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Chapter Title: A micro-entrepreneur network as a community of practice boosting entrepreneurial activities

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Abstract (max 250 words)

This case study describes practices in a micro-entrepreneur peer-to-peer network (MicroENTRE network), an example of a community of practice (CoP) where entrepreneurs, researchers and local public business advisory services (PBAS) seek to promote entrepreneurial behaviour through joint activities, such as sharing ideas, peer learning and business development. The concept was originally established to address the practical needs of micro-entrepreneurs and business development agencies in sparsely populated areas (SPA). Through the network, micro-entrepreneurs and PBAS are provided with direct contact to the university research team, which transfers recent research-based knowledge to the

network. This paper bridges the literature on micro-entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial behaviour in networks through an empirical description of micro-entrepreneurs' activities in the context of a peer-to-peer network using the typical CoP activity classifications developed by Wenger as the framework. The case study is based on the longitudinal analysis of monthly meetings (from 2015 to 2019) of 13 micro-entrepreneur groups. The data consist of participatory observations during the network meetings and the audio recordings and meeting memos of the authors. The findings describe typical examples of CoP activities in the network. For example, entrepreneurs use the network to share ideas, make requests for advice based on experience of fellow entrepreneurs and reuse the assets of other network members. Moreover, the data show that regular, peer-to-peer network meetings, jointly facilitated by PBAS and researchers, are an acceptable and accessible platform for micro-enterprise development in SPA.

Keywords (max 6): micro-entrepreneurs; peer-to-peer network; community of practice; sparsely populated areas; entrepreneurial activities

Introduction

Micro-enterprises with less than 10 employees (see European Commission, 2003) form majority of all companies in Europe (Muller et al., 2018) and in the rest of the world (OECD, 2016). Micro-enterprises need light and cost-effective solutions to develop and run their operations, particularly in sparsely populated areas (SPA), which can lack naturally occurring innovation platforms. Academic literature on (micro)entrepreneurship has placed a great deal of attention on the importance of entrepreneurial networks and shown that they are essential to the start-up and growth of a new firm (Drakopoulou Dodd & Anderson, 2007). A network provides a rich and complex metaphor for an economic exchange relationship (Easton & Axelsson, 1992), and one solution is participation in a peer-to-peer network for sharing ideas,

learning and business development. To that end, this longitudinal empirical study aims to introduce the concept of a micro-entrepreneur peer-to-peer network (MicroENTRE network) to promote the growth and internationalization of micro-enterprises, as well as explore the activities that entrepreneurs perform during and in-between these network meetings. The present chapter describes the principles of the network concept, demonstrates our experiences coordinating the activity of a network of 13 local groups over a four-year period (data covers the years 2015-2019) and assesses the network's activities based on the typical community of practice (CoP) activities by Wenger (2011).

A CoP can be self-organized by members or brought together by an external organizer to encourage interchange between practitioners (Hildreth & Kimble, 2004). CoPs are drivers that ensure that social networks are built within organizations in a natural, unforced way (du Plessis, 2008). The peer-to-peer network concept discussed here was originally launched in 2015 by researchers at the University of Oulu, Finland, in cooperation with several PBAS organizations and micro-entrepreneurs in Northern and Eastern Finland. As of the writing of this paper, a total of 13 local groups in different regions have been established, and, together, they form the nationwide MicroENTRE growth network. A research team at the University of Oulu coordinates the nationwide network, while the local PBAS organizations have the practical responsibility of organizing the monthly meetings. The empirical data used in this study were collected through participatory observations, audio recordings and memos of the meetings of the network. Thus, the present study adopts the practice-based framework recommended by scholars, such as Chalmers and Shaw (2017), to systematically analyse the construction of entrepreneurial contexts through episodes of naturally occurring social interaction.

