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CONSTRUCTING ACTION-ORIENTED ORGANIZATIONS: EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY

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Head of the Departmental Graduate Program   Date

CONSTRUCTING ACTION-ORIENTED ORGANIZATIONS: EXAMINING THE

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY

A Thesis

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of

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by

Virginia Sanchez

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ABSTRACT

Sanchez, Virginia. M. A., Purdue University, December 2015. Constructing Action-Oriented Organizations: Examining the Relationship between Individual and Organizational identity. Major Professor: Dr. Stacey Connaughton.

A majority of the research on social entrepreneurship focuses on stories about individual entrepreneurs (Bornstein & Davis, 2010) and the characteristics that make entrepreneurs and their nascent organizations successful (Renko, 2012); this study instead puts the focus on organizational founders and members in an attempt to analyze how they made sense of critical moments in the organization's early history and stories that helped to shape the organization's identity and individual members' identities. A total of 8 interviews were conducted with members of two organizations. Cultivadores (pseudonym) is an organization focused on the creation of psychosocial processes within the rural community of San Martin in Mexico. Viewfinder (pseudonym) aims to increase and create employment opportunities for adults on the autism spectrum. Cultivadores and Viewfinder are presented as case studies to examine the process of sensemaking, specifically the notion of retrospection, for members of social entrepreneurial organizations. Publicly available artifacts were also included to supplement each case study. At the time data were collected, both organizations had undergone major organizational shifts which changed the way each one works to address social issues. This study provides support for the idea that organizational members' identities change as

the organizational identity changes, and vice versa, pointing to a recursive relationship between the organizational member and the organization. A recursive relationship, between an organization and an individual, is one in which sensemaking is used to change (and maintain) the identity of either party involved in an iterative manner that repeats itself throughout the relationship between the two. Unlike prior research, this study focused on nascent social entrepreneurial organizations and found that as the bond between individual and organizational identity became stronger organizational members made decisions based on future-oriented sensemaking processes that favored the bond between organizational and individual identity.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

In 2012 Cultivadores: Unidos en la Creacion de Procesos Psicosociales

(Cultivadores),[1] the site of one of the case studies in this project, was promised funding

from the Mexican government for a project they would complete with a town populated

largely by indigenous people. The project was supposed to last a year and a half, but

about five months in, Uriel,[2] the founder of Cultivadores, received word from the

government office managing the funds that they had run out of money. "It was an issue of

corruption in the government," explained Uriel. Seeing that the government was

reluctant to accept responsibility, Uriel was forced to present the news to the town's

residents and discontinue the project. Doing so was not easy. Uriel stated "things like this

have occurred several times, right? That people go and promise them things and then they

don't follow through. So they, for them we were just another fraud. Even though it wasn't

our fault, but several people assumed we just kept the money." This incident put the

organization in a state of crisis and the stress left Uriel discouraged and becoming

physically ill.

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[1] Cultivadores: Unidos en la Creacion de Procesos Psicosociales is a pseudonym for this organization.
[2] Uriel, and all subsequent names, are pseudonyms.

Viewfinder Productions Group (Viewfinder),[3] the second organization featured in this study, jumped at the opportunity to rent a location when a local mall began leasing out shops to be used as office space. The goal of Viewfinder is to build career opportunities for adults on the autism spectrum by allowing them to interact with clients, while educating the community as a whole about the disability. Their original intent was to become a training center and having a brick and mortar location would allow them to begin financing that goal, but it also cemented the organization's identity as a client based business. It gave them a space to meet clients, an address to put on business cards, storage space to keep equipment, and as Teresa, a videographer for the organization, put it, it was "kind of a long time in the making sort of thing." However, this achievement was somewhat short-lived. Soon after, the organization grew more aware of a few problems with their location including the expensive parking, charges for utilities that were not available at the location, and the lack of use by members of Viewfinder. Additionally, Amy, the founder and self-proclaimed CEO of the organization, began to realize "I don't like doing client work, the mentees[4] don't like doing client work." Unintentionally, the organization had boxed itself into an organizational practice that had them working to meet client needs. Noticing that they had strayed from their original goal, board members made the difficult decision of letting go of the space, leading to the departure of several members, and restructuring their organization based on the needs of

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[3] Viewfinder Productions Group is a pseudonym for this organization.
[4] Mentees is a term used to minimize confusion when referring to different members within the organization. Viewfinder does use specific terminology to distinguish between different types of membership, however, those terms will not be used here. The term "mentee," is therefore specific to this study.

their remaining members. To several members of Viewfinder, this wise decision felt like a loss.

Becoming a victim to a corrupt government and the loss of a physical location, represent just two significant moments for the two organizations described in this study. These two moments, as recalled by participants, are important to the organizations because they interrupted their practices, restructured their processes, and changed their identities. Cultivadores and Viewfinder are social entrepreneurial organizations. Unlike traditional organizations, they prioritize creating social value, or social wealth, above financial gains (Auerswald, 2009; Mair & Marti, 2006). Through their commitment and hard work, social entrepreneurial organizations express their interest in having genuine social impact in their communities. For this reason alone, their stories should be entertained, listened to, reflected on, and enjoyed. Moreover, as this thesis will examine, the work that goes into developing social enterprises impacts not only the identity of the social entrepreneurial organization itself, but the social entrepreneur's and other organizational members' identities as well. This study provides insight into these multiple identities (organizational and individual), as well as how the social entrepreneur and other founding members mobilize themselves to help address a social issue.

Generally, much of the literature in the field of social entrepreneurship has focused on case studies about individual entrepreneurs who are often portrayed as heroic (Dacin, Dacin, & Tracey, 2011; Dempsey & Sanders, 2010) and charismatic (Bornstein & Davis, 2010). There has been scant attention to the creation of social entrepreneurial organizations (Bornstein & Davis, 2010). This study seeks to help fill this void by focusing on organizations still in their birth phases. To do so, this project analyzes the

retrospective sensemaking of the social entrepreneur and other organizational members as they built their social entrepreneurial organizations.

Focusing on social entrepreneurial organizations still in their birth phase provides insight into the struggles faced by the social entrepreneur and other organizational members as they build a social collective (their social entrepreneurial organization) that aims to address pressing societal issues. It is in this phase, as organizations come into being, that they face the most struggles and the highest probability of dying out (Stinchcombe, 1965). Although this phase was marked by struggles for both Cultivadores and Viewfinder, it is also the phase where the identities for both organizations were solidified. This project looks at how organizational members create the identity of the social entrepreneurial organization and in turn how that affects their individual identity (and vice versa). In doing so, I point to the recursive relationships between individual and organizational identity.

The purpose of this project is to examine the ways social entrepreneurs and founding members make sense of their experiences when they are creating social enterprises and how these experiences affect their identities (organizational and individual). I get at this by looking at the organizational stories they create for their organizations, as exemplified by publicly available documents and via the stories members tell about their experiences working with the organization. These organizational stories, purposefully, represent the missions of the social entrepreneurial organizations to

inspire social change.[5] Additionally, these stories provide insight into the changing, and recursive identities, of the individual and the organization.

This project is different from previous social entrepreneurship research in at least three ways. First, unlike previous research (see Dempsey & Sanders, 2010; Martens, Jennings, & Jennings, 2007; and Ruebottom, 2011), this project looks at the initial creation and development of social entrepreneurial organizations. Specifically, the focus is on how social entrepreneurs identify the issues their organization will focus on and how they build the organization's identity. Second, it is different from previous research (see Renko, 2012 and Ruebottom, 2011) on social entrepreneurial organizations in its methodological approach which (1) asked members to actively engage in the process of retrospection and (2) involved the use of the organization's publicly available artifacts to present a coherent story. These artifacts serve as the symbols of the organization, providing a historical record that clarifies who the organization is or is becoming over time. Artifacts represent the ways in which the organization wants stakeholders to perceive what it stands for (the organization's identity). Finally, this project examines the intersections of individual identity and organizational identity. The social entrepreneur and the founding members of the social enterprise bring aspects of their individual identities (values, issues that are important to them) to the construction of the

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[5] Social change refers to the implementation of processes with the goal of challenging and changing existing structures. Dutta (2011) refers to social change as the acts taken to represent a departure from mainstream rules and objectives that result in transformed structures. In structuration theory, structures are comprised of rules and resources (Giddens, 1984; Poole and McPhee, 2005). Poole and McPhee (2005) use the example of a library to represent this. They state that the library is a system (defined as a set of practices and behaviors) that is maintained by structures. In other words, following organizational rules, such as keeping quiet in the library or using a library card to check out books, reproduces that system. Social change then refers to the transformation of these structures, which result in a changed system.

organization's identity, and as my findings reveal, vice versa. When organizational members identify strongly with an organization, they adjust their behavior to act according to its values (Scott and Lane, 2000). Social entrepreneurial organizations provide cites in which this process can be analyzed as values form a vital part of the organization's identity.

This project is guided theoretically and methodologically by sensemaking theory. Sensemaking (Weick, 1995), and its notion of retrospection, is important particularly as it relates to critical moments or turning points[6] identified by organizational members, through the stories they tell about the organization. Stories help members of the organization retrospectively make sense of who they are (Boje, 1991); the telling of organizational stories also unearths aspects of the organization's birth and development that organizational members deem important. This project addresses how organizational members make sense of critical moments and how they believe those critical moments influenced their organization's creation and development.

The next two chapters provide detailed information about my theoretical framework and my methodology. In Chapter 2, I begin by outlining recent research related to social entrepreneurship. Following that, I discuss the concepts and constructs of sensemaking theory that guide this project. I end with the research question this project will address. In Chapter 3, I describe my method of data collection and analysis. Within these pages, I also describe the two research sites that aided me in addressing the research questions that close Chapter 2. Chapter 4 provides the findings of this study. Finally,

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[6] Turning points can be thought of as changes within relationships. However, they can also be used as a method of analysis known as "turning point analysis" (Bullis and Bach, 1989). This method of analysis has been used to study socialization and identification in organizations (Bullis and Bach, 1989) and female career journeys (Lu and Sexton, 2010).

Chapter 5 includes a discussion of the findings, the study's limitations, and directions for

future research.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter begins by explaining the definition of social entrepreneurship that guides this project. Following from that is a brief overview of the organizational life cycle, focusing on the nascent stage. Identity is then discussed. From there, a section on organizational stories follows. The next section overviews the theoretical framework used in this project. This section covers the basics of sensemaking, with a focus on retrospection. Finally, this chapter concludes with a presentation of my research question.

Social Entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneurship provides a venue for studying the stories of organizations committed to resolving social issues. However, Bornstein and Davis (2010) note the frequency with which the notion of social entrepreneurship is minimized "to stories of charismatic people" (p. 34). Instead they choose to describe social entrepreneurship as "a process, a way to organize problem-solving efforts" (p. 34) re-shifting the focus to organizing processes as opposed to a few charismatic individuals.

Several definitions of social entrepreneur and social entrepreneurship are present in the literature. Ashoka (2012) defines a social entrepreneur as someone who "develops innovative solutions to social problems and then implements them on a large scale" (para.

6). Dempsey and Sanders (2010) state that "social entrepreneurs focus their efforts on creating social value" (p. 438) and "social entrepreneurship combines an emphasis on individual initiative with a deeply moral discourse of contributing to something greater than the self" (p. 441). Martin and Osberg (2007) define social entrepreneurship in relation to entrepreneurship saying that the difference between the two deals with "value distinction" (p. 34). Just as Dempsey and Sanders (2010) suggest, social value, or "the product of the dynamic interaction between supply and demand in the evolution of markets for social value" (Mulgan, 2010, p. 40) is more highly valued than a simple measure of profit.

The present study views social entrepreneurship as an effort by a collective of people to facilitate social change. This is done through the creation of an organization by a group of motivated individuals. My focus is inspired by Bornstein and Davis' (2010) perspective that social entrepreneurship is not necessarily the stories of "charismatic people." Rather, it is about the stories told by organizational members about social entrepreneurial organizations striving for social change. Ruebottom (2011) notes that at the organizational level, social entrepreneurship becomes "the combining of multiple meta-narratives beyond just business and charity, used strategically to create a character — the social entrepreneurial organizations as protagonist" (p. 11). Specifically, the present study looks at social entrepreneurial organizations in their early stages, a time period in these organizations' development of which little is known (Renko, 2012).

Nascent Organizations. Theorists have separated what has been termed an organization's life cycle into various phases, each of which mimics human development

(Dobos & Jeffres, 1988). Although the labels attached to these phases vary depending on the researcher's discipline, the first phase -- often labeled birth, creativity, or nascent ventures -- has a consistent set of characteristics. Dobos and Jeffres (1988) note that it is within this first phase, when the organization is less than ten years old, that the entrepreneur is most influential. The birth phase is also marked by several struggles. Unsurprisingly, new organizations "die" at a quicker rate than older organizations (Stinchcombe, 1965).

Social entrepreneurial organizations are very similar to traditional enterprises in their nascent stages. At this stage, Renko (2012) differentiates social entrepreneurial organizations from traditional enterprises by looking at the motivations of the social entrepreneur (i.e., the social entrepreneur's goals for the organization). In a quantitative study that compared nascent social entrepreneurs to nascent entrepreneurs, Renko (2012) concludes that entrepreneurs who create organizations with the intention of benefitting others, rather than making money, are less likely to build an effective organization in the first four years of its existence. She also concludes that social entrepreneurs who employ some degree of innovation[7] in their organization are less likely to be successful than those who do not. To explain this, Renko (2012) points to three success stories (Teach for America, Grameen Bank, and the Acumen Fund) which were met with early resistance.

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[7] Renko (2012) states that innovation and market novelty are "sometimes used almost synonymously" (p. 1049). Furthermore, she uses Zahra et al. (2008)'s definition of market novelty which, when applied to social entrepreneurship, refers to opportunities that arise from one or a combination of the following factors: urgency, accessibility, and radicalness.

Identity

The concept of identity is both multifaceted and malleable. It can refer to individual identity as well as organizational identity. Neuliep (2011) defines social identity as "how the society around you sees you and hierarchically ranks you" (p. 211). Organizational identity can be defined as the perception of the organization that forms when it attempts to strike a balance between its intended identity and other spectators' perceptions of the organization (Hoffman and Ford, 2009). Working from the conceptualization of Bakhtin and Medvedy (1985), Czarniawska-Joerges (2004) defines identity as a narrative containing both material and device. Material in that it involves interaction and relies heavily on independence. As Czarniawska-Joerges (2004) states, "the peculiarity of modern identity: based on interaction, it aims to achieve an impression of individuality, that is, independence from other people's reactions" (p. 411). Within the perspective of a narrative, it is a device in that it can control the creation of characters and narrators. To summarize, the concept itself has been repeatedly defined, but can be thought of as the relationship between a person (or organization) and society.

This concept informs various theoretical concepts including sensemaking which finds its basis at an individual level with the sensemaker who defines and redefines his/her identity as time passes and is affected by environmental events (Weick, 1995). At an organizational level, sensemaking helps characterize, build, create organizational identity but can also determine organizational action (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005). Scott, Corman, and Cheney (1998) note that identities can be viewed as rules and resources that are used when interacting within an organization. At an individual level

these rules can be defined by routines and the resources can be a person's knowledge and experience, among other things.

Individual social identity is, arguably, formed by a mix of environmental and social factors. At a very basic level, social identity is rooted in group membership and categorization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Hogg, 2006). Ashforth and Mael (1989) state that organizational identity is a form of social identity. In fact, for some scholars the notion of organizational identity finds its roots in social identity theory (Hatch and Schultz, 2004) which serves as a basis for understanding the relationship between organizations and their members (Hogg, 2006). Just as the organization impacts the members, its identity is constituted by its member's interactions (Piette, 2013). Social groups have the capability of both aiding and constraining the construction of individual identity (Williams, 1995). Often, individuals vividly experience the group's failures, making them a part of their social identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

Hogg (2006) focuses on the role of prototypical members, or those who "embody group norms better than others" (p. 128). In relation to leadership positions (for instance, perhaps, social entrepreneurs themselves), leaders with high prototypical attributes are perceived as more credible and serve as a cornerstone for the rest of the group. Williams Middleton (2013) discusses how conforming to an entrepreneurial identity can help an entrepreneur gain legitimacy. For this specific reason, social entrepreneurs were essential in conducting the present study.

