome of successful green-green

businesses, that is, they start up green from scratch and are system-transforming, socially committed and technologically up-to-date breakthrough ventures.

In determining the chosen scope for this study - as it relates, for example, to definitions of 'entrepreneur' and 'green' (see below) - it is relevant to note the specific context and purpose of the authors. We teach on undergraduate and postgraduate Business Enterprise courses that focus on entrepreneurship in general and small businesses in particular. For those students who may be interested in becoming entrepreneurs, we want to stimulate an interest in, and/or present the opportunities relating to, green-green businesses. Whilst hoping that the results of this research may have a wider utility – for example, for policy makers who seek to foster ecopreneurship – if we are in doubt as to appropriate scope, we focus on the frame of reference of the Business Enterprise student. Implicit in our perspective also is the assumption that green objectives are compatible with 'business-as-usual' in the medium term, notwithstanding the longer-term vision of a (probably radically different) future sustainable society.

Green and 'green-green'

Inevitably, we need to address what is meant by 'green' before we can further delineate 'green-green'. We offer various interpretations first, before coming up with our own definition of what we mean in this paper by green entrepreneurs. In popular usage, the expression 'green' is used in both a relative and an absolute sense. So a green business could refer to one that has been set up on a green basis, or one that has become relatively green. Greenness can also refer to either the product or the process; (more on this below). In this paper (and elsewhere), greening is used as a kind of shorthand for moving towards environmental or ecological sustainability. The terms sustainability and sustainable development themselves have a huge literature on meanings and interpretation (Pearce & Barbier 2000). It is not appropriate to expand on this further here, other than to state how it is being interpreted for the purposes of this research. Concepts that are relevant to our analysis are the three pillars of sustainability – economic, environmental and social/ethical – and the Triple Bottom Line (TBL); that is, the simultaneous pursuit of economic prosperity, environmental quality and social equity (Elkington, 1997).

In the green business start-up context, we are assuming that the founders have economic (ie. financial) profit maximising or optimising objectives. So we are excluding from our scope the not-for-profit sector, that is, charities, voluntary and public sector organizations. However we do recognise that green/ethical entrepreneurs may well have mixed motivations; their motives may not be solely green but a combination of green, ethical and social and it is often difficult to separate them (as indeed the concept of sustainability reflects). For this reason, our scope potentially includes what some may describe as social (or ethically motivated) entrepreneurs, who also have financial objectives. In TBL terms, our green entrepreneurs might be interested in just two of the 'bottom lines' (environmental and economic/financial) or all three. Making the link back to Isaak's definition, one can equate entrepreneurs with TBL motives to ecopreneurs. Conceptually our scope could also include existing (non-green) businesses that radically transform themselves into green-green businesses (eg. a fossil fuel producer switching to a renewable energy product), as these businesses would equally well contribute to a sustainable society.

In general terms, we intend that the scope for our framework of investigation into green entrepreneurs should be a 'broad church' and include most people's common sense understanding of what constitutes a significantly green business. The rationale for this is that all types of green entrepreneurs – whether ethically-driven, opportunistically-driven or whatever – contribute to the move towards a sustainable society. So we include in our definition of green entrepreneurs not only Isaak's 'green-green' businesses – those that are founded on the principle of sustainability – but also other new green start-ups, such as financially orientated entrepreneurs who happen to identify a green niche.

Entrepreneurs and / or Small Business Owner-Managers?

Within the entrepreneurship literature there is a wide diversity of definitions on what is an entrepreneur and no general agreement of what is and what is not entrepreneurship (Carter & Jones-Evans, 2000). This diversity of (sometimes contradictory) theories of entrepreneurship is perhaps attributable to their having been developed in different academic disciplines, namely economics, sociology and

psychology (Blundel & Smith, 2001). Current thinking on approaches to understanding the nature of entrepreneurship tends to reject exclusive trait theory, but rather takes an integrated social-psychological approach (Chell et al, 1991). In other words, these are studies that focus on entrepreneurial behaviour or activity, incorporating models of the way that people respond to experience. It has been suggested that the interaction between personality and such factors as past experience, existing competence and the immediate context have proved to be decisive (Blundell and Smith, 2001).