The present concept was originally established to meet the needs of companies in SPA for peer support and a platform for social networking. Rural businesses face significant

development constraints related to their distance from customers and lack of easy access to business advice (Keeble, Tyler, Broom, & Lewis, 1992). In addition, an entrepreneur in a rural region often does not have natural access to collegial support from other entrepreneurs facing similar growth and management challenges, and local publicly-funded business development agencies typically meet entrepreneurs one-on-one. CoPs can enable geographically dispersed people to collaborate with relative ease (Du Plessis, 2005, pp. 197–198), and the concept of organized monthly group meetings with a focus on micro-entrepreneurs and an agenda set by the target group was warmly welcomed.

Regions can influence entrepreneurial activities via a shared culture or a set of formal and informal rules (Werker & Athreye, 2004). Initially, the launch of each micro-entrepreneur group was funded by separate European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) projects. After the completion of the launch projects, local business development agencies in each region have taken or will take over the facilitation activity as part of their business service offerings. All but one of the launch projects are still ongoing at the time of writing this study report.

The core idea of the concept is that the MicroENTRE network provides entrepreneurs with a forum where they can meet, share ideas and experiences and plan joint development efforts. The network is coordinated and the meetings are facilitated through a cooperation between the research team, as the original activators and national coordinators of the concept, and PBAS organizations, as representatives of the local business and region development stakeholders. Each event is hosted by one of the network member entrepreneurs at his/her company, and the events take place in the evening, which is outside of the active business hours of most of the participating entrepreneurs (Hänninen, Jokela, Saarela, & Simunaniemi, 2017). The host entrepreneur selects the theme of the event, and the meeting starts with him/her sharing his/her company's background information and motivation for the selected

theme. An open discussion and an exchange of experiences around the theme are the most important parts of the event.

Wenger (1998, 2000) stressed that not all forms of joint work could be labelled CoP, but particular characteristics (e.g. individuals doing things together, developing a sense of place, purpose and common identity, and resolving their differences) are required in order to be considered to be dynamic learning environments. When entrepreneurs attend a social event, such as a MicroENTRE network meeting, they have a chance to reflect on cognitive and emotional experiences with their peers and to learn from these experiences. Wenger, McDermott and Snyder (2002, p. 4) defined CoPs as ‘groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis.’ Committed entrepreneurs have their own companies but share many common needs and concerns related to the management and development of their small businesses with other group members. As such, a CoP can also be an introductory vehicle for knowledge management in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) worldwide by helping them expand their knowledge management practices within their organizations (Du Plessis, 2008).

In this paper, we share examples of the practical activities undertaken by the entrepreneurs in the MicroENTRE network meetings, as well as the business development experimentations that were inspired by their participation in the network. The contribution of the present study is to extend our understanding of how micro-entrepreneurs use the MicroENTRE network to support their entrepreneurial processes. Inspired by Goss (2005), this study focuses on the social processes that help to produce and reproduce entrepreneurial actions.

Theoretical framework

Micro-entrepreneurs' need for social networks

Micro-sized enterprises are defined as ‘enterprises which employ fewer than 10 persons and whose annual turnover and/or annual balance sheet total does not exceed two million euros’ (European Union (EU) Commission, 2003). Micro-enterprises are the most common type of SMEs, accounting for 93.1% of all enterprises of the EU28 countries (Makowska et al., 2019).

Micro-entrepreneurs are a dynamic, heterogeneous group, which is comprised of solo entrepreneurs, start-up founders, lifestyle entrepreneurs, family business owners and growth entrepreneurs, among others. They are also characterized by a large proportion of young enterprises, high growth rates and high exit rates (Falk et al., 2014). Fundamentally, each micro-enterprise is largely dependent on the owner-manager and his/her networks (Devins, Gold, Johnson, & Holden, 2005; Kelliher & Reinl, 2009); therefore, he/she plays a pivotal role in the micro-enterprise’s survival and success. In addition, micro-entrepreneurs typically face a set of constraints related to limited financial resources, limited expertise and limited time resources (e.g., Gherhes, Williams, Vorley, & Vasconcelos, 2016; Kelliher & Henderson, 2006; O’Dwyer & Ryan, 2000).