Taylor and Van Every (1999) assert that organizations that "act" need an individual to successfully communicate on behalf of the organization. In groups which encourage action, the more prototypical members will act, leading to social mobilization

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and social action (Hogg, 2006). Individuals working in organizations with values that

align with their individual identity are more likely to carry the weight of less active

members, if such members should exist within the group. White (2010) examines identity

changes by comparing interviews collected from members of the Provisional Sinn Féin, a

political social movement, during the mid-1980s, mid-1990s, and late 2000s. White

(2010) describes how as members become more involved with the political movement,

their activist identities create a "we-ness" (p. 365). These identities could also be invoked

during times in which an individual disagrees with decisions made by the movement

organization's leadership by allowing him/her to create a rival organization (White,

2010). Thus, the relationship between individual and organizational identity has been

well documented.

Organizational stories

At the organizational level, narratives can be used to create organizational identity

(Martens, Jennings, & Jennings, 2007) for resource acquisition (Martens et al., 2007), and

to build legitimacy (Garud, Schildt, & Lant, 2014; Mumby, 1987; Nicholls, 2010;

Ruebottom, 2011); all challenges of a nascent organization. Stories can help illustrate an

organization's reality by how several elements of the stories are framed and formatted,

lending credence to certain ideas and disfavoring others. Clair (1993) also contends that

certain framing devices can be used to "sequester" stories that stand in opposition to the

organization's interests. Ruebottom (2011) describes how a combination of meta-

narratives[8] and rhetorical strategies can frame a social entrepreneurial organization as a protagonist battling antagonistic characters. Storytelling is one of the most preferred methods used to make sense of events in both individual and organizational lives (Boje, 1991).

Since much of the past research has focused on stories about social entrepreneurs (Bornstein & Davis, 2010), this study will look at the story of the organization as collectively told by its members. Focusing on entrepreneurial storytelling, Martens, Jennings, and Jennings (2007) explain that narratives accomplish several goals including organizational identity creation and resource acquisition. The most effective stories are those that present the organization as having an ambiguous identity, communicate how an opportunity will reduce risk, and include a strategic use of familiar and unfamiliar elements within the stories. Similarly, Ruebottom's (2011) research focuses on the use of narratives in the building of legitimacy for social entrepreneurs. The social entrepreneurial organizations in her sample subscribed to a combination of meta-narratives that framed the organization as a protagonist dealing with antagonistic forces. Ruebottom (2011) points to several protagonist and antagonist meta-narratives for which she attributes specific vocabulary sets (summarized in Table 1). Ruebottom (2011) is not, however, able to draw conclusions about which metanarratives are most effective in building legitimacy.

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[8] Meta-narratives, as conceptualized by Ruebottom (2011), are "master frames" (p. 100). Put simply, a meta-narrative is a collection of narratives used to legitimize ideas, or in Ruebottom's (2011) work, organizational causes.

Rather than focusing on and seeking out an organizational narrative or the story of a charismatic storytelling entrepreneur, this study sought out several organizational stories by speaking to the various members of a nascent organization.

Table 1: Overview of Ruebottom's (2011) protagonist and antagonist meta-narrative and vocabulary sets (pp. 105-106)

Protagonist Meta-narratives	Vocabulary Set
Charity	non-profit; social/environmental goals and benefit; mission and values-based
Grassroots Social Movement	Bottom-up; responsive and emergent; participative and local; motivational; educational; constructing what's possible
Science	scientific or medical model; evidence-based, facts; testing and research; experts
Business	strategy; management; marketing, selling and branding; financial decisions, cost-benefit analysis; core competencies; economic model
Entrepreneurship	opportunities; risk; creativity and creation; passion, dedication, and importance of the people; early stage; spin-offs
Antagonist Meta-narratives	**Vocabulary Set**
Economic	self-interest; financial gain; immorality and pillaging
Ideology	ideologically driven, beliefs-based; irrational and fearful; closed to exploration
Bureaucracy	complex, large-scale; inefficient and change-resistant; hierarchical and top-down; linear and rational; institutional, rule-based, conservative and traditional; disconnected

Sensemaking

      Sensemaking can be defined as the process by which stimuli are placed into frameworks that help an individual make sense of his/her experiences (Starbuck and Milliken, 1988; Weick, 1995). At a very basic level, sensemaking places communication at the center of human behavior (Weick, 1995; Weick, Sutcliffe, and Obstfeld, 2005). Sensemaking, according to Weick (1995) is an "explanatory process" (p. 17) characterized by the following seven properties: "1) grounded in identity construction, 2) retrospective, 3) enactive of sensible environments, 4) social, 5) ongoing, 6) focused on and by extracted cues, and 7) driven by plausibility rather than accuracy." It is helpful in "comprehending, understanding, explaining, attributing, extrapolating, and predicting" (Starbuck and Milliken, 1988, p. 13) all processes that involve "placing stimuli into frameworks (or schemata) that make sense of the stimuli" (p. 13). Although the seven characteristics are important to sensemaking, it is often difficult to include all in a single research study (Weick, 1995). With this in mind, the present study focuses greatly on the use of retrospective sensemaking by the founding members of social entrepreneurial organizations as they understood themselves to partake in and witness the creation of their organization's identity.

      Sensemaking is social, ongoing, and involves the use of "cues" (Weick, 1995, p. 81, Weick, Sutcliffe, and Obstfeld, 2005). Cues, according to Weick (1995), are "simple, familiar structures that are seeds from which people develop a large sense of what may be occurring" (p. 50). These "cues" are utilized to create and develop trends (Weick, 1995). They are given to organizational decision-makers through the environments in which they are functioning (Porac et al, 1989). Cues are also noticed by organizational

members. In other words, anything identified as a cue is deemed worthy by an organization's members, providing insight into what they consider important to an organization's practices. Given their versatility, "cues" serve a number of purposes. In one example, Dougherty and Drumheller (2006) looked at how "cues," such as wasted time, unfair business practices, improper work, and process disruption challenged organizational members to make sense of emotions in their work setting. They noted that the emotional experiences most salient in their interviews were those that occurred during a disruption to the organization's practices. Interestingly, their participants also engaged in what Dougherty and Drumheller (2006) refer to as "deselecting cues" where members ignored emotions in favor of rationality, a frame that supported the system in which they worked.

When does sensemaking happen? Perhaps the best way to begin understanding sensemaking is to learn what prompts it, or in other words, what sets up an occasion for sensemaking. In short, the presence of chaos is what engenders sensemaking (Weick, Sutcliffe, and Obstfeld, 2005). Sensemaking assumes that people live in an ongoing system. In the case of organizations, these systems could be based on organizational rules that members dedicatedly follow and expectations they hold. Chaos occurs through an interruption to this system, for example, a member not following a rule, an expectation not being met, or, in the case of Dougherty and Drumheller (2006), the presence of emotion in a very rational system.

Working from Mandler (1984), Weick (1995) directs our attention to two types of interruptions that can lead to sensemaking. The first is the interruption to the ongoing actions and stimuli of daily life and the second comes in the form of acknowledging that

such an interruption occurred. Such an interruption results in an increase in cognitive arousal which can lead to more efficient cognitive performance (Weick, 1995). The reasoning behind this is based on the idea that despite the heightened cognitive arousal leading to a loss of cues, the sensemaker is better able to focus on more important cues. Sensemaking is, for this reason, an attempt at finding organization in disorder (Weick, Sutcliffe, and Obstfeld, 2005).

Although sensemaking can happen inadvertently, "[e]xplicit efforts at sensemaking tend to occur when the current state of the world is perceived to be different from the expected state of the world, or when there is no obvious way to engage the world" (Weick, Sutcliffe, and Obstfeld, 2005, p. 409) and this lines up with the social entrepreneur's mission which strives to change a social system that is, in its current state, inefficient to a more functional and beneficial system. Thus, the social entrepreneur, talks "[s]ituations, organizations, and environments…into existence" (Weick, Sutcliffe, and Obstfeld, 2005, p. 409). Ultimately, examining something through an organizational sensemaking lens addresses the following question: "How does something come to be an event for organizational members?" and informs how the answer to that question brings organizational members to action (Weick, Sutcliffe, and Obstfeld, 2005, p. 410).

The retrospective analysis of events is important in framing occurrences and acting on them (Weick, 1993). Often, these occurrences serve as cues that surprise the person at both an individual and a collective level. Using the example of the development towards an understanding of battered child syndrome, Weick (1995) notes the importance of logical conceivability when recalling prior events. As Weick (1995) puts it, "people think to themselves, it can't be, therefore, it isn't" (p. 1). Thus, rationality is important in

the management of uncertainty (Maitlis, 2005). However, Weick (1995, p. 84) points to a

trade-off between accuracy and plausibility when logical explanations fall short.

Sensemaking often occurs as a result of looking back and reflecting on prior

events. Often, these events are referred to as "shocks," or interruptions to an ongoing

system (Weick, 1995, p. 85). Retrospection, thus, refers to the looking back and filling in

of details and information to create a logical and action-oriented frame. However, the

process of retrospection is subject to error as actions that led to a positive outcome are

viewed positively when evaluated retrospectively. Inversely, negative "shocks," such as

an organizational crisis, are viewed negatively, even in instances where the events that

led to the shock had similar potential to have had a positive outcome.

Starbuck and Milliken (1989), in a study that looked at sensemaking processes

used by executives, compare the content of past observations against the content of

present and future observers. Notably, "observers of the past" as they refer to them, are

more likely to foresee trends and find telling connections between events that are

seemingly not related. Starbuck and Milliken (1989) also point to "two dominant analytic

sequences" (p. 3) that are used in retrospection. Below is a representation of these two

sequences:

Good results → Correct actions →Flawless analyses →Accurate perceptions
Bad results →Incorrect actions →Flawed analyses →Inaccurate perceptions

As suggested above, retrospection begins with acknowledging results and the analysis

that follows is heavily influenced by these results. Faced with bad outcomes, the search to

find out what went wrong begins by analyzing incorrect actions, eventually leading the

observer to note and accept the present or future observer's inaccurate perception.

"People seem to see past events as much more rationally ordered than current or future events, because retrospective sensemaking erases many of the causal sequences that complicate and obscure the present and future" (Starbuck and Milliken, 1988, p. 2). Thus, after a crisis, searches look for human error (based on the stigma of "crisis").

The concept of retrospection and the use of "cues" were helpful in the present study in that they provided insight into the structures that make and those that exist around an organization. These two concepts (retrospection and cues) have the potential of guiding organizational members to action. In organizations committed to social change, these two processes are especially useful as they allow organizational members to make sense of critical moments in the organization's history.

Research Question

Through sensemaking, organizational members reflect on their organization's founding, including the critical moments that have led the organization to where it is today. As they act on these reflections they continue to build the organization, framing its mission, goals, and its identity. All of this together, especially for an organization in such an early phase of its existence, provides insight into the intersection between organizational and individual identity. Identity is important as it is a source of shared meaning for organizational members and can affect the actions an organization takes (Maitlis and Sonenshein, 2010). Given that sensemaking is about action, as is the goal of the social entrepreneurial organization, the combination of sensemaking and social entrepreneurship will be helpful in analyzing the intersections of organizational and individual identity.

As Weick, Sutcliffe, and Obstfeld (2005) state "If the first question of sensemaking is "what's going on here?," the second, equally important question is "what do I do next?" (p. 412). This quotation captures the action-oriented approach that characterizes sensemaking processes. In order to learn more about this process for members of social entrepreneurial organizations, it is important to identify the moments that cause this sensemaking to occur. Doing so allows for further analysis into how these processes change individual and organizational identity. The present study looked into how members of social entrepreneurial organizations made sense of critical moments and took action to resolve social issues. Thus, the present study aimed to answer the following overarching research question:

RQ: How do members of social entrepreneurial organizations make sense of their identities (organizational and individual)?

To address the research question, this study seeks to explore and understand the stories that social entrepreneurs and founding members tell about their entrepreneurial organizations. Also, for a more nuanced explanation, this study seeks to explore the critical moments/incidents of the organization's history. More specifically, how social entrepreneurs and founding members make sense of these critical moments/incidents in the organization's history.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

To answer the research question, a qualitative study was conducted and two case studies are presented. A case study, according to Yin (2003) "is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p. 13). Thus, case studies are research tools that allow for the examination of an individual phenomenon. Unlike other methods of research, they do not require the manipulation of behavioral variables and they tend to focus solely on current and contemporary events. Case studies are useful "to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events" (Yin, 2003, p. 2). They allow for the study of contemporary occurrences in their natural, contextual settings. Since sensemaking occurs in context, the findings are situated as case studies with a focus on the stories and themes that relate to identity. Thus, case studies are not experimental in that, as the researcher, I did not identify or manipulate variables. Instead I pull from different streams of evidence (e.g., interviews transcripts, artifacts) to provide a rich interpretation of a social phenomenon. In order to provide a more accurate description of how members of social entrepreneurial organizations make sense of critical

moments in the organization's nascent stages, I conducted interviews with organizational members and used publicly available artifacts to supplement stories interviewees told about their organization's birth phase.

Descriptions of research sites

The two organizations included in this study are less than ten years old, making them appropriate for a study of the birth phase of an organization (see Dobos and Jeffres', 1988, notion that the birth phase of organizations lasts about ten years) and they fit previous conceptualizations of social entrepreneurial organizations (see Renko's, 2012, differentiation between social entrepreneurial organizations and traditional organizations at the nascent stage). Cultivadores has been in practice since 2009 and Viewfinder since 2012. Both of these organizations are small; each currently has fewer than fifteen active members. Of these members, not all were eligible to be interviewed since permission to recruit from certain populations (e.g., minors under 18, members with disabilities, etc.) was not obtained from the Institutional Review Board.

Cultivadores: Unidos en la Creacion de Procesos Psicosociales. Influenced by the Zapatista movement, Cultivadores works to address problems within San Martin, a rural town in Mexico. San Martin is a small town with a population of around 1,000. Reaching San Martin typically requires the driver to venture through mountainous regions no matter which direction they are travelling from. Uriel, a resident of San Martin, founded Cultivadores after becoming exposed to the Zapatista movement following a lifelong passion for service. According to their Facebook page, the organization's mission is to "promote, generate and accompany psychosocial [processes]

in the community of San Martin, to aspire in building self-management alternatives to

their educational, environmental and socio-cultural needs."[9] During his interview, Uriel

specified that psychosocial processes included: participation, problematization,

awareness, dialogue, and education. He explained that Cultivadores' mission was to

create space for these processes to occur. This perspective has created opportunities for

the members of Cultivadores as well as other residents of San Martin to participate in the

creation of discussion groups, work with other non-profit organizations in Mexico, learn

about and implement environmentally friendly practices into their community, and

analyze the role of gender, age, and political factors in rural and indigenous

environments.

 Viewfinder Productions Group. Viewfinder is a production company that

operates in a city within the United States. The organization was founded to provide

career assistance to two main populations of people. First, it is focused on helping adults

who have been diagnosed with autism[10] to find employment. Second, it provides college

graduates with space and equipment necessary for their freelance work in exchange for

their service in mentoring an adult with Asperger's Syndrome. The organization focuses

specifically on providing digital media services to small organizations and individual

clients. A price list on their website lists a few of these services which includes:

photography, videography, video conversion, cartooning, animation, and web design.

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[9] This mission statement was translated into English. All quotations pulled from the publicly available artifacts have been translated into English.

[10] The participants from Viewfinder also refer to individuals with autism as being "on the spectrum." This terminology is often used interchangeably with autism within this manuscript. Additionally, several members of Viewfinder have Asperger's syndrome specifically. The term "Asperger's syndrome" may be used when referring to members of Viewfinder who have this specific form of autism. Alternatively, these individuals will also be referred to as mentees.

When hired, members of Viewfinder are assigned to a team consisting of mentors and mentees to complete the work.

Recruitment of participants

Given the importance of the social entrepreneur (the founder) as a prototypical member and organizational decision maker (Hogg, 2006), this study began with the recruitment of social entrepreneurs, in this case Amy and Uriel, who founded the two organizations examined in this study. Amy and Uriel were initially contacted through email where they were given a brief description of the study being conducted. To obtain participants, the founders from each organization were contacted (Uriel for Cultivadores and Amy for Viewfinder) and asked to provide a letter of support on behalf of the organization. Additionally, they were asked to provide contact information for any organizational members who would be interested in being interviewed. The only criterion put forward was that the members approached were currently active or were founding members of the organization. Cultivadores had six members who were interested in being interviewed, however, of these six, two were under 18 years of age and another was travelling when data were being collected.