In the context of this paper, it is relevant to focus specifically on what is generally thought to be included in the understanding of the word entrepreneur, and what is generally excluded. There is a difference between the popular idea of an entrepreneur - the heroic, risk taking, money-making, individualist – and the developing interpretation in the academic field. Entrepreneurship in the academic literature is generally accepted as extending well beyond the small business owner-manager sector, with which it is popularly linked. In other words, there can be entrepreneurial behaviour in large organisations – termed ‘intrapreneurship’ - and in many walks of life, not just business. For example, there is growing attention being paid to social, civic and artistic entrepreneurs (Leadbeater 1997, Thompson 1998). Entrepreneurship is also generally understood to imply a growth orientation. In other words, a small business that wants to stay small is often excluded from the category of entrepreneur. Similarly some commentators suggest that initiatives that are not really different or distinctive - perhaps because they replicate something which exists in broadly the same format elsewhere - should not be thought of as entrepreneurial (Thompson, 1998).

It should be recognised, however, that the term ‘entrepreneur’ is also used as a kind of generic shorthand for any individual who starts up, runs (and possibly, but not inevitably, grows) a new business venture. It is this broader definition that this paper will be concerned with, not the narrower preoccupation with either growth-orientation or uniqueness of product or service. We assert that all types of new green businesses are relevant to the greening of society and thus the scope for our investigation should encompass all. In other words, we do not exclude individuals

who have no intention of growing their business or who replicate other green business ideas. The fact that a potential organic food wholesaler or wind farm operator may be replicating a business concept that exists elsewhere or may wish to stay small, does not mean that that business will not make a valuable contribution to a sustainable society. Given that we are ultimately interested in the motivations of anyone inclined to start a green business, our investigation encompasses both entrepreneurs and small business owner-managers, although we use the 'shorthand' of green entrepreneurs to include both. For the purposes of our research then, the word entrepreneur refers to an individual who earns his/her livelihood by exercising some control over a business activity, intentionally producing more than can be personally consumed, in order to profit from such enterprise (adapted from McClelland, 1961 and Dana, 1995). This includes the owner-manager of a small business as well as the innovative, growth orientated entrepreneur.

Typologies of Entrepreneurs

The dictionary definition of typology is 'the classification of objects according to type' (Garmonsway, 1984). Kolk & Mauser (2002) in connection with environmental management models "... identify multiple ideal types, each of which represents a unique combination of the organizational attributes that are believed to determine the relevant outcome." They argue that "the more closely an organization resembles an ideal type, the more effectively it will be described by the typology." (Kolk & Mauser, 2002: 22-23)

Examples of pure typology models are Steger's environmental performance model (1993) and Porter's (1980) generic strategy model. In a typology more than one ideal strategy can lead to optimal performance. Kolk & Mauser also make the point that typologies do not (or should not) deal with development over time. The nature of the defining criteria indicates whether they are based on internal processes, the business environment or a combination of the two. Most of the environmental performance models focus on a combination of internal and external processes (Kolk & Mauser, 2002).

The approach being taken in this paper is to review existing typologies of entrepreneurs that are seen to be relevant and useful to developing a typology of green entrepreneurs. This review looks at a range of integrated social/cultural/psychological approaches that appear in the general entrepreneurship literature (table 1).

Type	Authors
Craftsmen entrepreneur Opportunistic entrepreneur	Smith, 1967 Chell et al, 1991
Inventor Entrepreneur Craftsmen Entrepreneur Opportunistic Entrepreneur	Woo et al, 1988
Growth-Orientated Independence-Orientated Craftsmen-Orientated	Dunkelberg & Cooper, 1982
Need for Achievement <i>correlated</i> with Market Differentiation Strategy	Miller & Toulouse, 1986
Entrepreneur Quasi-Entrepreneur Administrator Caretaker	Chell et al, 1991
Technical Entrepreneur Categories > Research Producer User Opportunist	Jones-Evans, 1995
Traditional Self-Employed Cultural Entrepreneur Personality Determined Achiever Barthian Agent Hagenian Displacee Kirznerian Identifier	Dana, 1995
Style > Hard Pragmatic Opportunistic Softer People Focused Style Paradigm > Sea Change Innovation + The Designer-Inventor Person	Thompson, 1998

Table 1: Approaches to Classifying Entrepreneurs

It is Thompson's four dimensions of entrepreneurship (1998) that has been identified as being particularly relevant to analysing green entrepreneurs (see Figure 1).

Thompson presents his entrepreneurs as emerging from a 'well of talent' of "people who have a talent and an aptitude to become an entrepreneur, or at least behave in an enterprising way." (p. 17) These paths are shown in the diagram with examples given for each type.