Network as a community of practice

Wenger (2011) described CoPs as ‘groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly’. Social structure is an intrinsic part of the entrepreneurial process (Drakopoulou Dodd & Anderson, 2007).

Wenger (2000), Wenger and Snyder (2000) and Wenger et al. (2002) defined the three core characteristics of a CoP as follows: domain, community and practice.

A CoP’s identity is defined by a shared domain of interest. In the MicroENTRE network, the domain of interest is micro-entrepreneurship, and the members seek practical knowledge, experience and partners to lead their companies to growth. The community is a group of

entrepreneurial individuals who decide to form a peer group. Finally, people become members of a CoP through shared practices; in other words, they are linked to each other through their involvement in certain common activities. This mutual engagement binds the members of a CoP together as a social entity (Wenger, 1998). The members agree upon rules and build trust through the formation of the group. The practice of the MicroENTRE network consists of monthly meetings in the members' business facilities discussing a topic decided by the hosting entrepreneur.

Wenger (2011) classified 11 typical activities through which CoP members can develop their practice. These activities are: problem-solving, requests for information, seeking experience, reusing assets, coordination and strategy, building an argument, growing confidence, discussing development, documentation projects, visits and mapping knowledge and identifying gaps. Wenger's descriptions of these typical activities in CoPs in general and the empirical examples in the context of MicroENTRE network are shown in Table 1 in the Results section.

Methods

Data collection

This is a descriptive case study based on the longitudinal empirical analysis of 13 micro-entrepreneur peer-to-peer groups with regular monthly meetings during the period of 2015 to 2019. The research process is shown in Figure 1.