After receiving confirmation that members would be eligible for interview, I travelled to Mexico, contacted additional members, and arranged times and locations for interviews in person. Viewfinder, when they provided a letter of support, identified five members to be interviewed. All names and identifying information included in this manuscript, including those of the social enterprises, organizations mentioned by participants, cities and other features that could give away the organization's identity,

have been changed to an assigned pseudonym to protect the identities of all those who agreed to participate in this study.

Participants

Due to the small size of Cultivadores, an organization with six active members, only three members were eligible for interviews given that three were underage and IRB approval had not been attained in order to interview anyone under 18. All three lived in San Martin, within walking distance of Cultivadores' current location. Uriel, the founder of the organization is 29 years old and a practicing psychologist when he is not putting in extra hours to get his organization up and running. Érica, a 19 year old member, currently runs the youth and children's groups in addition to representing Cultivadores in a wider network of people working to resolve agricultural issues. She is one of the most active members and often serves to accompany and assist Uriel on trips and when making presentations. In addition, Fátima, is 20 years old and has participated sporadically throughout the organization's existence as she has travelled to and from the United States. Her travels to the United States have limited her opportunities to act within a leadership role in the organization, but she maintains her status as an active member by participating in smaller projects. When she began working with the organization, she represented Cultivadores while they worked with a group designed to educate youth about HIV. After attending several workshops that taught her about ecological building and green initiatives, she is currently putting those lessons into practice in her own home while educating members of the community on some of the strategies she has learned.

In total, five members from Viewfinder participated in this study. The three co-founders of Viewfinder are also mothers of children with autism, Amy, Hannah, and Ida. Amy was acknowledged by all interviewees as the main driving force behind getting the organization started and even jokingly referred to herself as the CEO. Her son, Benjamin, was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome and is a key reason that the organization was started. Hannah is the mother of Gerard, an individual with Asperger's who was highly regarded as a success story by all the participants. Along with Amy, Hannah, who holds a degree in Early Childhood Education, helped lay the groundwork that would soon become Viewfinder. Ida, is the mother of Victor a child who is also on the spectrum. Within the organization Hannah and Ida are the secretary and member-at-large, respectively. Julia, the current President, admits to having known very little about autism before joining Viewfinder but was eager to take on a leadership role within the organization. In the past she created a nonprofit to help collect and ship new and used school supplies to schools in Sierra Leone. Finally, Teresa is the board's current treasurer. She has a sister who is more severe on the spectrum and fully understands the struggles these individuals go through as they, often turbulently, attempt to transition into adulthood. Within the findings and discussion of this study, other members of both organizations who were not interviewed for this study are mentioned.

Procedures

One-on-one interviews were conducted with founders and members of two social entrepreneurial organizations, Cultivadores and Viewfinder (pseudonyms). According to Lindlof and Taylor (2011), interviews are beneficial in "understanding the social actor's

experience, knowledge, and worldviews" (p. 173). All humans have "cultural codes" (Lindlof and Taylor, 2011, p. 173) that influence and stage their responses in a certain way. Interviews enable the researcher to tap into the interviewees' motivations and stories. Interviewing also allowed me to ask about events that are more difficult to get at using other data collection methods, such as events that have occurred in the past (Lindlof and Taylor, 2011). Doing so allowed me to have front row access into the process of retrospection.

The data used in this study came from semi-structured interviews that covered two main topics: 1) individual identity (e.g., asking participants about their lives before becoming a part of the organization) and 2) organization building (e.g., exploring the difficulties experienced in the early phases of the organization) (See appendices A and B). Often, the participants' answers within these two general topic areas melded together making the transition from one topic to the next unnoticeable. A semi-structured interview guide was created for each individual organization (See Appendices A and B). These interview guides were created to ask about each organization's specific practices, projects, and experiences. This was important for this study since the two organizations are working to resolve different social issues. The unique nature of each organization's goals combined with the need to acquire accurate information required two different interview guides. These interview questions were created after publicly available artifacts were collected and scanned for more information of each organization's practices and milestones.

Half of the interviews were conducted in participants' homes and the other half were conducted in public locations which included a school district building, a library,

and a coffee shop. The participants were encouraged to choose the setting they were most comfortable with in order to assure that responses were both open and honest. After receiving permission from the participant, the interviews were recorded with the aid of an audio recorder. Interviews lasted between 33 minutes to 1 hour and 6 minutes and were semi-structured (see Appendices A and B for interview guides). The interviews yielded 143 single-spaced pages of transcription. Transcriptions took place within a week of having conducted the interview and were facilitated with the use of ExpressScribe. To overcome language barriers, the interviews from Cultivadores were conducted in Spanish. These were transcribed and coded in Spanish, but all quotations pulled from the transcriptions for use in this manuscript were translated to English. As a native Spanish speaker, I was able to successfully recruit participants and conduct interviews. Additionally, I was able to translate all relevant pieces of information (e.g., transcripts and artifacts) between the two languages.

Due to the small sample size of this study (n=8), publicly available organizational artifacts were used to supplement the descriptions of the organizations and the findings and interpretations. Table 2 is a list of the artifacts included in this study. Initially, these artifacts were used to create interview guides for each organization. In order to do so, an approach laid out by Hoffman and Ford (2009) that is used to describe rhetorical situations in organizational contexts was adapted and utilized. Hoffman and Ford (2009) provide worksheets to complete a full rhetorical analysis; however, since the primary source of data for this study was interviews, only one of the worksheets (see Appendix C) was adapted to create interview guides.

In reporting findings and interpretations, these artifacts were revisited and scanned for the themes that emerged from the interviews in order to provide more detailed descriptions of organizational events and procedures. These artifacts, therefore, provided additional evidence for some of the findings of this study, rather than contributing new or contradicting themes. For example, Uriel described three phases of Cultivadores' short existence and then explained how each one not only signaled a structural change, but also included the abandoning of one method of online communication for the adoption of another; thus, providing a historical record of how the organization is developing.

Table 2: List of Publicly Available Artifacts

Cultivadores	Viewfinder

- Blogspot website (used from May 2009 through June 2012)
- Organizational website (undated)
- Facebook page (active since June 2011)
- YouTube channel
	- Facebook page (active since June 2012)
	- Organizational website (undated)
	   - Price list of the services offered
	   - Cartoons of the organization's members

Data Analysis

A line-by-line in-vivo open coding approach was used to analyze the interview transcriptions. This process was completed by hand. Themes were derived based on their recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness (Owen, 1984). Recurrence allows the researcher to make connections across all interviews in search for similar "threads of meaning" (Owen, 1984, p. 275). Relatedly, repetition refers to the frequency with which similar phrases are repeated by one or several participants. Forcefulness refers to the ways in

which verbal communication is emphasized via volume, pitch changes, and pausing, for example. Each interview was analyzed separately in search for salient themes. When these themes were identified, I then sought to further refine these themes into more meaningful categories (Strauss and Corbin, 1998) within each case study. From there, only themes that were recurrent and frequent were included as findings.

Researcher positionality

Amy and Uriel, as well as other members of Cultivadores and Viewfinder, are individuals with whom I have both personal and professional relationships. Hence, the organizations were convenient sites to study. However, in the initial stages of this project I considered other organizations. All the organizations that were considered were in their nascent stages (see Dobos and Jeffres', 1988, notion that the birth phase of organizations lasts about ten years) and fit well within past conceptualizations of social entrepreneurial organizations (see Renko's, 2012, differentiation between social entrepreneurial organizations and traditional organizations at the nascent stage). Due to time constraints, and perhaps because of my relationship with Amy and Uriel prompted a faster response, the two organizations that were chosen were Cultivadores and Viewfinder. Despite having some prior exposure with each organization, this study showed me that there were aspects of each that I was not familiar with. The moments pointed out as critical by the participants, for example, were events that I was not previously aware of. Before this study, I was also not aware of some of the personal struggles faced by members of these organizations as they worked to build it at this early stage. While I had some familiarity with each organization, my awareness of each organization was minimal. Conducting this

study taught me a lot about identity and the struggles faced by young social

entrepreneurial organizations

CHAPTER 4.   FINDINGS

The deeper I ventured into this project, the clearer it became how different the two organizations are. This is something that was best represented in the interviews collected from each organization. For Viewfinder, the participants presented very cohesive stories. They pointed to very specific and meaningful events. I interpreted this as a sign of how closely the members worked with each other, relying on one another to complete a variety of tasks and placing on everyone's shoulders the goal of making the organization successful. Cultivadores was a bit different. In their interviews, members pointed to very different moments and organizational events. This proved to me how, in some ways, the members worked in a fragmented manner with each person picking and choosing what projects interested them the most. This is perhaps not a sign of inefficiency, rather it is a sign of flexibility. The stories and meaningful moments of Cultivadores and Viewfinder are very different. For this reason each case is presented separately. After each case is presented, themes related to identity follow in the discussion.

To answer the overarching research question, instances of changing organizational and individual identity are described within the two case studies. Each case study is split into two main sections: organizational context and tracing the

organization's history. "Organizational context" provides a description of the setting in which each organization operates. To add substance to these descriptions, the stories told by the participants are described within the section. For Cultivadores, three story themes are presented. These three themes (increasing uncertainty, breaking tradition, and family reactions) point to a changing societal identity. For Viewfinder, the three stories (growing up, transitioning into adulthood, and scarcity) reflect themes of injustice faced by the participants and mentees. "Tracing the organization's history" expounds the critical moments that shaped these organizations in their nascent stages. Together, these two sections provide insight into the changing individual and organizational identities in these two cases.

Both organizations begin without a set organizational identity that is further developed by its members. The findings of each case study show how organizational identities are determined via the contributions of organizational members (e.g., remodeling of Viewfinder's physical space, Erica and Fatima's incorporation of Cultivadores logo and name into demonstrations after mass). Individual identities are also often balanced in favor of the cause being supported and the organization (e.g., Amy, Hannah, and Ida's use of the mother and entrepreneur role; Erica and Fatima's roles as daughters, women, and organizational members) as well as affected by the two (e.g., Uriel becoming physically and mentally ill after Cultivadores is unable to finish a project). These examples are scattered throughout the two sections of each case study.

When the two organizations were invited to participate in the study each had recently experienced a disruption to their practices making it a ripe time to analyze sensemaking retrospectively. Having undergone a disruption meant that the members of

the organizations had to make decisions that would affect future organizational practices by deciding which cues were most salient. Uriel used the word "preparatory" to describe the phase Cultivadores is in and as the analysis below will reveal, the word seems to describe Viewfinder as well. I begin with the case of Cultivadores.

Cultivadores: Unidos en la Creacion de Procesos Psicosociales

In 2009, Light wrote that "opportunities for grand change come in waves" (p. 22). He was referring to the idea that certain societal factors, when lined up correctly, produce opportunities for social entrepreneurs to develop ideas that enact and encourage social change. For Cultivadores this seems to be the case. The mission of Cultivadores, according to Uriel, is to promote and create psychosocial processes. Psychosocial processes, as generalized by Uriel, are those that ask residents to be involved with their communities while also attending to themselves in terms of health and well-being. He adds, "[psychosocial processes] help you understand what is happening in your society, but also to understand yourself as a person within that society." Uriel uses the word "balance" several times to summarize this idea. Specifically, the psychosocial processes he points to are participation, problematization, awareness, dialogue, and education. Uriel defines these five processes in the following way:

> **Participation**, or the way in which you participate in something and you begin to, well you begin to change. So that is participation, another process is **problematization** which has to do with thinking that things, how do I explain this? The majority of people are like "oh, well things are the way they are and they won't change" and to problematize means to say "No! Let's see, why are things the way that they are?"… **Awareness** is another psychosocial process because it is personal. That is, you become aware of something, but that awareness is not created by itself, you become aware by participating, engaging in **dialogue** with other, right? … **Education**, education is popular. (emphasis added)

These five processes are created by Cultivadores and are heavily interrelated. The way

Uriel explains them, one can see the connection between awareness and dialogue, for

example. Uriel states that Cultivadores does not have "any special theme" that defines its

practices. Instead the organizational members make moves depending on how they can

create these psychosocial process. In other words, the organization finds ways to get

residents more involved and in doing so, they help them understand problems affecting

the community. For this reason, the organization doesn't have a specific practice, or way

of doing things. It was created specifically so that it could adapt to changes in the

environment in which it functions.

The development of the organization can be traced to the experiences of Uriel,

who laid the groundwork for what would become Cultivadores. In his interview, Uriel

described his life before creating Cultivadores in 2009. He offered the following:

> Ever since I was a very little lad, or that is very young, I began to get involved in
> situations that were rather religious. And since, I think I was about 9, yes, more or
> less like 9 or 10 years old and I started to participate in groups and so, I feel like a
> part of me was waking up and becoming more interested in such activities.

He continues by describing his advancement within his community,

> The kids sought after me to say like "Hey, how do I do this?" and "It's just that in
> my house this thing happens" and such. And from there a restlessness was born
> because I, like I didn't have good responses for them and I became interested in
> studying psychology so then when I was 18 years old and in the university my
> perspective opened up more in the social than in the religious.

In describing himself this way, he establishes himself as socially conscious. Something

that is very important to him now. This desire to mediate and resolve problems in his

community leads him to a psychology graduate program in which he has the opportunity

to work in Chiapas, Mexico, the area in which the Zapatista movement is located.

The Zapatista movement (described under "organizational context") is an important component in the Cultivadores's short history. Uriel credits the Zapatistas with having inspired him to work within San Martin, the community in which the organization is currently based, as well as, with connecting him with the resources to begin building Cultivadores.

Organizational Context: The Zapatista movement

In college, Uriel began taking trips to Chiapas, a state in the southernmost part of Mexico, where he became more involved with Zapatismo. The Zapatista movement is a reaction by the indigenous populations of Chiapas, to an increasingly oppressive government that has left them with little medical care, education, food, and even housing (Collier and Quaratiello, 2005). The Zapatista's gained notoriety in 1994 after the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) between Canada, Mexico, and the United States led a rebellion in which the indigenous populations declared "enough is enough" (Collier and Quaratiello, 2005, p. 2). Uriel states that NAFTA contributed to a growing gap between the rich and the poor, especially those in the indigenous communities. He offered the following explanation:

> Alright, well it was when the Mexican government signs the free trade agreement with the United States and with that the government said that now Mexico was going to overcome all of its problems and that we were partners with the United States and that everything was going to be better and all that. And the indigenous peoples of those towns, who had already spent a lot of time reflecting, but secretly. Well not necessarily in secret, but not publicly. And from there they, the same day that free trade enters Mexico, they declare war stating, but it was like a political war, you know? They state that it was not true, you know? That the indigenous towns continued to have the same problems they have always had. That there was a lot of poverty, that there was a lot of marginalization, that the kids kept dying of hunger or curable diseases, that the indigenous towns just didn't have any of the benefits and entering that free trade agreement did not benefit them at all. In other words, if they hadn't seen any benefits before the

agreement, well they didn't now either. And for Mexico's social and political landscape, that was a very strong movement since Mexico is one of the Latin American countries with a higher population of indigenous people.

The implementation of the free trade agreement is one of the many ways in which Mexico's political atmosphere changed. As Uriel indicates, this movement exemplified how out of touch the government was and how little they understood about the struggles their indigenous communities faced.

Taking place in the early 1990s, the Zapatista movement would become a model for Cultivadores as well as a character in the organizational member's stories. Uriel believes that this movement was so strong it influenced several social movements. He elaborates, "if you were to interview like more, more groups and organizations, I would guess, I believe about half have, I mean, if anything some more influenced others less, but I think that for half the people that, let's say in the past 15 years, have been involved in social movements it has a lot to do with, with some aspect of Zapatismo." He justifies that, not only were the Zapatistas influential to him, but they also influenced many more social movements in Mexico. He later explains that the Zapatista movement was influential worldwide as it occurred near the same time period that socialism fell, the Berlin wall was taken down, and the internet was becoming more widespread. Thus, this collection of political and technological changes became a worldwide phenomenon and lends itself to various social entrepreneurial opportunities, or as Light (2010) would have it, a wave of social entrepreneurial opportunities.

Working with the Zapatistas, he was influenced to return to his hometown, San Martin. He states, "they are always reminding you that you have to work in the place where you are from because there is something to be changed in all places, all places will

continue to have social problems." Despite wanting to continue his work in Chiapas,
Uriel returned home where he created Cultivadores to serve San Martin and the
surrounding towns, as well. In working locally, Uriel has familiarized himself with other
non-profit organizations in surrounding towns. It is common for these organizations to
team up on projects that will further their causes.