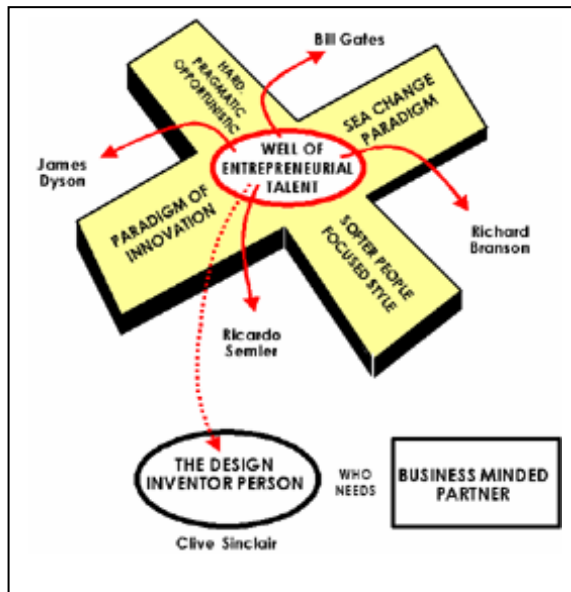


Figure 1: Thompson's Four Dimensions of Entrepreneurship (1998)

The defining criteria for this model appear to be personal/interpersonal style and type of paradigm or worldview.

Thompson describes the 'vertical' axis as follows: "hard entrepreneurship represents the paradigm of the independent, pragmatic, opportunistic and competitive entrepreneur," (p. 17)

whereas softer entrepreneurship operates "... in a more informal manner, they are

strong on communication and sell their vision to engage and motivate others." (p. 17)

Moving to the 'horizontal' axis, Thompson describes the sea-change, visionary end as "adventurous entrepreneurs who set out to change the world. These are people with a real ability to galvanise others; they work hard, play hard and operate at the leading edge"; they are energetic and charismatic. The opposite leg of the diagram, 'Innovation', he describes as requiring imagination, creativity, passion and commitment to bring about change. Thompson provides examples of each type of entrepreneur and of the fifth category – the designer-inventor - who lacks the business acumen or interest to build the business on his/her own. Thompson's model

is key building block that informs the typology of green entrepreneurs presented below.

Typology of Green Entrepreneurs

Drawing on the review of general entrepreneurship typologies and green entrepreneurship literature, the defining criteria presented in the typology below (see Figure 2) reflect the view that the most relevant explanatory variables for characterising different types of green entrepreneurs are the external context (structural influences) and the entrepreneur's personal orientation or motivation.

The 'orientation' axis arises from this paper's earlier exploration of green and green-green businesses, and is influenced by Thompson's paradigm perspective (Thompson, 1998). A profit orientation and some sort of green orientation are the minimum attributes assumed for the scope of this typology; the 'economic orientation' end of the axis represents these minimum attributes. The green orientation could either be a motivation or a perceived market opportunity or both. Since non-profit organisations (green + social orientations, but not economic) are outside the scope of this framework, and green, ethical and social motives are seen as interrelated (therefore, no separate 'social + economic' category is identified), the only alternative set of orientations identified in the typology is one that combines all three motives – economic, green and social/ethical – and is represented in the typology as a sustainability orientation. The matrix formed by these two axes – motivation and influences – thus produces four 'ideal types' of green entrepreneurs.

To appreciate the 'Innovative Opportunist' type it is useful to make the connection with Thompson's paradigm or worldview dimension. It is suggested that Thompson's description of the innovative paradigm is analogous to a financially orientated entrepreneur who spots a green niche or opportunity. Dana's 'arbitrager' description also seems apposite. This type of entrepreneur is one who has been mainly influenced by hard structural drivers, such as regulation. A likely example* of this type of entrepreneur is Evan Connell, of the Connell Group, who is building the first plant in the UK to recycle fridges safely. New EU environmental legislation

* These case examples are derived from secondary published data.

specifies that all CFCs must be recovered. Connell has adopted some new technology, developed with the Manchester Metropolitan University, which will strip harmful CFC gases from the foam lining inside old fridges and leave them safe for scrap (MMYou, 2002).