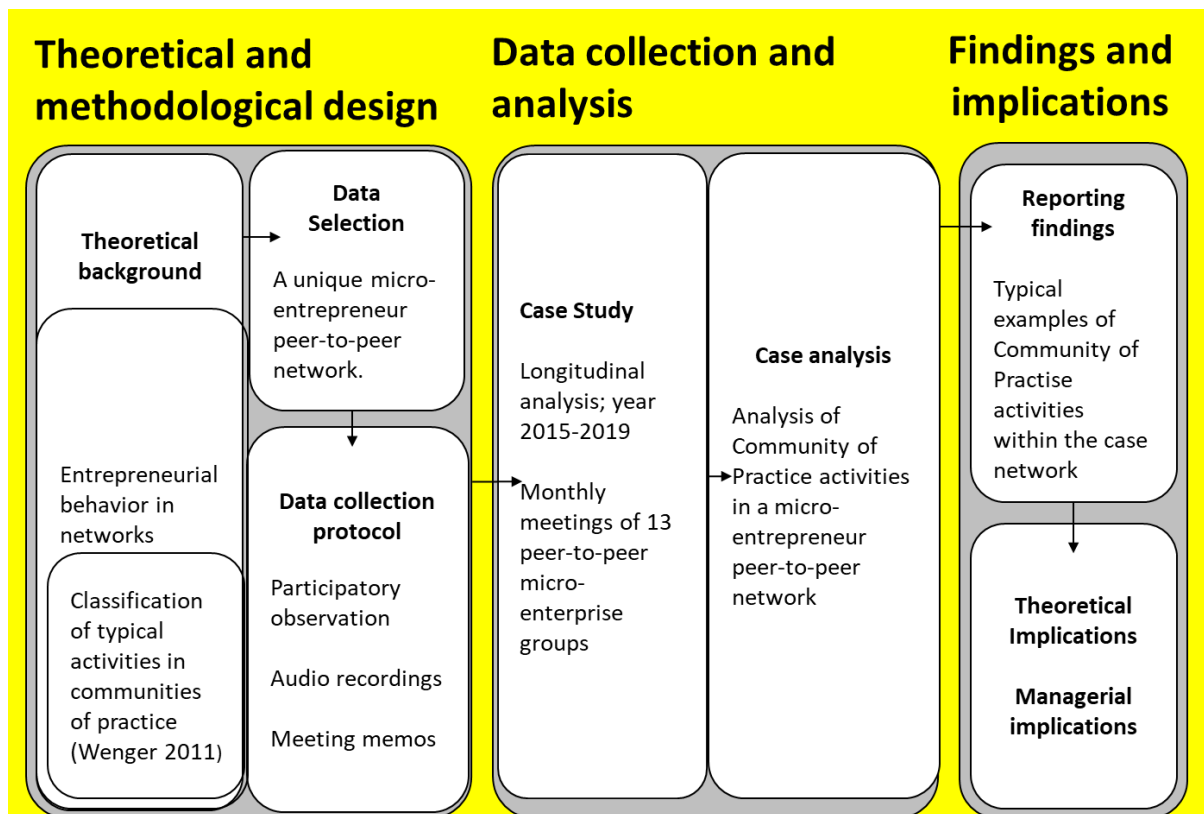


Figure 1 Logical illustration of the research process.

The main data consist of participatory observations in the MicroENTRE network meetings and related meeting memos by all authors. Moreover, the meetings of five groups during 2016-2018 were audio-recorded, and these were used as validation of the meeting memos. The meeting facilitators (PBAS or researchers) summarized the main conclusions from each meeting on the joint online website of the network. All authors actively participated in the network meetings during the study period and had access to the audio recordings and meeting memos. Moreover, the authors had a consultative role with the PBAS organizations and micro-entrepreneurs in the network between the meetings.

Data analysis

To capture the entrepreneurial activities in the network meetings, we adopted the classification of typical CoP activities by Wenger (2011) as the analysis framework. For each of the 11 classification types (listed in Table 1), we looked for one or more illustrative practical examples in the context of the MicroENTRE peer-to-peer network.

RESULTS

Micro-entrepreneurs' activities in the peer-to-peer network meetings

The examples of each activity in the context of the micro-entrepreneurs' peer-to-peer network are discussed below, and a summary is shown in Table 1.

Problem-solving. Entrepreneurs use each MicroENTRE network meeting as a forum for solving some of their management and business-related problems with help and experience from other entrepreneurs. Typically, the host entrepreneur takes the floor at the beginning of the meeting, introduces his/her company and raises a practical problem, e.g. software development for offer calculation. The group then works with the problem through an unstructured discussion, or the facilitator (the researcher or the local business development agent) leads the process through a functional problem-solving activity. In the most successful cases, some of the entrepreneurs continued working on the problem after the meeting.

Requests for information. MicroENTRE network members have experience and knowledge on issues that other members find helpful. For instance, one entrepreneur wanted to start exporting his products to another country, but he did not have a contact person in the target market. Another entrepreneur knew several suitable persons and was willing to make these connections.

Seeking experience. Entrepreneurs often encounter situations that are new to them and for which there seem to be several possible solutions. The MicroENTRE network forum can be used to hear how others have tackled a similar problem. For instance, one entrepreneur had a sudden need for a new employee, but she could not find anyone suitable. The group shared several alternative recruitment solutions from which the entrepreneur could pick the ones that suited her best.

Reusing assets. The MicroENTRE network is a forum where entrepreneurs become aware not only of their needs but also of their assets. One excellent example is a group of entrepreneurs who decided in one meeting to combine their resources and implement a sales road trip around Eastern Finland. One entrepreneur offered his vehicle for use, the others sold their products out of his car and the profits were shared based on a joint agreement. None of these entrepreneurs could have carried out this endeavour without the others.

Coordination and strategy. The meetings are not only an arena for sharing experiences but also for coordinating joint business activities between the members. After learning what the members of their MicroENTRE network group produced and in what kinds of facilities they sold their products or services, two entrepreneurs started to coordinate the sales of their products at the sales facility of a third member. This increased the selection and attractiveness of the sales facility, and the producers could reach new customers without undertaking new marketing efforts.