San Martin and the surrounding towns are agricultural villages. Despite being in a
very rural part of Mexico, they have been affected by NAFTA and an increase in foreign
companies moving nearby. This migration of companies into the rural villages that
surround San Martin is one component of the first set of stories told by the participants.
This first set, 1) increasing uncertainty, expresses the sentiment and the fear felt by
participants. This first set also influences the second set of stories they tell, 2) breaking
traditions.

Increasing uncertainty. Although at times they struggle to pinpoint an exact
culprit for these changes, uncertainty is evident in the ways in which members of
Cultivadores articulated their stress. Erica states that "they have come to invade [our
land]." She also offered her thoughts on how these companies are affecting the
agricultural processes:

> It's more like, well the themes I can recall have been like the agreements that
> have been made nationally like, uh, how land should be sold, like that. There was
> a time when land couldn't be sold and because of national agreements that were
> made, like it was with the Free Trade Agreement, how it came to, instead of
> helping rural farmers or the countryside in general, it fucked everything up.

Although she doesn't specify how, she describes how free trade has affected and changed
rural communities. She offers the example of how land is sold and traded and claims that

the change has allowed bigger companies to take advantage of the farmers by taking

control over their lands.

She later explains that these are the struggles her parents are dealing with now but

expresses uncertainty for how this will affect the younger generations. She states, "life

has become more violent, that too. Because now, we don't even know about a lot of

things, but we are scared. We don't even know why or how but we are scared about a lot

of fucking things." In this statement, Erica describes her community's fear over the

recent changes to their society. Later, she briefly touches on how free trade has changed

the way the community farms and what they consume.

Fatima, who also grew up in San Martin, also touches on the change in

consumption patterns in the community. She states:

> We started to see everything that is consumed, that you consume like in every, in
> day to day life. They are just that, that, well no! For example, one time we were
> looking at an image of these like from the corporations like which one is owned
> by which and in the end you realized that almost everything has to do with
> Monsanto. From what you eat to everything that, well the corporations make
> everything that you use in terms of products, everything.

Like Erica, Fatima has noticed how the once purely agricultural San Martin has changed

in terms of the products they consume, which were at one point more natural than the

products now imported into the town. Both Erica and Fatima agree that the changes to

their society need to be addressed and they speak of how an uprising by their community,

as well as others, has led to the breaking of traditions within San Martin.

Besides Fatima's reference to Monsanto, no other antagonist is singled out by

name. However, it is clear to all members that a protagonist exists. It is the introduction

of these characters into the society that has increased the amount of uncertainty for

residents of San Martin. The stories of uncertainty serve as cues for what the participants do next: break traditions. This second set of stories describes the instances in which the participants have acted against the expectations that are societally set for them. Thus, the increasing uncertainty and societal conditions lead the participants to action.

Breaking tradition. Within San Martin, the residents follow certain traditions including traditional gender roles and generations of farming. However, recent societal changes have led several people to rebel against these in order to motivate social change. Erica is one of these people. She states, "the vision I had was, well to get married, have kids. Everything that is done, like normally, what the women from here do, you know?" In this quotation, she explains how her path in life has, at least temporarily, guided her away from her community's expectations. She later explained that marriage was still a possibility, but that for now she plans to begin studying agricultural innovation in the near future.

Last year, Uriel assigned Erica to travel to represent Cultivadores in front of a network made up of other nonprofits that are also looking for ways to "defend their land." This has given her an opportunity to travel alone, a privilege that is usually not experienced by women. She states, "well, you're scared because someone leaves by themselves and they're a woman and they can rape her, they can (trails off). Like right now we're seeing a lot, like here in Mexico, that they are disappearing people, that they are killing, and all that." Erica later explains that these fears may not necessarily be justified, rather they may be a product of socialization with the fear itself being a result from breaking the gender role expected of her.

These travels, along with her work on other projects has allowed her to meet other women. In meeting these women, Erica hints at the changing societal identity that appears to be strengthened by the mobilization of various societal members. She summarizes how her ideas of gender roles have changed in the following way:

> Well, maybe in the past but, like, I changed, like, I feel like I changed my point of view because, well, it's something… that your mom did, that your grandmother did and that this person you don't even know and this other person that you never met. But like, to come to repeat what they did? Well, no. So I feel that I, that I really liked meeting other women who have done other things other than what has been done here for such a long time.

Meeting these women has allowed her to envision a future different from the one she once imagined. More importantly, Erica's quotation vividly describes a change in her identity. Neuliep (2011) quotes Gergen's (1991) saying that "without others, there is no self" (p. 312) hinting at the connection between individual identity and how it is created by those around you. Erica's example shows how her identity comes to be defined by her travels and encounters with other women, rather than with family members and other residents of San Martin. This new and changing identity also changes her future-oriented, rather than retrospective, sensemaking. Instead of envisioning a future of marriage and children, Erica also begins to find a place for higher education in her future.

Uriel, Fatima, and Erica also tell stories of how their families adjusted to their work with Cultivadores. For Uriel, one of the biggest challenges was getting his parents to understand the importance of his work. He describes how they challenged his decisions based on their expectations, "they were like 'but that, what is that useful for?' and 'what are you gonna get out of that?' And it was, like, to explain that I didn't want, I mean obviously I wanted to make money to support myself, but that wasn't the goal, to make a

business, but also to generate work with the projects and stuff. But they didn't understand." Despite his parents' uncertainty, Uriel decided to continue Cultivadores, but "I had to convince myself along the way. It was several years to convince myself that this really was what I wanted."

For Fatima and Erica working with Cultivadores required that they, as women, complete work outside of the home. Erica explained that "there isn't a problem if, like, if I do my chores here at home." She was expected to maintain her role in her home if she wanted to continue working with Cultivadores. In this way, Erica's family presents a bit of a resistance to her newly formed identity. Erica chooses to conform to her family in order to avoid conflict. Rather than grapple with her family, Erica finds balance between her identity as an organizational member and a daughter in a culture that values traditional gender roles. Fatima describes how her parents initially hesitated to let her work with Cultivadores. She states, "since they were themes of sexuality, they were all like not even asking us what we were doing or anything." The work of Cultivadores also required the members and the communities to address issues they had not faced before. Fatima, in aligning more with the Cultivadores, creates distance between herself and her identity within her family.

Tracing the organization's history

As the main driving force behind Cultivadores, Uriel places the organization's history into three phases. The transitions between the phases are separated by different organizational decisions, each made after what Weick (1995) describes as a "shock" or

interruption. The members of Cultivadores, while working in the same organization, for the most part work independently of each other. These next three sections cover the most important interruptions that occur within each phase. Not all participants pointed to these three moments, however, these are represented in the results because each one led to significant structural changes to the organization and its practices. The moments pointed to by organizational members are included within the appropriate phase.

Phase 1: Uriel. When he finally decided to begin Cultivadores, Uriel launched a blog to announce its opening. His first post opens with, "The word is powerful, language shapes our world and creates realities, this is why it is important for us to reach out to you today, as we symbolize our new initiative, Cultivadores: Unidos en la Creacion de Procesos Psicosociales." The post went on to explain the different services offered which include societal projects and psychological consultations. This blog, which was active from October 2009 through June 2010, was utilized scarcely and only had six posts.

Briefly, the first phase (from 2009 through the end of 2010) consisted of the founding members' participation in several educational seminars and a lot of organizational decision making. Uriel described how he would be called into local middle schools to speak on a specific topic:

> "Hey could you give a talk on this?" "Yes." And I would go and give a talk on one thing or another in several places, you know? To the kindergarten and the moms "How do we talk to our little kids about sexuality?" You know? And there I am giving discussions. Or to a middle school, "Well there's a lot of bullying over here!" You know? So that's how I was. "We need you to tell us about violence over here."

This quotation exemplifies how Uriel came to be recognized as a resource for the communities and a problem solver. Within his community, Uriel was seen as service

oriented. Cultivadores's identity, in the eyes of the community, is heavily based on Uriel's during this first phase in the organization's nascent stage.

For the most part, this first phase consists solely of Uriel's work. At the end of this phase, Cultivadores gained an official identity by becoming recognized by the Mexican government as a nonprofit organization. This inevitably allows the identities of Uriel and Cultivadores to separate. Practically, this was an important move as Uriel describes, "what government recognition is useful for is if you want to solicit money for your activities well that is why you need that permission." Thus, government funding was essential in creating projects within the community. These projects become the basis of phase 2.

Phase 2: The duality of government funding. As phase 1 came to a close, Cultivadores transitioned to a new communication medium, a personal website. This website, which features animation and decorations reflective of the Zapatista movement, has an introductory page and a selection of five different pages titled "our foundations," "our chores," "support us," "our space and territory," and "our history." Sections of the website remain unfinished; however, there are references to events occurring within the organization as early as 2013.

In the second phase, the founding members created several projects which were submitted to both the government and private corporations with hopes of receiving funding to complete them. Out of five submitted, two were accepted. One of these projects involved the formation of a youth group that continues to exist today. Fatima and Erica, who were 15 and 13 years of age, respectively, entered the organization as part of the youth group. Fatima described the youth group as follows, "we were like 15 youths

and it, like, promoting the environmental care here in San Martin." The youth group

created a venue for them to discuss and act on the struggles they faced as youth in an

ever-changing community.

> Erica describes one of her first experiences with the youth group:

> I remember a lot when we went to, like the [HIV education-focused organization] which is like another nonprofit that is working on HIV related topics and we went, well Fatima was the oldest and then Maria the youngest… the three of us went it was like, like we were the youngest and everyone was much older and the three of us were all scared (laughs). So then it's like they recognized our work because we were young and we were female. So it was like "Wow!"

Erica touches on several issues. She describes how uncommon it was for them as young

women to be involved but also how intimidating it was for them to start working with a

social movement. Here, Erica takes note of the gender and age differences. This is a cue

that she takes note of and responds to with enthusiasm and by becoming more involved.

Weick (1995) states that cues are chosen based on their salience. Given the gender norms

that Erica notices are changing, this is also proof of the significance of the broken

traditions to the organizational members. The awareness that she is, due to her age and

gender, different also impacts her identity. This shift in identity, made salient by

strangers' reactions to her work with Cultivadores, helps her see the importance in her

work with the organization.

Fatima also described the variety of projects she worked on within her own

community. She stated, "we made composts, we made vegetable gardens, and we also,

well the work was split so we also hosted events, like earth day. All of that, and we did it

in front of everybody, like at the end of mass, for example." She described the work as

agricultural and community focused, ranging from smaller farming projects to bigger

educational issues. All of these projects were youth driven and they all touch on the changing agricultural climate. The flexibility Uriel sought for the Youth Group allows the members to make meaningful and impactful contributions to the organization. The creation of agriculturally focused initiatives by the Youth Group is, by default, reflected in the organizational identity of Cultivadores. By running high-profile activities in full view of San Martin's residents, the Youth Group contributes to Cultivadores's organizational identity. Fatima hinted at some of the events organized by the Youth Group and images on the organization's Facebook page also show organizational members setting up tents and presenting to small audiences in front of an earth day banner.

The second project that was funded was one guided mostly by Uriel. The goal of the project was the preservation of indigenous cultures. Uriel went about this project by affiliating himself by some of the women in the village who created and sold crafts. A YouTube slideshow video titled "5 years of wandering of Cultivadores" published in February of 2014, briefly shows the smiling women sitting in circles, selling crafts, and handling clay. After being guaranteed at least a year and half of funding he went to the community he wanted to work with. He describes the events that followed:

> We approached the community, "Well, we want to do this job!" And we explained to them, "here are the liabilities, here is the card and everything." And then the people became involved, you know? We were able to put together a group of people from [the town] and we turned in [to the government] our report of this year, which was just like four or five months of work, but the project was going to last at least through next year, that is, all of the following year. So at the end of the year, the last few days of the year they tell us that there isn't any money left. It was a problem of corruption with the government because that is a fund that supposedly every year you claim your fund and it has to be spent on that, it can't be spent on something else. The project was accepted, we had documentation and they told us, "Nope, there isn't any." And we said "But it's

just that, we already presented ourselves to the community, we promised we would do this. "Well, there isn't any. Tell them you can't."

Although these factors were out of the control of Cultivadores, Uriel had to deal with them. This was devastating and almost led to the fall of the organization. As Uriel states "Everyone in San Martin assumed we had taken the money for ourselves. There were a few people who still trusted us, but the majority just think we are thieves." Uriel lost trust in the government. By this point, the identities of both Cultivadores and Uriel had become so intertwined that Uriel becomes ill, both physically and mentally. This event coupled with the upcoming elections, he explains, made the political climate of Mexico too unstable for a non-profit organization to depend on financially. Instead, he began to farm a plot of land for use by Cultivadores. Traces of this incident are absent from any of the online media utilized by Cultivadores.

Phase 3: The preparation phase. In the third phase, Cultivadores made a decision to work solely in San Martin. They also decided not to create projects for which they would apply for funding. Instead, they acquired land and entered, in Uriel's words, a "preparation phase." This change also brought with it a new communication medium, a Facebook page. The earliest posts reflect the organization's desire to utilize and promote the space as much as possible. Posters announcing movie nights, earth day, and other agriculturally focused events decorated the page in its early adoption. This is the phase the organization is presently in. On making this decision, Uriel reflects by offering the advantages of not working in other communities. He states,

> Well you can imagine it like you want, but in reality it was very tiring because we had to go all the way over there, waste gas, use trucks, all of it. So we decided then and there, "No, Cultivadores will work, if we really want to do something where we can change something it will be in San Martin. If Cultivadores grows,

well then maybe we can reach [the surrounding villages]. But for now, Cultivadores is small. To put that huge goal on ourselves instead of helping, will frustrate us."

By way of retrospectively looking back at his progress with Cultivadores he came to realize how the organization was utilizing its available resources, but how those expenses did not yield the results they expected. Cultivadores, Uriel realized, is too small to effectively serve the surrounding villages. More importantly, the negative outcome from negotiating with the government for resources, motivates Uriel to look for negative factors in the organization's processes, just as explained by Starbuck and Milliken (1989). Shockingly, although Uriel recognizes that the problem was rooted in government corruption, he still finds mistakes in the way Cultivadores functioned. Uriel points to the wasted resources such as the money spent on gas and the wear and tear on the automobiles used for transportation.

Frustrated, he decides "so that is why it was like 'no, Cultivadores will concentrate on San Martin and whatever it can accomplish in San Martin is fine.' And that is why we got the plot of land and decided to continue work with the youth group." The plot of land, Fatima explained, is part of Uriel's inheritance. Out of all the members interviewed in this study, Uriel is the one whose actions are most in service to the organization. Typically, San Martin residents who inherit land use it to farm or build homes. On the organization's website, the land is described as being "poor in nutrients." The site also explains how in the past it was used to grow maize or to keep pasture for animals. Uriel, instead, uses it to grow Cultivadores. In justifying continuing the work of the organization, Uriel focuses on the current successes of the organization, including the youth group.

This land has given Cultivadores visibility and has deepened the awareness people in San Martin have of the organization. Uriel, with the help of Erica, Fatima, and other members, has begun to build a small cabin-like structure using green building techniques. He describes how constructing this cabin has allowed him to engage with other community members,

> A lot of people would approach me, "Hey, what are you doing?" So by talking about it you begin touching on social problems, you know? For example, the costs or even the environment, you know? Like the buildings constructed out of cement are less environmentally friendly than these, you know? It's like a reason to talk to the people in the community of the problems we face today.

Instead of creating projects and approaching the targeted population, Uriel has taken a step back and now uses the cabin, which will become a headquarters for Cultivadores, as a way to educate San Martin's residents about different environmental problems. In doing so, Uriel adopts the environmental concerns that were in part raised by the youth group and uses those to, quite literally, build the organization.

Erica also reflects on how despite how Uriel's focus has shifted more towards building the cabin he continues to encourage the organizational members to work on projects. She describes one of these below:

> It was a year old on the 22nd of April, earth day, we thought about making like, I don't know an event where [the kids] planted little trees and they could learn more about what Cultivadores did because we saw that the little guys were like, they didn't have anything, something else to do… and we didn't have anything either but we saw them with as much to do as we did. So we started doing, like, we did the event and the kids liked it… then they came back to ask "When can we come back?"... It was cool!

She realizes that, like the youth of San Martin, the children also experienced the societal changes described earlier. She also explained how the children involved mostly were boys. After reaching out more to girls, she is delighted when they begin showing up.