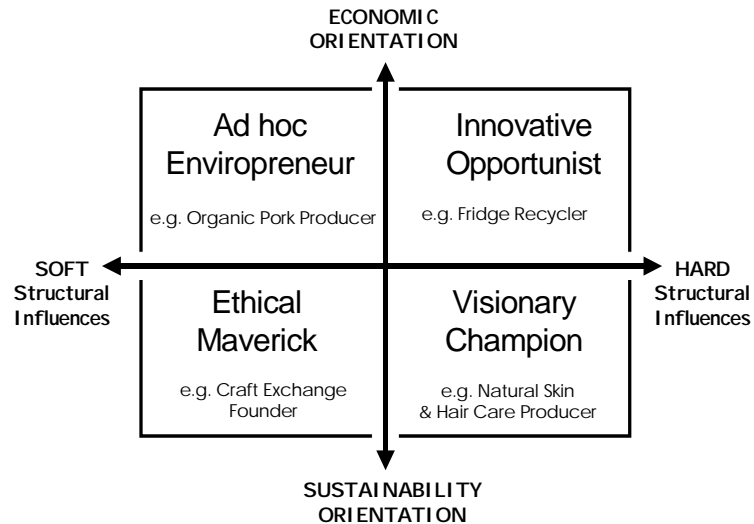


Figure 2: Green Entrepreneur Typology

The ‘Visionary Champion’ type is consistent with Thompson’s ‘sea-change’ paradigm, in that this type of green entrepreneur is one who embraces a transformative, sustainability orientation. This champion of sustainability sets out to change the world, operates at the leading edge and has a vision of a sustainable future that envisages hard structural change. This type would also fit Isaak’s ecopreneur description, since the business is founded on the principle of sustainability. There are analogies with Dana’s ‘Barthian Agent’ in that these entrepreneurs are active in the transformation of society and act as the brokers of contacts between two cultures. In the case of visionary champions, the two cultures are ‘business-as-usual’ and a sustainable society. The classic example here is Anita Roddick of Body Shop fame, who clearly fits the visionary, energetic and charismatic descriptions.

The Ethical Maverick type of green entrepreneur is characterised by a sustainability orientation and soft structural influences. In other words, the most significant

influences on the business formation have been friends, networks and past experiences rather than visions of changing the world. With a sustainability values-driven motivation, they might tend to set up as alternative-style businesses on the fringes of society rather than establishing mainstream, High Street types operations. Apparent examples of this type of green entrepreneur are the founders of the 'On the 8th Day' vegetarian cafe and health food shop in Manchester. The partnership was set up in 1970 'in the height of the hippie era' with ethical and environmental values at the heart of the business (Hawthorne, 2001). It later became a co-operative.

The final category – the Ad-hoc Enviropreneur – is a kind of accidental green entrepreneur. Their motivation is financial not values-driven and personal networks, family and friends influence them most. An example would be the organic farmer's son (eg. the fictional character 'Tom Archer' in the long running UK radio drama 'The Archers') who sets up his own organic pork business. The fact that his parents are committed and fairly successful organic farmers has provided a supportive socio-cultural background. Tom wants some degree of independence and to prove himself as a successful businessman in his own right. Organic pork production happens to be a complementary activity to the rest of the family business. It is not a product whose development has been specifically encouraged by government subsidies or driven by environmental regulation or even particularly encouraged by the 'market-pull' of consumers.

Typologies do not provide decision rules (Kolk & Mauser, 2002); instead they identify multiple ideal types, each of which represents a unique combination of the attributes that are believed to determine the relevant outcome. Assuming that the same interpretations can be made of people-orientated typologies – in this case, green entrepreneurs – as with organizational typologies, then the more closely an entrepreneur resembles the ideal type, the more effectively he or she will be described by the typology. However for this green entrepreneur typology, one might challenge the Kolk & Mauser interpretation that typologies do not, or should not, deal with development over time. Given that entrepreneurs tend to 're-invent' their businesses over time, the evolution of a particular entrepreneur might see him or her moving from one 'ideal type' to another. For example, an examination of Anita

Roddick's business history (Roddick, 1992) might suggest that Ethical Maverick and/or Innovative Opportunist could have been appropriate descriptions at different times.

Structure-Action Framework

Following the work of social theorist Anthony Giddens (1984), Walley & Stubbs (2000) suggested that so-called environmental initiatives could not be understood by exclusively focusing on the actions taken by individuals nor solely in terms of the organisational structures that surround them. Rather, they argued that environmental initiatives should be seen in terms of order emerging from the mutually-producing relationship between action and organisational/social structure. In other words, structure shapes action and action shapes structure. It is aspects of the emergent order from this self-organising relationship that become recognised as environmental initiatives. Structure from this perspective is seen as rules and resources, apparent only when they are acted upon. As individuals interact, aspects of one person's ways of seeing and doing are interpreted and thereby contribute to the notions of structure held by others.