Photographs on the organization's Facebook page show Erica helping the children plant trees and engaging in other activities. She refers to this moment as one of the most important to her in Cultivadores' existence. Looking back to some of the comments she made earlier in her interviews, Erica's efforts to engage the little girls of the community make sense considering her growing awareness of gender roles. It is likely that the importance of this moment is heightened greatly with the ways in which it aligns with her changing identity.

Weick (1995) states that past sensemaking affects future sensemaking processes. This is the case for Cultivadores. While the Zapatistas urged Uriel to work within his home, he interpreted this somewhat loosely and expands his work to surrounding villages. It is not until after several setbacks that he decides that the organization does not have the amount of resources necessary to help villages outside of San Martin. In coming to this conclusion, Cultivadores becomes an organization solely based in San Martin, a decision that the Zapatista movement would likely support.

Conclusion

Cultivadores's case study provides examples in which the organizational and individual identities are intertwined and changed as the organization moves through its nascent stage. For the individuals, becoming part of a social entrepreneurial organization exposes them to a wider societal movement in which gender roles are challenged and pressing issues are problematized. This changes the future plans of the organizational members who decide, for example, to go onto higher education rather than find a husband right away. Or, to change the scope of the organization after an external force threatens it

rather than discard the plan entirely. The organization also allows for members to discuss issues affecting the cause they have aligned themselves with. These discussions become the frameworks that create organizational identity.

Viewfinder Productions Group

Autism is a disability that to some people can be very hard to comprehend. "Unless you live with them you don't really notice it," stated Amy. And having a child or sibling with this disability is life-changing. Teresa, whose sister is autistic, fully understands this, she stated:

> A lot of times it's really hard when you hear the diagnosis that your child, you know, your brother, your sister has autism. People wanna quickly…help them as much as possible. And you want them to live, as neurotypical, is a term that we use, neurotypical of a life as possible. Um, you know so you kinda wanna, you fight so hard and you try to get them, and we'll try this therapy, we'll try, see if the iPads... something that could connect them you know? And sort of keep them uh, try to bring them there [sigh] bring them into our, into a neurotypical life as much as possible.

Ida, whose son is autistic, seconded this saying "It's life changing when you have someone in your family that has a disability that is not recognized as their own you know, as their own self, as an individual, you know, they classify you." Because this disability is hard to understand and the community as a whole lacks the knowledge needed to know how to interact with those on the spectrum, many end up jobless, living off social security, and, often, suicidal. To address this, Viewfinder was created to help adults with autism find stable employment.

As stated on the organization's website, the mission of Viewfinder is to act as "a training facility where individuals with high functioning autism/Asperger's Syndrome

(mentees) learn skills in digital photography, digital video, broadcast, web page design and social interaction." Their Facebook page contains a different (and slightly older) mission statement that emphasizes the importance of long-term careers in order to live without depending on Social Security, a system that Amy described as unreliable in her interview. Within this organization, the individuals with autism or Asperger's are referred to as mentees.[11]

Organizational Context: The "disability arena"

I was introduced to the phrase "disability arena" upon asking Ida to describe her life before joining Viewfinder. The word arena invokes images of warriors fighting in stages surrounded by spectators. Ida explained that "sometimes it feels that way because you do feel like you're a fighter, you know that you have to protect something and you defend something." However, unlike other arenas where competitors, actors, and athletes come prepared, Ida was "thrust into this special education world." Before the birth of her son Victor, Ida was a "selfish…crazy young lady" with no respect for her parents and who was "always getting into trouble." Ida's descriptions of her former self serve as an example of how "shocks," or disruptions, can change individual identity.

Hannah whose "life has revolved around kids (laughs) in different ways" was also forced to make drastic changes after adopting her youngest son. When she found out he was on the autism spectrum and had various special needs, Hannah chose not to work fulltime and became affiliated with an advocacy organization (one that brings the three mothers together). All the stories found within this section could be categorized under the

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[11] Mentees is a term used to minimize confusion when referring to different members within the organization. Viewfinder does use specific terminology to distinguish between different types of membership, however, those terms will not be used here. The term "mentee," is therefore specific to this study.

greater theme of injustice; however, the mothers told stories that could distinctly fit under

three specialized categories: 1) growing up, 2) transitioning into adulthood, and 3)

scarcity of well equipped resources. The order in which these categories have been placed

is important, not only chronologically, but in terms of how the participants make sense of

their experiences in the preceding category. The stories of the participants growing up

affect how they transition into adulthood. After experiencing this collective of stories, the

mothers evaluate the resources that came into play holistically, thus reflective of the third

category. The creation of Viewfinder, influenced by the experiences described in these

first three categories, could follow in theme, however, it will be described in a later

section of this paper. These stories are important because they provide a glimpse of the

experiences within the "disability arena."

Growing up. Most of the stories that were told about raising a child with autism

take place within the education system. They all involve actions taken by the mothers in

order to improve the conditions their sons were facing. In some ways, their steps are

characterized by a trial and error process with the women, for example, agreeing to be

part of a parent-teacher organization then realizing their actions are more impactful

within another organization and joining it. Each of these stories also carries the theme of

injustice, specifically that faced by the child which the mothers experience with them. In

essence, these stories describe the socialization of the mothers into the disability arena.

Amy, Ida, and Hannah, the three mothers, tell stories about the struggles faced by

their sons, who have been diagnosed with autism. Ida, most notably, shared the following

incident that occurred as she fought against actions that would affect her son at school:

They wanted to rent these trailers to put the special ed kids at, cuz they ran out of space in the building [she states mockingly]. So what happened was I went to a school board meeting and I raised my hand to speak against this inhumane, I thought, treatment of our children with special needs. Cuz you hear the stories of them being in basements and back closets and everything else. Well this, I remember the school board president said to me "Who are you? State your name. Where do you live?" "Ida Broderick, Springfield." "This is Clinton. You don't live here. You have no voice here. Please sit down." Then I stood back up and I said "Excuse me, I pay taxes in Springfield, but my taxes are being sent here for my son to be educated, so you are getting paid to educate him. Does it matter where I live?" "Well here it does, please sit down."

Ida points to this experience as one that motivated her to go into advocacy. Similar to her active former identity which was "always getting into trouble" her newer, recent identity remains active, but now acts on a cause. Her moves are more strategic and, more importantly, more meaningful. Her reactions to these injustices are executed in a way meant to provide tangible results for her son Victor. Thus, without stating it, Ida describes ways in which these two individual identities (her's and Victor's) are strongly intertwined. For her, and the other mothers interviewed, this is a recurring theme as they are all able to describe incidents occurring to their sons and the actions they took to combat those injustices. Ida elaborates on her frustration with the previous incident stating "now I'm going to be publicly vocal. It's not just gonna be the bitching and moaning within my family. I'm taking this to the street!" Acting on this frustration leads her to become PTO president at the school, in order to "make it better for all kids" and "to be available to not only the staff but the parents that are looking at this kid like, 'What the heck is he doing here?' 'Oh my god, he doesn't talk and he flaps his hands! Is he gonna hurt my kid?'" Ida wants "to be available to families." Unfortunately, she is later asked to resign from the position. This experience, and similar injustices, serve as cues

for Ida, as well as Amy and Hannah. They come unexpectedly and force the mothers to take action.

Amy noticed a lack of understanding within her own son's school. "I had very clear expectations of what I wanted him to be able to accomplish, I had expectations of what I thought the teachers needed him to accomplish," she states. When the teachers did not meet these expectations, she used her own money to train them:

> I had taken my son through the school system, I had paid for his teachers to get training in his disability because it was relatively new. I made sure that he not only was serviced but people like him were serviced and by me training them and giving them the information it helped out lots of different people.

Just like Ida offers her time to service others, here, Amy describes using her own financial resources in a way that benefits others as well.

As the mothers become more socialized into the "disability arena" they gain an understanding of the resources available to them. More importantly they find their place within the "disability arena" where they hope to increase the understanding of autism by volunteering in various autism or disability focused organizations. These organizations provide for them an opportunity to help other parents who may have also been pushed into the disability arena. Even before the creation of Viewfinder, the three mothers have aligned their identities with a cause. Hannah, who has been heavily involved with these organizations in the past, provides a clear description of the type of service offered, "they help them with the school piece if they have questions about the IEPs [Individualized Education Program] or accommodations or helping to explain the disability to the child's teacher, class, whatever." Having "worked with them on a volunteer and a paid level for

many, many years," Hannah also described how heavily involved parents are with these

organizations:

> They recruited parents who were interested. They called them parent leaders and there would be numerous things you would do. You might work out at resource fairs, you might go visit schools, you might be giving a talk, you might be doing phone conversations with parents that would call in that needed help, you might be going to school with a parent to help them at a meeting or to help them you know advocate an IEP. So those were all unpaid things that all the parents did. Then when I was with them a little bit longer, I became, I don't know, it was still a parent leader but I was doing a little bit more of the presenting and the teaching and some of those were paid through stipend. And then I started doing a lot of their data entry because they run off of many, many grants and all the grants needed all kinds of information collected and returned so I would be the data entry person which I could do at home and that was a paid position.

Amy, Hannah, and Ida eventually meet while working with the same organization as

parent leaders. These shared experiences bring the women together as Ida shares, "we

just became friends, because the bond is such that our boys are all on the spectrum and

we've all been wronged and they're, we can't, you know their not being accepted in their

communities. They're not being given an opportunity to have a job you know."

   Transitioning into adulthood. When children are autistic, there is a multitude of

resources available to them and their families. However, as they graduate from high

school and transition into adulthood they become, as Hannah describes them, "a lost

group." Other members of Viewfinder confirm this sentiment. This decrease in help can

be detrimental to these individuals. As Amy puts it, "see when they're in high school they

have purpose. Once they've graduated, they've lost their friends, they've lost all of their

normalcy." Julia also notes, "once you turn 18 you're kind of basically dropped. You're

an adult now. You can't be part of the organization [that helped you as a kid] and you're

just, like, thrown out into the world, 'figure it out' kinda thing." Both Amy and Julia

express this shift as very sudden and immediate. The mentees experience sudden changes

to their identities since they have for so long considered themselves part of an

organization. Julia's language use, in describing the mentees as being "dropped" and

"thrown out," captures the uncertainty with which the mentees and their families are

forced to face life after an autistic individual transitions into adulthood.

Thinking back to her sister's experiences, Teresa rationalizes this imbalance in

resources that characterizes the help available to an autistic adult:

> They try to hit them as young as possible while they're still learning how to learn. And, you know, that makes sense but again what happens when, I mean there's only so long that, like, my sister could stay in school, in high school…. I think for her she could stay in there until she was like 20.

Here she shows understanding for the abundance of resources in childhood, but notes

their limitations as well. Ida, while appreciative of the resources available to her son as a

child, also expresses disappointment in some of these organizations:

> A roadblock is an organization that is supposed to be supporting individuals on the spectrum, but all they do is they do the cute kid stuff but they're sorta not delving into the adult issues that we're trying to. Cuz these cute little kids turn into adults. And it's okay to misunderstand a child when they're having a tantrum but when an adult is falling apart at the seam in the community and socially they look very awkward that concerns me because then you know trouble is on the way, you know…. That's a roadblock, is the community as a whole not wanting to. They love 'em when they're kids but when they're adults forget it!

The frustration in Ida is obvious and in this statement she calls out, not only the

organizations helping children, but also the community for not providing equal support to

the adults. In this phase of transitioning into adulthood, the members of Viewfinder also

begin to distance themselves from their communities and a few of the organizations that

provided assistance for families while the children are young. Although not very obvious

yet, the members of Viewfinder begin to identify less with other members of the disability arena. This is a vital step towards the creation of Viewfinder.

Hannah summarizes this change best when she states "they don't seem to have a good transition plan for how to help families and help the young adults get out into the world in any kind of way." In this statement, Hannah also recognizes the stress that is brought on the families when these resources they relied on are suddenly gone. The parents, according to Amy, "are kinda left floundering everywhere" and have to use the resources available to them to help their children as best as they can. As a result, those adults who do choose to enter the workforce have to do so with less support than they were used to.

Scarcity. The previous two themes (growing up and transitioning into adulthood) become vital in examining the retrospective sensemaking of the members of Viewfinder, specifically the mothers. Having followed the traditional routes through the education system and into the workforce, the mothers notice a disruption in the changing experiences. While they had support while their children were younger, the mothers are suddenly, as Amy described, "floundering." The experiences of childhood and adulthood for their children are exceedingly inconsistent and for the mothers to critically analyze what exactly is the root of the problem. They realize that the problem is ingrained in the resources available to their children as adults. Unlike those available during childhood, resources available to autistic adults are scarce and unspecialized. Amy, who is in control of Viewfinder's website, often posts links to articles that speak to experiences related to autism. Most recently she posted a link to an article discussing the introduction of an autistic character on the show Sesame Street, a hotel whose staff is made up of

individuals with disabilities, and several motivational quotations. However, the posts move beyond the lighthearted. Amy has also posted an image with tips to help someone having an anxiety attack, advice for caregivers, a link to an article about underfunded special education programs, and an Amazon link to the book "Look Me in the Eye: My Life with Asperger's" by John Elder Robison. In short, the deficiency of qualified resources is one that is clearly communicated in the organization's Facebook page.

Thus, the mothers notice a shortcoming. Often sparked by societal and governmental shortcomings, social entrepreneurs seek out solutions that combine their interests with the needs of others (Auerswald, 2009). When asked to describe the difference between Viewfinders and other organizations that help adults with autism, Hannah simply said "Well first I have, I don't know, I guess I have to disagree with that." She went on to explain that the resources specifically for autistic adults are scarce. There are, however, organizations that have provided services to this population. Since Viewfinder is specifically interested in resources that help employ adults with autism, most of the participants spoke about organizations that helped them do so. Specifically, they pointed to the local department of a government run organization designated to help individuals with disabilities find employment. In describing several of these resources, the participants described them as bureaucratic in that they are resistant to change and disconnected to the struggles of autistic adults (Ruebottom, 2011). A few of them also spoke about community efforts, however, most of their discourse dealt with the above mentioned resource which will be referred to as the Employment Agency for Individuals with Disabilities (EAD).

The EAD, and similar organizations, often do not account for the specialized skills and talents of individuals with autism, and notably Asperger's syndrome. "A lot of these organizations, even though they're designed to help people with disabilities, this is a disability that they can't really put their thumb on and figure out how to help them," explains Amy. To these employment organizations this population is, in Amy's words, "an enigma" due to their high cognitive functioning. Hannah elaborates:

> We're beginning to find out that EAD did not understand autism really well. So the types of jobs and things they were coming up with would almost cause more anxiety in the boys cuz they would be like real face-to-face things, in the public eye kind of. Like the jobs they always offer, you know "let's go be a cashier in a store, let's go work in fast food, let's go work in a restaurant." And both of these guys [Gerard and Benjamin] are, they're very smart, they're very good at computers, they're very good at technical stuff but they wanna be behind the scenes. And they don't wanna be…eyes on them. And if you put them somewhere where they have to talk to the public and make change and all that, I mean they're gonna, just (laughs). It's gonna be too much, it's too much!

Hannah points specifically to the EAD and lists examples of employment opportunities they offer. In addition to the examples given by Hannah, Amy describes the type of work often offered as "piece work" which she believes is dangerous to an individual with high intelligence levels:

> You put somebody like that into a place where you are counting checkers all day long and you are asking for trouble. Not that they're gonna get violent, but they're gonna get in trouble. They're gonna stop doing what it is because they know that they have more and they're gonna actually, a number of them will end up committing suicide because they don't feel like they fit in anywhere. And when they are placed in some of these situations, even though they know intelligence wise they can do better, their self-esteem drops.

As Hannah stated, these jobs "cause more anxiety" because they are not providing employment that takes into account the characteristics of autism, such as social anxiety. Amy adds to this that these jobs do not take into account the consequences of ignoring

the high intelligence levels combined with the social anxiety. Instead, employment

organizations tend to serve different disabilities. Amy offers a description of this:

> A lot of these organizations are designed to work with people who are cognitively
> delayed. So they know that they can put them into a specific area of work. Or,
> they are physically disabled so they already know the adaptations that they need
> for them. But this sector is really difficult. I mean it's even difficult for me
> because you'll have individuals who, like Kenneth... Okay, Kenneth is very vocal.
> He's very good at expressing himself but he'll never look you in the eye and he'll
> never say "no." So he may not mean "yes," you know? He may mean "no" but
> he'll never say it. He'll just be "okay," you know? Gerard, who is extremely
> capable on all of our video stuff, he just took off on all this stuff. If you can get
> ten words out of him during a conversation you are doing good. So they can't do,
> you know, the self advocacy thing, they can't. Can't stand up for themselves.

In addition to the employment organization's inability to find proper and fulfilling work

for these individuals, Amy points to another requirement that they have for anyone who

goes through their service and that is the ability to self advocate.

Amy, Hannah, and Ida have all had to self-advocate for their children. All three

children, Benjamin, Gerard, and Victor, have worked with EAD unsuccessfully in the

past. Ida expresses her frustration with EAD:

> All of our guys, Hannah and Amy and my guy um, were basically shunned by
> EAD. My son was, you know "You're unemployable, you're not employable"
> Well that's not good enough.

Recognizing that the employment resources are not meeting the needs of their children,

has provided a focus for Viewfinder.

While, employment organizations were a big theme for the mothers in

Viewfinder, they also mentioned other resources available to their children. However,

they are quick to point out that most resources lack knowledge on autism, often ignoring

the social aspect of the spectrum disorder. Ida summarizes this by saying, "there's

organizations that'll provide personal care workers, that'll provide moneys for you to

function in the community and that. but that doesn't help you on how to make a friend,

how to function socially, socially is huge!" Teresa adds to this by stating that financial

support can be limiting since it can create a comfort zone for the individual and stop them

from expanding on their talents and learning more. As she puts it, financial support can

inhibit an individual's effort in "caring for 'Cura Personalis!' The Whole Person!"

Tracing the organization's history

Weick (1995) wrote that two types of interruptions can lead to sensemaking. The

first of these is an interruption to a system that is already in place and the second is the

recognition of the first interruption. Therefore, the first interruption challenges

organizational members to recognize it while the second prompts them to take action

(Weick, Sutcliffe, and Obstfeld, 2005). Overall, members of Viewfinder pointed to three

critical moments/incidents thus far in the organization's history: a stolen idea, the

opening of their brick and mortar location, and a recent shift in the organization's

practices that transformed the organization from a client based business to a training

center. Chronologically, these stories show how the use of retrospective sensemaking

among the members of Viewfinder increases as the organization's structures are

disrupted. As they make more mistakes, the members become more analytical and more

active.

A stolen idea. The story of Viewfinder, much like Cultivadores, can be traced

back to the experiences of the founding members prior to its establishment. Earlier, this

project discussed how the mothers viewed the injustices they and their sons faced as part

of the organizational story of Viewfinder. More importantly, the injustices served as a factor in encouraging the mothers to begin identifying as activists and entrepreneurs. Ida says it best when she states "every time there was an injustice or uh, my son wasn't being treated like a normal guy, a normal kid, a normal adult I jumped on board to something." This level of determination is characteristic of the other mothers as well, especially as their sons transitioned into adulthood, enabling them to take further actions to improve the conditions in which their sons will work. Weick (1995) expressed that the use of retrospective sensemaking affects future action and future sensemaking. The mothers included in this study exemplify this in how they worked to create an organization that served their sons by reflecting on past injustices. One of the first actions that pushed them towards becoming an organization follows.

Within this series of injustices Amy and Hannah spoke about a situation where they had to adjust for the sake of their sons after being treated unfairly by a multinational company. Their sons, Benjamin and Gerard, met when Amy and Hannah noticed that the two had faced similar issues in the school. Hannah describes the arrangement as follows:

> Gerard had been trying to do a variety of little part time jobs and things because he was very anxious about the whole job situation. So one of the things Amy and I thought of, because both boys needed some companionship and Gerard wanted a job was, and Gerard could drive, was that maybe um...it ended up being two days a week he could pick up Benjamin from [the school], which is not too far from here, bring him back home, cuz Benjamin was done at noon, and they would go down stairs. This was, Gerard does not live here anymore, but he did at the time and they would basically eat lunch and do their computer stuff, um, their games.

The friendship between the two boys eventually brought all four of them closer together. The four later entered a business plan competition. Their business idea was to build a store with features that catered to children with special needs and their parents. It was

based on a common interest shared by Benjamin and Gerard. After receiving good

feedback, Amy and Benjamin pursued this venture further by travelling to the

headquarters of the company[12] that manufactured the product on which their store was

based. Amy described how they presented their plan, she stated, "we said, 'You need to

do this' and lo and behold if they did without us. They took our plan, they took our idea,

and they opened a [company] store in [the mall] without us. They used all of our

research, everything." Despite how devastating this experience was, the moms could not

pursue the matter much further. Amy hints at the relative powerlessness they have in

comparison to the multinational company. She stated, "and we can't sue them cuz they're

[company]. You know so we can't prove anything." Hannah, who also noted how

complicated the matter was, realizes how their son's pressing needs came first. She

explains "at that point we were thinking for our sons because they both were full of

anxieties." This change is consistent with Weick's (1995) notion of the importance of the

cues being extracted from a disruption. In other words, of the several cues being offered

by the environment, the mother's picked up on the stress being experienced by their sons

as the most important and most pressing. This series of events also have implications for

the identities of Hannah and Amy as mothers and entrepreneurs. As mothers, Hannah and

Amy recognize that what is more important is getting their children ahead. As

entrepreneurs, Hannah and Amy recognize that they are relatively powerless against a big

multinational corporation. The balancing act between identifying oneself as a mother or

an entrepreneur, as exemplified by a major event, also determines which cues are found

to be salient. The entrepreneur picks up on the power imbalance, while the mother

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[12] The participants requested that this company not be identified.

simultaneously notices the anxiety in the son. They act on this cue and the entrepreneurial identity by making their next move what Amy refers to as a "pivot" that began by redoing their business plan into what is now Viewfinder.

Opening their brick and mortar location. The next event, the opening of their brick and mortar location, was an especially important moment in the organization's history. In August of 2012, after acquiring office space at a local mall, Viewfinders posted an image to their Facebook page that showed the mall's directory with their name added to it. With a new location and the number of organizational members increasing, Viewfinder spent the next two months counting down the days until their grand opening and posting photos of their work as they remodeled the space. Organizational members and social media followers saw their location transformed from an empty, uncared-for space to a colorful, equipment-filled store. While describing this event, the participants began making connections between the space and how it allowed for its mentees to become involved with the organization. Through this process of retrospection, the members unknowingly split the experience of having a brick and mortar location into two: the opening of the brick and mortar location and the managing of it. Consistent with Starbuck and Milliken's (1989) notion of analytical sequences, the members speak positively of the experiences involved in opening the space while reflecting on all the negative aspects involved with its management.

The brick and mortar location was the first opportunity that the mentees had to engage with the organization. Amy explained how one member, Gerard, became involved in the remodeling of the space:

> Gerard had redone the basement of his parent's home so he had some skills. His dad had always been a handyman, so you know…he knew wiring and things like that. So Gerard was there every single day painting and cleaning and helping me tear off the floor. I took off two weeks of work and we gutted the place. I mean it was in bad shape. If you want pictures I got 'em. But um we pretty much revamped the place and made it workable, made it a nice office space. Something we could be proud of and his self-esteem leaped and from there, there was no stopping him.

Having a physical space allowed for involvement into the organization early on. The location was in terrible shape and this offered an opportunity for Gerard to utilize his skills to impact the organization from the beginning. This, as Amy explained, helped him build confidence. In turn, Gerard's contributions to the physical space also helped the emerging Viewfinder develop its organizational identity.

For Ida, the location also provided her son, Victor, with an opportunity to be involved. She states, "Victor felt part of [Viewfinder] and that's what he could do and that's how we exposed him to it." Victor's responsibilities within the space consisted of cleaning, and even though these types of jobs are usually the kind the mother's try to steer their children away from, within Viewfinder the situation was such that there was someone guiding them through the process successfully. Victor's handling of some of the cleaning responsibilities is a good example of an application of the analytical sequences Starbuck and Milliken (1989) wrote about. Although the mothers expressed how these jobs are not ideal for an adult with autism, Ida's positive reflection may be a result of the positive outcome. Alternatively, this process of retrospection has also given them the opportunity to determine what made Victor's experience of successfully taking on a cleaning position at Viewfinder different from one that may be assigned to him by another organization. Ida identifies the sense of belonging and guidance built into

Viewfinder as the difference makers. These two things are not apparent in other organizations, such as the EAD, which she refers to as being part of a "system" and not allowing for flexibility in helping an adult with autism adjust to the workplace. Instead, Viewfinder's physical location allowed Victor to take on any job he was able to accomplish. Viewfinder catered to Victor in a way that was not possible with any other resource. Rather than working for an organization, he worked with one.

On October 15th, 2012 a status update on Facebook celebrated their grand opening stating "We are ready to ROCK!" In their interviews, the participants guaranteed that there were several benefits to having a location. Teresa states, "as far as advertisement it was kind of nice to advertise our business. 'Oh, there's a business here called Viewfinder.'" Later she also states, "not only do the alums have a space to have clients, [the mentees] have a space to have client meetings. We had all of our meetings there, we had banners out, people were starting to get to know our name around town a little bit so to speak." Julia backed this up stating "it put a good face on Viewfinder. It was great for branding and getting our word out there." By allowing Gerard, Victor, and others to tangibly impact it, these members contributed to the brand. The physical space was an embodiment of the organizational identity that had been created by the members the organization sought to assist. Ida also expresses how it justified the mission of Viewfinder, "when we did open our brick and mortar and we had all these inquiries. So that, that almost, that sort of gave us that 'What you're doing is great. There is a need out there.'" Teresa, Julia, and Ida all pointed to how the location itself helped them build a client base and garner interest. For Ida, the location also helped reinforce the mission of the organization.

Having remodeled the location, Viewfinder began taking clients. The clients of Viewfinder tend to be small independent firms without the funds to hire an expensive company to work on promotional materials (e.g., commercial spots) or individuals looking for someone to complete private projects (e.g., weddings). Viewfinder filled their needs because they were low cost and professional. A price list on the organization's website provided a record of the services offered. Viewfinder offered video services starting at $50 an hour, photo services at $40 an hour, and animation for $45 an hour, to list a few. These prices were far below the market rate, making them an appealing deal. Added to this price list is the caveat that the price may change depending on the artist hired. For the most part, the relationships formed between Viewfinder and their clients have been positive. However, the members of Viewfinder have noticed how taking on clients has infringed on the amount of help they have offered their target population by halting their creativity and adding sudden responsibilities. In other words, by opening Viewfinder up to client work, its identity has shifted to a business rather than a social entrepreneurial organization.

Client work, as Viewfinder discovered, is very limiting and can be frustrating. Amy elaborates, "you have to do exactly what the client wants." She also adds that client work "limits [creativity] terribly. And the thing is, is that the [mentees] are much more creative than the clients give them credit for." While client work is helping the members of Viewfinder financially, it does not give them a chance to offer input in the project. In order to keep functioning as a business, the members are forced to give up their individual identities in favor of the business identity that began consuming Viewfinder. This proves to be stressful and limiting on the organization's members. Teresa offers a

different take on these creative limits. She states, "I haven't really worked with the animators as much as I'd like. That would be awesome but we haven't found the right client to be able to do that." Thus, she expresses her desire to work with other members rather than the "same usual suspects" as she later describes them. She also conveys how limiting clients can be in that the nature of the work they want accomplished determines which mentees are designated to a project. This leads to disproportionate workloads amongst the members.

In addition to the restraints that client work can put on an organization, the participants described a client whose project, after two years, is still a work in progress. Teresa, who helped to contract the client, felt it was a big accomplishment considering that the contract involved a huge payment and about four different video projects. This client is a disability-focused organization. Hannah states that this client "disappointed us the most" because if anyone would understand it would be an organization that served the same group of people as Viewfinder.

Teresa offers a rundown of the problems that occurred, "first the video was supposed to be like ten minutes long, then 'no, we wanted it five minutes long,' 'no, somebody said ten' it, it, the miscommunication that came with that client, on both ends, but mostly on their end." Ida adds "this is what they wanted, then they changed their mind, then they gave us timelines, then they shortened the timeline." When they presented work to them, the organization was not happy. Teresa explains, "the client wasn't happy with the first video they saw but at the same time, like I said, they wanted a video, a different kind of video, and then they didn't. And then there were like two other videos they wanted made and they never told us what they wanted." The problems ranged

from the organization changing their minds, their timelines, and showing dissatisfaction while not clearly communicating what their expectations were.

Teresa later explains that the client was going through several organizational changes. They had "too many cooks in the kitchen" as she puts it and "they had probably somebody higher up telling them that this is what they wanted but then some people in the middle were saying "actually this is what we want and this is not." The disorganization of this client made them difficult to work with, and as Amy offers, "our biggest downfall believe it or not was the disorganization of other clients."

On their end, participants from Viewfinder also expressed remorse that their own members had been paid to provide services and were not able to follow through. Ida offers her own take on this situation. She states,

> I think the glitch there was that…these individuals who we were, you know depending on, were on the spectrum and I don't think they fully understood what the responsibilities were. So here we are talking about trying to educate and train individuals on the spectrum and then we gave them such a huge responsibility of giving them a task to do and the money to go with it and they didn't complete it. So I think we failed them.

In her view, the problem was not necessarily the client. Instead, she hints that the problem was both with the business identity that Viewfinder grew into and how it affected Viewfinder's mentees. She believes Viewfinder was not equipped to handle a client as unorganized as the one described.

While the location served the purpose of helping organizational members identify with the organization, it also cemented their cause in the community. However, as time went on and as their client list grew, the problems with the location became more evident. These included an increase in rent, the location of the mall, and the location of the store

inside the mall. Some of these problems were unexpected; other issues including client work, the members felt, should have been foreseen.

After two years, the mall Viewfinder was in went into bankruptcy and soon was under new owners. Teresa explained why this was a problem, "we weren't even sure if our rent would be the same which is kind of why we were there was...decent rent." Hannah and Julia, however, described how an increase in their rent was guaranteed. Hannah described the new rent as "sky high." Julia described how the rent, combined with charges for other utilities, made the location impractical, "they kept raising our rent and charging us for like ridiculous things like AC and heat which we didn't even have in our space, garbage removal which we didn't have either, yeah it was just like we got charged for all this extra stuff anyways." In Julia's words, the location became "a very expensive poster." Amy also adds that the space was underutilized.

The mall's location in a busy downtown area also made it hard for the organization to continue operating out of it. Teresa states, "it was too hard for our clients to sort of get there and that's with [the mall] in general is that the parking is so expensive, um, and annoying." For an organization that relied on clients, their location was not ideal. However, it also presented problems for organizational members as Amy explains, "the problem was nobody was using it. It was, there wasn't parking or there was expensive parking. And um the number of the people that were there have no way of transportation to get there so even though there was city buses, it wasn't hitting where our client, or where our associates lived." While the space was great for the organization in the beginning, Amy's quotation above highlights how it was not good in terms of allowing the organization to continue its practices.

Although it was devastating, the members of Viewfinder ultimately decided to relinquish the location. This was hard on everyone, Julia best captures this feeling when she states "I think Amy feels like we lost part of Viewfinder's identity." This makes sense given the amount of opportunities the location allowed for the mentees to become involved from the beginning. The physical location had allowed for the development of both the individual identities of Viewfinder's members and its own organizational identity. As a result, moving out of the location led to the departure of several members from the organization. However, this did not mark the end of the organization's existence. Julia described this, "I don't think we lost our focus and "don't think we lost interest um but it definitely was a big transition." Despite the move Julia doesn't feel like the organization has lost its way. She acknowledges the loss of the space as tragic but describes this transition as "a really strong reflection time" that "ended up being really good for the group."

Ida reflects on the acquiring of this space by stating, "I think we jumped too far too fast." She also offered the following, "I think we're still in the infancy stages even though we did have that brick and mortar." Here she acknowledges that a brick and mortar location, although it is seen as a key milestone for a developing organization is not a strong indication of success for Viewfinder. She also indirectly acknowledges that Viewfinder's organizational identity is not physical, rather it lies in the problem the organization tries to address. What was important in the physical location was not the space itself but the image created by Viewfinder's members. Thus, the significance of the location was in the way it connected individual and organizational identity.

Recent shift in the organization's practices. In June of 2015, Viewfinders elected

new board members. Within that same election process, the members reflected on past

experiences (i.e., losing their locations, client work) and they decided to return to their

original vision of a training center. Despite having lost their location, the participants saw

no other option but to continue. Hannah expressed this sentiment:

> We always come back to though, you know, if there was a good somebody or a
> good organization, or a good place to turn our kids over to safely that could take
> over but we haven't found it nobody's found it so it's like were finding that you
> have to kinda create these situations for them you have to go out and look for
> these things so that's why we're still hangin' in there you know.