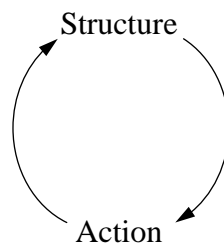


Figure 3 Giddens' (1984) perspective

As individuals are considered skilled actors, continually engaged in reflexively monitoring their interactions with the world around them, his theory allows for prevailing structures to be either reinforced or changed through the day-to-day behaviour of individuals (Figure 3). In other words, individuals may reproduce the status quo or choose to act differently. However, the challenge for appreciating 'greening' is to follow Giddens' structure-action ideas beyond specific fleeting instants in which an individual action might either reproduce prevailing structures or perform something new. To appreciate the greening process, one must make the conceptual leap to see how a mutually-producing model of structure-action would

extend across time and space to account for widespread social phenomena; for example, the greening of organisations (Walley & Stubbs, 2000) or in a wider context, the greening of society in general. So relating this perspective to the phenomena of green entrepreneurs, these individuals will be both influenced by the evolving economic and social structures around them, and are in turn, influencing those structures.

Influence and Motivation

The review of entrepreneurship research indicated that interactions between personality and such factors as past experience, existing competence and the immediate context have proved decisive to the understanding of entrepreneurship (Blundell & Smith, 2001). The integrated social-psychological approach to entrepreneurial behaviour outlined earlier in this paper (Chell et al 1991), focuses, amongst other things, on the way people respond to experience and crucial dimensions of the business context. This approach resonates strongly with the structure-action perspective on greening outlined above. We see influences and motivation as clear elements in this structure-action dynamic, as illustrated in Figure 5 below. In other words, it is elements of the hard (eg. economic) structure of society and softer structures (such as personal networks) that influence potential entrepreneurs and motivate them to start a green business – the action!

On a more practical level, Hendrickson & Tuttle (1997) present (based on US case studies and context), an environmental classification scheme that can be used to categorize the mission or market strategy for different environmental enterprises. This framework contains both internal and external variables as defining criteria. As regards external context, they draw on the work of Post & Altman (1994) who identify, from a macro sociological perspective, three drivers for change: (NB. these are **not** drivers/motivators of the entrepreneurs)

- compliance-based environmentalism – improving the environment through government regulation and sanctions

- market-driven environmentalism – inducing more ecologically beneficial behaviours through various positive incentives; and
- value-driven environmentalism – bringing about change through consumers’ willingness to act on their environmental values

These drivers need not be mutually exclusive at the organizational level and an environmental entrepreneur may take advantage of all three drivers to promote interest in their product. Hendrickson and Tuttle (1997) use these drivers as one of the criteria for their classification scheme. In total they use four factors to classify the environmental focus of the market strategy adopted by the four case study environmental enterprises they analyse:

1. the type of environmental business or businesses addressed - ie. do the products or services relate to the inputs or resources, to the transformation process or to the output of goods.
2. the extent of the environmental emphasis of the overall product/service mix (eg. percentage of total business geared to environmental product)
3. the type of customer – consumer or commercial/industrial or institutional
4. the types of incentives – free market vs. government – offered to customer to buy/use the product or service

The first two criteria are internal variables and the latter two are external. It is an example of a green framework that recognises the interplay of external context or influences with organisational characteristics.

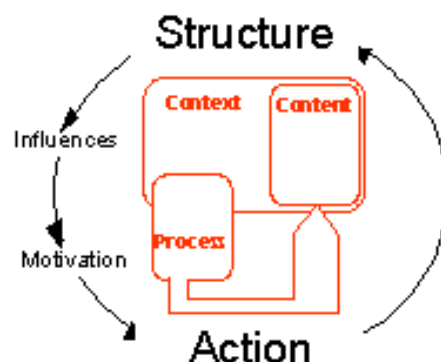


Figure 4: Iterative nature of Greening

A further framework that the authors have found useful for understanding the iterative nature of greening initiatives is the Context-Process-Content approach (Walley & Stubbs, 1999). This is illustrated visually within the structure-action framework in Figure 4. This framework shows how the content of an initiative emerges through a process which was inspired and constrained by the context in which it took place. However, this does not imply that content and context are different things; each refers to emergent attributes of processes of ordering. Content is only distinguished as being the emergent outcome of the focal process in the story being told. Context is the outcome of previous ordering processes, which, in a greening story, appear as inspiration or constraint on the focal process. The iterative nature of the relationships within the context-process-content (C-P-C) triad is best presented graphically, as this highlights how emergent content contributes to a new context for subsequent initiatives. Using this graphical format, the broad categorisations of context, process and content provide a map on which to locate core concepts that tell the story of an environmental initiative. In the context of this research, the initiative would be a new green start-up.