She recognized that the closing of Viewfinder would leave the mothers once again

searching for a way to help their sons, hence, actively acting on cues and employing their

entrepreneurial and maternal identities. Thus, the organization must exist. To move

forward, Viewfinder's members decided to contact a consulting company that would help

them analyze past mistakes and identify which steps to take as they move forward. This

meeting has yet to happen. However, they have been busy refocusing themselves to

assure that they go into the consultation with as clear a plan as possible. To them, this

means returning to the original idea of a training center. However, they do so with a

better idea of the organization's identity and a clearer understanding of the ways in which

their members shaped this identity.

At some point in the three years Viewfinder has been in action, they lost their

way. Teresa attempted to rationalize this. She stated,

> In the beginning our mission and our true mission to help young adults with
> autism kind of build their own uh companies, little companies, I think that needs
> to be the main focus in keeping the main focus and even you know more intensely
> be the main focus. I think that's where we started kind of branching off and
> getting away from our original vision is when we started worrying too much

about which clients to pick up but the whole fact that we're doing this together is you know what we should be focusing on anyway.

Amy also noticed this "branching off." She stated, "we wanna focus it on what our main mission statement was and that's the training of individuals." Both Amy and Teresa accepted that they strayed away from their original intentions. They also showed a need and desire to restructure the organization so that it caters more to their intended audience. For them, the key to pushing Viewfinder forward was finding a way to return the organization, so to speak, to its mentees.

The members of Viewfinder took several steps to reach this consensus. Their ultimate goal is to assure that the members they have are being served as best as possible. Julia explains, "It's very member driven, it's what they wanna do, um, we wanna like make sure this is about the members and were following, if we need to change something if something's not working for them like we're gonna change it and we're gonna make sure we're following what their passions are and what they wanna learn and how we can help them best." She reemphasizes the return of the company from the client's projects to its members. Amy adds that client work actually took away from their mission, "that actually blends into our mission statement which is to get them self employed. So if they, yeah I mean if we start doing the client work with them, we're kind of taking that away from them. So but if we just train them and then we give them the support when they do that, then we're actually empowering them." Giving the members a chance to find their own clients and work on their own projects is symbolic. It shows a relinquishing of control from the founding members onto the population they claim to help so that the organization is not just, in Ida's words, a "mommy's have a dream" project. This also

shows how the founding members noticed their own influences on the organization, turning it into a client-based business. Thus, the organization took on the identity of a business. This identity is one that the mentees resisted because it placed on them several of the same pressures as a job such as EAD would have. For Ida, the best way to serve their population is by involving them more in the decision making process. Drawing on her prior experiences having to deal with school boards, she stated, "you shouldn't go to a meeting and not have a voice." She also described how several members "come to meetings and they just sit."

Ida addresses the mistakes made early in the history of Viewfinder by speaking of them in terms of how they affect Viewfinder's mission to help adults on the spectrum. She states, if I were to do it over again as soon as a new [member] came on board the first thing I would ask them is 'what do you think we're about?' … 'what was your interest?' 'Why did you come to us?' 'why do you want to be a part of this?'" She also adds that more planning should be done before acting on decisions and that there should be a process to assess the organization's progress along the way. Julia, reflecting on what should have been done differently, adds "We need to do like a SWOT analysis. Basically like 'here's what we did right, here's what we did wrong, so this is what we're gonna fix so we don't do it again in the future.'" Both Julia and Ida, therefore, engage in retrospective framing to reflect on the mistakes the organization made, steps that could have been taken to avoid those mistakes, and ways to move the organization with this knowledge of prior mistakes.

Conclusion

Viewfinder's case replicates some of the findings present in the case of Cultivadores. This case is also teeming with examples of intertwined and recursive identities. Just like Erica jumped between her daughter and organizational member identities, members of Viewfinder balance the roles of mother, entrepreneur, freelancer, and several more. These identities exist and act at the same time. At times, the roles can be detrimental (e.g., the mothers forcing their dream onto the organization's identity) but they can also increase the efficiency with which organizational decisions are made (e.g., focusing on a mentees' anxiety after the organization had their business idea stolen). One important distinction between the two cases is Viewfinder's excitement at having a physical location, they value the location for the affordances it provides in terms of allowing the mentees to help determine the organization's identity. After two years of having worked in this location, the members realize that business identity that came with the location restrained the development of the mentees, preventing the individual identities of the mentees to flourish in a positive manner.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION

This project served as an avenue by which to explore social enterprises at their earliest stages of existence. By opening up about their experiences, the participants from two organizations offered important insight into the stories they created for their organizations, the moments that dictated the actions they took, and the factors that both facilitated and/or restricted their actions. As such, this study endeavored to answer the following question:

RQ: How do members of social entrepreneurial organizations make sense of their identities (organizational and individual)?

To address the research question, this study seeks to explore and understand the stories that social entrepreneurs and founding members tell about their entrepreneurial organizations. Also, for a more nuanced explanation, this study seeks to explore the critical moments/incidents of the organization's history. More specifically, how social entrepreneurs and founding members make sense of these critical moments/incidents in the organization's history.

This chapter offers a summary of key findings, theoretical and practical implications of the research conducted, the limitations of the study, and possible directions for future research.

Summary of key findings

Notably, both Viewfinder and Cultivadores were in a state of flux when I requested interviews. Within the past year and a half both have committed to drastic structural changes. For Cultivadores, this meant refocusing the scope of their organization to serve just the area of San Martin and for Viewfinder this led them away from the brick and mortar location they desired and instead had them focus on becoming a training center. In both organizations, this shift in strategy affected their membership rates with both losing members. However, the similarities of the organizations, mostly, end there.

Stories. Within Cultivadores, stories encompassed two main themes: 1) the increasing uncertainty faced by residents of San Martin and of Mexico, and 2) how this change has led to a breaking of traditions within Mexico's rural and indigenous communities, simultaneously leading several nonprofit organizations to align themselves with each other. In discussing the changing climate of Mexico, Uriel described his experiences with the Zapatista movement. He explained how the North American Free Trade Agreement led to the rebellion of Chiapas' indigenous population, who had been facing many hardships before the agreement and saw no benefit from it. Believing that there are social issues to be resolved in any location, the Zapatistas encourage Uriel to go

back home and work there. Working with Cultivadores has allowed Uriel, Erica, and Fatima to identify several changes in San Martin that they seem to be identifying as the delayed effects of NAFTA. Thus, they have created projects to create awareness and teach their community about these changes (e.g., increased consumption of imported products).

The delayed effects of NAFTA have also caused the breaking of several traditions in Mexico. Erica, for example, speaks about changing gender roles. In particular, she discussed how Cultivadores works in conjunction with other non-profit organizations to address social issues. While working with these organizations she has met several women, including indigenous women, who are actively involved in social movements. Observing and working with these women have changed her plans for the future. Soon, she will begin college, a move that differs greatly from her original intentions to marry and have children.

In Viewfinder, the participants told stories about the injustices experienced by adults with autism. The stories cover the theme of injustice that occurs when the mothers guide their children through life. Specifically, these stories cover: 1) growing up, 2) transitioning into adulthood, and 3) the realization that qualified resources are scarce. When mothers Amy, Hannah, and Ida spoke about the exigencies that pushed Viewfinder into existence they spoke of injustices to their sons within what Ida coined the "disability arena." These stories are filled with instances in which the mothers took action to improve the conditions in which their sons lived. Ida, for example, became PTO president at her son's school in order to both help her son and educate parents who might be uncertain about her son's strange behavior. In a different example, Amy paid for her

son's teachers to be trained in interacting with autistic children, a move that benefits

more children than just her son. Thus, the "disability arena" describes the struggles of

those in the disability community who find and help each other. While the "disability

arena" proves to be a place riddled with injustices, it is also the stage at which the

mothers felt the most support. As the children turned to adults, they became a "lost

group" according to Hannah. Most organizations whose mission it is to help individuals

with autism focus only on the children, leaving the adults in a state of limbo as they try to

find jobs and their parents "floundering everywhere" as stated by Amy. Those resources,

such as the EAD, that do take on some of these individuals prove to be of little help as

their knowledge about autism and Asperger's syndrome is very limited. Thus, the first set

of stories recalls the need for an organization like Viewfinder to serve this population of

people who are otherwise not properly assisted by their communities.

The members of Viewfinder recount the mistakes they made since their doors

opened. These stories revolve around the ways they hindered their members by focusing

too much on client work and neglecting to instill organizational processes that would

allow their mentees to be more involved in decision making processes within Viewfinder.

Working with clients limited the creativity of the members of Viewfinder. Teresa

described how most client work required that she work with the "same usual suspects"

and left little opportunity for her to work with other members. This work also restricted

the amount of creative input by the mentees forcing them to work within the client's

restrictions. Taking away the space for creativity was, according to Amy, not

empowering the mentees. The members also described a client whose disorganization

created several problems for Viewfinder. This client was the most disappointing since it

was a company that is disability focused. Ida believes they were hired by this organization because both focused on helping individuals with disabilities, a decision she believes is a mistake. In addition to focusing less on client work, the members also believe there should have been several measures in place to help the organization operate smoothly along the way. A few of these deal with operational processes, such as creating stricter contracts; however, Ida believes the biggest mistake is not engaging the mentees more. She states that there needed to be a bigger focus on what the mentees wanted out of the organization.

Critical moments. In line with Weick, Sutcliffe, and Obstfeld (2005) who wrote "If the first question of sensemaking is "what's going on here?," the second, equally important question is "what do I do next?" (p. 412), the members of Cultivadores and Viewfinder react to and act on cues in their environments. In reflecting on the organization's critical moments and incidents, the participants of this study inadvertently begin pinpointing where they went wrong using analytical sequences that allow them to look for errors in their actions and decisions.

When asked to identify critical moments or incidents in the organization's history, Uriel did not hesitate to separate the six years that Cultivadores has been in practice into three separate phases. Erica and Fatima, became members of the organization during the second phase. Although they did not demarcate the phases as explicitly as Uriel, they separated them by associating Cultivadores's work in San Martin as a significant moment. In the first phase, Uriel began building recognition by speaking at local venues, such as middle schools, about a variety of topics including sexuality and bullying. This

phase ended when Cultivadores became officially recognized as a nonprofit by the Mexican government, allowing for the organization to apply for government funding.

In the second phase, Cultivadores took advantage of its newly found access to government resources and received funding for two projects. The first turned into a youth group that is often partnered with other organizations to complete awareness projects (e.g., the HIV education organization). The heavy involvement with other nonprofits became the means by which Erica and Fatima met women and young people working on the same issues. This exposure served as a means by which Erica and Fatima found a system of support for their work. While Erica and Fatima worked in the youth group, Uriel began work on the second project which is focused on the preservation of indigenous traditions in a nearby community. He explained how in a sudden and corrupt way, the government pulled the funding for the project. For Uriel, this served as a cue, or disruption, that forced him to reflect on the disadvantages of working away from San Martin. In particular, he focused on the material resources (i.e., gasoline, money, etc.) that have been spent and compares those to what is feasible for the organization to spend. Via retrospective sensemaking Uriel came to the realization that Cultivadores does not have enough power to fight against the government over the control of resources. He decided to work within San Martin and this became the moment that differentiates phase two from phase three.

Erica and Fatima, although they did not mention the government incident in their interviews are well aware that an organizational shift has occurred. For Erica, this is reflected in her work. She expressed how working solely in San Martin has allowed her to create a children's group to teach them about solutions to environmental issues in their

community. Uriel spoke about this third phase as preparatory. He didn't specify what the organization was preparing for, but sets it up to be rather anticipatory.

The participants of Viewfinder pointed to critical moments/incidents that can be categorized into the following three themes: 1) a stolen idea, 2) opening a brick and mortar location, and 3) a recent shift in the organization's practices. The first of these moments is one experienced by Amy and Hannah, and their sons Benjamin and Gerard. Although this moment is only experienced by two of the five participants, it shows strong resilience and paves the way for Viewfinder as it stands today.

Opening a brick and mortar location was important for the participants of Viewfinder. From the beginning, this location became the basis for the organizational identity of Viewfinder. It allowed for members to become involved at all levels from remodeling to cleaning. Thus, the space became the first way in which members saw their direct influence on the organization. However, despite how important this location was in building a relationship between individual and organizational identity it presented various problems that made it impractical to maintain. The members of Viewfinder decided to end their lease and in losing their location, they also lost a few members and, to some extent, a part of their identity.

Losing the brick and mortar location was devastating, but it did not signal the finality of Viewfinder's life cycle. During a meeting this past June, the members voted to eliminate client work from the business plan and focus solely on the organization as a training center. Via training methods, Viewfinder empowers their mentees by giving them control all over again. To Ida, this is symbolic as it represented a shift in the

organization from the "mommy's have a dream" project to one where the sons are making more decisions. This, according to Amy was the mission all along.

Identity. The importance of the stories and critical moments offered by the participants lies in the insight they provided in learning about the relationships between organizational and individual identity. The following section brings together the different ways in which organizational and individual identity are recursively related. This section begins by describing how organizations, especially at their nascent stage, are heavily influenced by individuals. The second half of this section discusses how the organizations change individual identity. In short, this section shows how members of social entrepreneurial organizations begin to view their identities as almost synonymous to that of the organization.

After hearing that she would be asked two sets of questions, one about her individual identity and another on Viewfinder, Amy warned me "They might meld together, just so you know." In short, the idea that she conveys in this quotation is a response to the overarching research question posed at the end of chapter 2. Members of social entrepreneurial organizations saw their individual identities as being deeply and meaningfully intertwined with that of the organization, and in some cases almost synonymous with the organization.

In a way, the organizations, at their nascent stages provided space for the organizational members to mold and form them based on prior experiences and future aspirations, or based on retrospective sensemaking. While both organizations had an intended goal when operations began, precise organizational processes were not put in place right away. Members of Cultivadores, for example, can basically do whatever they

want as long as their actions are serving the creation of the psychosocial processes Uriel defined. For Viewfinder, the mentors and mentees can negotiate projects, prices, and ideas with clients as well.

Viewfinder, is "branded" by the mentees who remodeled the physical location in its early stages. This settles the organization's identity in a way that is visible in and out of the organization. The strong bond between individual and organizational identity is partly to blame for the sense of loss when the location is given up. In addition to getting rid of a brick and mortar location, the members were also throwing out one of the first connections between organizational and individual identity.

The identity of Cultivadores, which was largely defined by Uriel's practices during its first phase, changes when new members joined. The youth group is the most vivid example of this, as the group helps orient the organization towards environmental dilemmas. Later, Cultivadores finds itself cultivating a space in San Martin that employs environmental building methods.

The bond between organization and individual is strong. Throughout the short histories of Cultivadores and Viewfinder, there are several instances in which changes to the organization produce strong, sometimes emotional, responses. Take for instance the destructive clash between Cultivadores and the Mexican government that opened this study. When corruption threatened the cultural conservation project, Uriel became physically ill and full of anxiety. Similarly, when Viewfinder lost its brick and mortar location, several members left and Julia described the incident as a loss of identity.

However, the organization also became a place of support for the members. The organizational identity constructed by the members serves as a medium by which

members gain exposure to other movements, resources, and ideas. This exposure changed the members' outlook and identity. Erica, for example, had to balance her role as a daughter and organizational member. Doing this she became very aware of how important her sex was in both instances. While her community expected her to marry and have children, the exposure to other women in non-profit organizations allowed her to see how her sex did not determine her future. Marriage to Erica is still desirable, but now she also desires higher education.

Theoretical Contributions

As a whole, this project provides support for the idea that there is a recursive relationship between individual and organizational identity. However, it also extends sensemaking theory in that it suggests that this recursive relationship results in the favoring of individual identities that are closely tied to the organization when making personal future-oriented decisions.

Recursive relationship. In nascent social enterprises, recursive relationships exist between individual and organizational identity. These relationships are recursive in that they develop and transform each other repeatedly throughout the organization's history.

That the self can be inextricably tied to an organization is not a new concept (Piette, 2013; Hogg, 2006). However, the manner in which this bond can affect the sensemaking processes of an individual, especially when that organization is in its nascent stage, has not been looked at closely. This study is replete with examples in which individual and organizational identities come together. In Viewfinder, Amy describes how the mentees play a role in deciding the aesthetic presentation of the

website and location of the social enterprise. As the identity of the organization changes, so does that of the individual. Gerard, in affecting Viewfinder in both tangible and intangible ways, becomes more confident and is able to travel using the skills he has acquired. Similarly, when Viewfinder loses its location, which Julia states is perceived to be tied in to their identity, several members leave. Within Viewfinder, Uriel describes almost eradicating the organization after the government pulled funding from a project. Despite having another project succeeding, he experiences the loss that comes with not having the resources to finish a job that is important to the organization. Although he could apply for more funding through other venues, instead he feels defeated and decides to take the organization in another direction. Thus, he makes the group's failure part of his own social identity (Ashforth and Mael, 1989).

Sensemaking. At an individual level, when the identities of an organization and individual are very closely connected, sensemaking processes are deeply affected. This study provided examples about the ways in which future oriented sensemaking changes for individuals in organizations within their nascent stage. While the members used retrospective sensemaking to make choices about the structures and practices of their organization, they also made decisions about their own futures as individuals.

Perhaps this is due to the state of an organization at its nascent stage in which it does not have a solidified identity. Coming into a young organization, rather than one with an established way of practicing, allowed for the impact made by an individual to be more visible. Amy provided examples of how mentees came into the location of Viewfinder and physically changed it. By installing carpet and painting the location, the mentees made changes that are visible to them, other organizational members, but also

anyone who walked through the mall. Erica and Fatima described how the youth group became more visible to the residents of San Martin by hosting events after mass, a time in which most of San Martin's residents gather. These events both linked the individuals to the organization as well as helped establish the focus of the organization. While Uriel did work on other projects that did not have an agricultural focus, the organization becomes linked to the focus established by the youth group. For both organizations, several events became a step towards a strong bond that formed between individual and organizational identity. Put simply, the "I" became more of a "we."

Since the relationship between the two identities is recursive, the individual identity is strongly affected by the organization. This led to the creation of several associations for each individual. Erica and Fatima, in addition to viewing themselves as daughters and women, now see themselves as female organizational members. They begin to bring together a few aspects of their identities and combine those with the organization. Ida, Amy, and Hannah, are not only mothers, but they see themselves as entrepreneurs. In cases like these, where an individual balances two or more identities, that person is more likely to make future oriented decisions based on the identity with organizational ties. For example, Erica who balances between daughter and organizational member identities begins to favor a future where education is involved over the traditional marriage and children route. Uriel, who balances son and entrepreneur, chooses to use his land to build Cultivadores rather than build a home or farm for profit. Ida, Amy, and Hannah, rather than abandoning their identities as entrepreneurs, favor a future in which the two identities combine.

This balancing act that favors the organizationally oriented identity can also be detrimental. Ida, for example, describes how business focused orientation of Viewfinder took away the focus of helping adults with autism. In this case, by choosing to favor the entrepreneurial identity over the maternal identity, the mothers made decisions that favored the business side of Viewfinder. Doing so took away from the organization's goal of helping adults with autism, a consequence that was later recognized and used to change the organization's practices.

Practical Contributions

In their nascent stage, Cultivadores and Viewfinder experienced events that shook the organizations. However, the two major events included in this study are, at their core, very different. Cultivadores, an organization guided by the Zapatista movement, lost funding due to external forces. While Uriel experienced this loss intensely, Erica and Fatima did not seem to have been affected. Viewfinder, in losing their brick and mortar location, experienced a decrease in their members. Their dilemma was a result of internal decisions that led to the relinquishing of a physical location and, with it, the first instance in which individuals directly impacted the organization. With all of this in mind, it is important for organizations to have a mechanism by which individual members can see their contributions being integrated into the organizations in meaningful, and possibly tangible ways. There are several ways in which this can be done. Two of these methods involved allowing organizational members to have control over the organization's space and communication methods.

Giving organizational members control over the organization's space allows the members to directly see their contributions to the organization. Viewfinder began to do so by allowing members to impact the physical space they rented. This was easy for Viewfinder given that the space they rented needed remodeling. Allowing the members to paint the space, move furniture around, and put up decorations made the space their own. Cultivadores did the same by utilizing green-building techniques within San Martin. In employing these techniques, Uriel invited Cultivadores's members in building and cultivating the space.

To give members control over communication methods can be simple. Viewfinder's website was created by a member and any updates to it reflect the members' personalities. For example, a recent update changed the members' photographs to cartoon versions of those members created by a mentee who specializes in cartooning. Cultivadores's communication is largely word-of-mouth. Organizational members, however, often create their own events and are allowed to use the organization's logo to promote and help brand the organization.

Finally, in implementing these two suggestions into an organization it is important to recognize that doing so will increase the bond between an individual and an organization. This means that any future changes that affect an organization's space or communication should involve the members who have contributed in any modifications. After all, if the goal is to strengthen the recursive relationship between individual and organization, then any changes that could be detrimental to this relationship should be communicated to all affected audiences.

Limitations

In looking back at this project, I point to three limitations. First, I did not ask the participants about their cultural identities. Second, within each organization there were key individuals with whom I did not interview. Finally, this study is limited to one point in time and does not look into the use and effectiveness of retrospective sensemaking overtime.

Knowing how different the two organizations were, I used publicly available artifacts to tailor the interview guides for each organization. This allowed me to ask about the different practices, projects, and clients within each organization. However, when all the data were analyzed, topics related to cultural and national identities had not been probed enough. For example, Erica discussed how her sex led to various societal and cultural expectations. However, in working with Cultivadores she created a different path for herself. The tensions created by her work in a social entrepreneurial organization and these cultural expectations were not fully explored while she was interviewed. To offer another example, one of the ways in which Viewfinder's mentees contributed to the organization was by creating pieces of artwork that reflected their skills and interests. These pieces are referenced by the participants interviewed for this study and are considered as somewhat foundational to the organization's practices, however, little probing is done to look further at the connection between these pieces, the mentees, and the organization. In other words, while the artwork is stated to be important, I asked very few questions about it.

While the two organizations were small, not all members were interviewed. This made it hard to draw conclusive findings and locate instances of recurrence among the

interviews. One of the founding members in Cultivadores, for example, who played a big

role in the first two phases of the organization, including the problem with the

government in phase two, was unavailable during the data collection process. Because his

travels took him to rural parts of Mexico, it was hard to establish a stable internet

connection to conduct an interview online.

While interviewing with members of Viewfinder, I also did not seek out mentees.

Since the mentees were a vital part of why the organization began (and why it continued

to function even after several setbacks) this is one of the biggest limitations of this

project. One of the participants, Ida, even questioned why I had not sought out mentees to

interview. However, at several points during the interviews, the mothers alluded to

difficulties their sons experienced in terms of communication. In reference to my

interview process, Ida stated,

> If I was a person on the autism spectrum right now I couldn't sit as long as I am
> with you right now. I couldn't answer or even understand half the questions you're
> asking me but should that mean I shouldn't be included within your research? Or
> your thesis? No! You're gonna have to use a different approach to gather the
> information out of me. Just don't give up on me just because I may not respond in
> a timely matter.

Ida's statement pointed out two things. First, she explained the difficulties of conducting

an interview with an autistic individual. More importantly, she pointed to my lack of

preparation for conducting an interview with an autistic individual. Thus, the methods I

employed would not have been appropriate had a mentee been contacted for an interview.

Another group of people whom I did not approach were individuals who left the

organization. Both organizations experienced a loss of members at some point during

their nascent stage. Erica, when she discussed the lowering attendance at youth group

meetings, mentioned how some members leave the organization because they get married. Uriel also added that some members leave because they move to the United States to work. This may have suggested that for some members the relationship between individual and organizational identity was not as strong as that between individual and cultural identity. The loss of membership in Viewfinder was a bit more sudden. After the loss of the physical location, several members leave. Since the physical location in many ways represented the bonded individual and organizational identities, this decrease in membership may have strong ties with the concept of identity. Thus, people leaving the organization may have provided insight into the recursive relationship between individual and organizational identity.

Finally, while both organizations are in their nascent phases and currently managing structural changes, this study is not able follow them as these changes play out. Thus, all the data are limited to one point in time and misses the opportunity to find out which changes are effective and which are not. In both organizations, the members engaged in retrospective sensemaking by thinking about the critical moments that led them to change the way the organizations operate. There is no way, however, to determine whether the retrospection they engaged in was effective.

Future Research Directions

Future research projects should take into account the limitations pointed to above. In studying identity, future projects should begin by taking into consideration what cultural factors are coming into play as social entrepreneurial organizations are developing. While the relationship between individual and organizational identity can be

strong, other identities can also change the development of that relationship. Organizational members may leave, for example, because their cultural identities as mothers, daughters, or laborers, are more salient to them. Along those same lines, those members who have left should also be contacted and interviewed. Doing so has the potential to provide deeper insights into how and why organizational and individual identities become strongly tied or not.

In addition to this, when deciding who will be approached for interviews, it will be especially helpful to review the methods being used in order to make sure that all participants and experiences are accounted for. Perhaps a longitudinal study would allow for better insight into how sensemaking processes change over time and how they affect the organization and its members. A longitudinal study would also allow a researcher to develop a relationship with their participants. This is something that would have helped me include individuals on the spectrum into this study.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION

My curiosity about social entrepreneurial organizations began a few years ago when I became interested in how such organizations identified problems in their communities and effectively addressed them. In interviewing members of these organizations, I witnessed how passionate and dedicated they are to addressing social issues. The quotations pulled into this piece do not adequately describe how passionate these people are. The members of Cultivadores and Viewfinder have taught me that the process of addressing these issues may not be the smoothest, but when there is no one else stepping up to address them, the rough course an organization is taking may be the best.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A   Interview Guide for Viewfinder

Interview Guide (an adapted version created using Guest, Namey, & Mitchell, 2013)
Estimated Interview Time: 30-60 Minutes

Possible Greeting
I want to begin by thanking you for setting aside time from what I am sure is a very busy schedule. I have done quite a bit of research on social entrepreneurial organizations, so I know it is really a privilege to be able to spend the next hour or so speaking with you. As you know this interview will be used to inform my Master's Thesis, I also have hopes to publish this in a journal and continue my research in related fields. To start this interview, I would like to ask you to sign an informed consent form. Feel free to take a few minutes to read it and I can answer any questions you may have.

informed consent form

Thank you. The reason I am so interested in organizations, such as [organization name], is because my bigger research interest has to do with social change. I have two sets of questions, those that focus on you and those that focus on [organization name]. I would like to start with some background information. To get us started…

Questions about individual identity (15-20 minutes)
1. I want to know more about your life before the creation of [organization name]. Can you tell me about any jobs or hobbies you had before (coming onboard)/(creating) [organization name]?

2. What are some memorable moments in your life that influenced what you are doing today?

3. If you were to describe yourself to others, how would you describe yourself

4. What was the first step you took to create the organization? -or- How/Why did you become a part of the organization?

Since we seem to be touching a lot on your role in [organization name]. Let's talk about it.

Questions about organizational building (35-40 minutes)
I have a few quick questions about your organization's history. These are just to fact check my other research. What year was the organization created? How many organizational member's does it have?

1. Tell me about [organization name].

>   a. *What is [organization name]'s mission, or ultimate goal?*

2. There are a lot of organizations that are geared providing support for people with autism/Asperger's syndrome. How do you feel that your organization is different?

3. There are a lot of articles, on your website and social media pages that address the issue of educating people about autism. What do you hope those articles communicate about your organization?

4. How have you seen the organization develop over time? What were key moments in the organization's development?

5. I have a timeline for you to fill out. On one side, just fill in the year your organization was created and consider the other end to be the present. There are four slots. I want you to take a few moments to think about 4 major turning points for the organization and briefly describe them in each space.

6. How has the organization changed with each new member that comes on board?
>   a. *For example, I noticed that the organizational member's photos were recently replaced by cartoons. Can you tell me why they were changed?*

7. It seems like you have done quite a bit of travelling in the past year or two. Can you explain some of the locations and why you went there?

8. Let's continue by making a list. On one side list who you believe are the organization's biggest supporters, and on the other list people, organizations, things that have created roadblocks in your organization's development.

9. Who are your organization's main audiences?

10. How do you communicate with them?

11. I am going to backtrack and ask more of an individual question: At any point did you (as an individual) feel like stopping?

12. For the social entrepreneur: Is there a reason you stepped off your role as president?
>   a. *For others: I noticed that since the organization was founded there were several changes to the organization's management. In your opinion, why has the organization's management undergone so many changes in the past year?*

13. Have you ever wanted to quit/stop volunteering? Why or why not?

14. Has your organization been successful? How do you know?

15. What is the organization's ultimate goal?

16. What is your ultimate goal?

Concluding Questions (5 minutes)
1. Is there anything you believe I missed?

Thank you so much for your time. I have provided my contact information for you to be able to contact me.

Appendix B   Interview Guide for Cultivadores

Guía de entrevista (versión adaptada de Guest, Namey, & Mitchell, 2013)
Tiempo Estimado: 30-60 Minutes

Saludo
Quiero empezar por agradecerle que tomo tiempo de lo que me imagino es un día muy ocupado. He estado estudiando organizaciones sociales empresariales, por eso se que es un privilegio poder hablar con usted por la proxima hora. Como usted sabe, esta entrevista informará mi tesis, pero tengo esperanzas de publicarlo y continuar mis investigaciones en temas relacionadas. Para empezar, quería pedirle que leyera y firmara una forma de consentimiento informado.

forma de consentimiento informado

Gracias. La razón por lo que me interesan este tipo de organizaciones es porque mi meta mas grande es estudiar el cambio social. Tengo dos grupos de preguntas, las que se concentran en usted y aquellas que se enfocan en [nombre de organización]. Para empezar…

Preguntas sobre identidad individual (15-20 minutos)
1. Me gustaria saber mas sobre su vida antes de la creacion de [nombre de organizacion]. ¿Me podrias decir de algunos trabajos o pasatiempos que tuvo antes de (hacer parte de)/(crear) [nombre de organización]?

2. ¿Cuáles son algunos momentos memorables en su vida que hayan influido lo que usted hace hoy?

3. ¿Si usted fuera a describirse a otra persona, como lo haría?

4. ¿Cual fue el primer paso que usted tomó para crear la organización? -o- ¿Como/Porque se hizo parte de la organización?

5. ¿Cual es su oficio dentro de la organización?

Parece que seguimos regresando a esta tema sobre su trabajo con [nombre de organización]. Hablemos de eso.

Preguntas sobre la construcción de la organización (35-40 minutos)

Tengo unas preguntas rápidas sobre la historia de la organización. Estas son nadamas para confirmar unos datos que he encontrado. ¿En que año fue establecida la organización? ¿Cuantos miembros tiene?

1. ¿Cual es el objetivo, o misión, de [nombre de organización]?

2. ¿Como ha visto que la organización se desarrolle con el tiempo? Cuales fueron los ¿momentos significativos en el desarrollo de la organización?

3. Continuaremos por hacer una lista. En un lado por favor liste los más grandes partidarios de la organización, y en el otro liste personas, organizaciones, y otras cosas que han presentado obstáculos en el desarrollo de su organización.

4. ¿Cuales son las audiencias principales de su organización?

5. ¿Como se comunica con sus audiencias principales?

6. Quiero retroceder un poquito y preguntar algo más individual: ¿En algún momento consideró para su trabajo con la organización?

7. ¿Ha sido exitosa su organización? ¿Como lo sabe?

Pregunta final (5 minutos)
1. ¿Hay algo que usted cree que se me ha olvidado preguntar?

Le quiero agradecer mucho por su tiempo. Si por alguna razón ocupa comunicarse conmigo, le he dejado mi información de contacto.

Appendix C   Worksheet used to generate interview questions

Before completing this worksheet, compile a list of publicly available artifacts. Answer the following questions for each artifact.

Exigencies: What messages are communicated by the artifact? Are these messages challenges and/or opportunities for the organization? Are these messages reflective of the goal or mission of the organization?

Audiences: Who are the audiences being targeted by the artifact? What traits is the organization asserting onto each audience? Is the message for each audience different?

Constraints and Assets: What is the organization communicating, based on the artifacts, about what is making it more difficult to complete their goals/mission? What additional assets do they have in completing their goals/mission that has enabled their work?

Diversification: What other platforms (e.g., websites, blogs, social media, mail) are the organizations using to communicate with the different audiences publicly? Have these developed or changed over time?

Using the responses to all the previous questions, what topics are most recurrent? What do these topics say about the organization and its practices?

Adapted from Hoffman and Ford's (2009) "Worksheet for describing rhetorical situations in organizations" (p. 75)