A Framework for Investigation of Influences

The aim of this paper was to develop a framework or frameworks for investigating the motives of, and influences on, entrepreneurs who set up green businesses. The S-I-M-A / C-P-C framework presented above aims to conceptualise the big picture within which green entrepreneurs emerge. This suggests that one needs to examine influences before moving on to ascertain motives. We have seen from the literature review above that influences from the external environment can range from (what we characterise as) ‘hard’ structural influences – such as regulation, economic incentives, etc – to ‘softer’ socio-cultural influences - such as personal networks, education, etc.

Figure 5 conveys this range of influences in the external environment of the potential green entrepreneur. It includes some ‘question marks’ because it is not clear at this

stage, what specific influences individual entrepreneurs might identify. The black inner circle illustrates the view, as reflected in the entrepreneurship literature, that the influence of the external environment is mediated by the individual characteristics of the entrepreneur – such as his/her personality and competence. These will all impact on the nature of the green business that emerges.

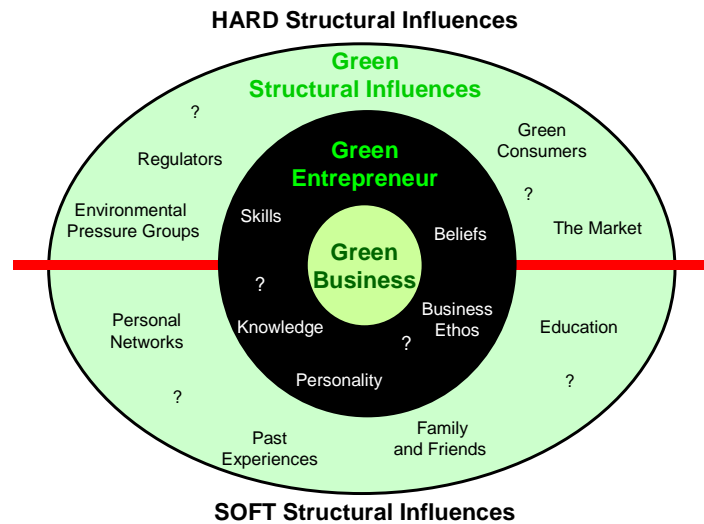


Figure 5: Influencers on the Green Entrepreneur

Reflections and Further Work

Our aim was to explore the concepts of ‘green’ and ‘entrepreneurship’, existing approaches to classifying entrepreneurs, and the literature on green entrepreneurs, with a view to developing a framework(s) for investigating the motives of, and influences on, green entrepreneurs. We have provided and justified the particular definitions of entrepreneur and green entrepreneur that we find appropriate for the research investigation. We have found some useful insights from the general entrepreneurship literature and have presented an exploratory typology of green entrepreneurs. We have coined the terms ‘innovative opportunist’, ‘ethical maverick’, ‘ad hoc enviropreneur’ and ‘visionary champion’ to describe alternative motivations or orientations of the green entrepreneur. We have offered our S-I-M-A / C-P-C framework as a representation of the big picture within which green entrepreneurs emerge and the ‘Influences Framework’ as a approach to identifying the range of hard and soft structural influences that might impact on the motives of a potential green entrepreneur.

The next stage of our research is to carry out primary research with entrepreneurs on influencing and motivating factors. We see analogies between this research aim and investigations into organisational learning and networks in small firms (Taylor and Krsto 2003). We aim to draw on lessons learnt from that bibliographic research approach – which explores the collective and social dimensions of decision-making in order to gain a ‘richer picture’ of small firm owner-managers learning – to structure our research approach. We aim to review the literature on how to foster more entrepreneurs, with a view to assessing its applicability to green entrepreneurs. The ultimate aim is to gain insights for policy makers and educators into ways to foster green entrepreneurs.

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