Building an argument. Although entrepreneurs often have a shared opinion on a given topic, sometimes the discussion at the network meetings takes the form of argumentation for and against a certain issue. For instance, one entrepreneur was convinced that he would never become an employer, but the other participants in his group argued convincingly for

recruiting more staff. In the end, the discussion made the entrepreneur re-evaluate his decision, and he hired his first employee.

Growing confidence. It is typical for a micro-entrepreneur to struggle alone with his/her decisions. The peer-to-peer network offers a unique forum where a micro-entrepreneur can test his/her ideas with colleagues who are or have been in a similar situation. As an example, one entrepreneur was unsure whether he should take the initiative to strategically expand his business. After pondering his alternatives with the group, he realized that launching an active expansion strategy was the only way to save his business from decline.

Discussing developments. MicroENTRE network group members can act collectively as a living lab for testing product and service prototypes before they are launched for customers. For example, for a micro-enterprise selling its goods in a section within a physical store, other network members made a ghost shopping experiment in the store with a pre-structured paper form to improve the shop's attractiveness and functionality. In another MicroENTRE network group, an entrepreneur used his network's WhatsApp group to get feedback on his company's new logo.

Documentation projects. As part of the MicroENTRE network concept, the participating researchers document the meetings in order to be able to monitor the group's process, and they take notes on entrepreneurs' expressed needs in order to be able to provide developmental support. The researchers update the participant lists and audio-record the meetings, with the permission of the participants, for further research purposes. The entrepreneurs are interviewed to identify their barriers for growth and to receive feedback on the concept. The entrepreneurs are not required to document their own experiences, but they are provided with social media forums for free discussions between the monthly meetings.

Visits. The physical meetings are organized at member entrepreneurs' business facilities. For many host entrepreneurs, giving a short introduction at the start of the meeting is a stressful idea; however, a familiar location makes them feel more relaxed. Being in the very place where the host's business activities happen makes the given problem or theme more comprehensible for the other entrepreneurs.

Mapping knowledge and identifying gaps. Sometimes peer-to-peer discussions lead to unexpected realizations. For example, while listening to other entrepreneurs' descriptions of the kinds of services they needed, one entrepreneur understood that the other network members could be a potential customer segment for his services.

Table 1. Mapping MicroENTRE network activities using Wenger’s (2011) typical CoP activity classifications

Classification	Wenger’s example of typical activity <i>(direct quotations)</i>	Examples of MicroENTRE Network Activities
Problem-solving	‘Can we work on this design and brainstorm some ideas; I’m stuck’.	One network group participated in the co-development of a new software program after one entrepreneur spoke about the problems he had with offer calculation. In another group, an entrepreneur promised to help a colleague learn how to use Google Analytics. These kinds of mentoring sessions took place in the meetings quite regularly.
Requests for information	‘Where can I find the code to connect to the server?’	One entrepreneur wanted to export to Sweden, and another entrepreneur, an expert export consultant, was able to help find contacts. He also had a great connection to an agent in the target market, who was also able to offer needed office space and network with other Finnish export businesses.
Seeking experience	‘Has anyone dealt with a customer in this situation?’	The host entrepreneur of a meeting, who was suffering from a sudden shortage of capable employees, sought information on the experiences of her peers. She commented, ‘It was to interesting find out that others have experienced similar challenges but have found different creative solutions to this particular challenge. An entrepreneur understands the other entrepreneur best’. The shared experiences included outsourcing without hiring, the use of public employment services, the effective use of digital networks for hiring and employee ownership programs.
Reusing assets	‘I have a proposal for a local area network I wrote for a client last year. I can send it to you, and you can easily tweak it for this new client’.	During a network event, two entrepreneurs found that their products shared a common theme, which could be used for boosting sales and sharing logistics and marketing costs during the high season. Therefore, the entrepreneurs organized a joint summer marketing and sales promotion campaign at Finnish summer festivals.

		They shared logistics and a sales booth and created a joint branding and social media campaign. The profits were also shared based on a joint agreement.
Coordination and strategy	‘Can we combine our purchases of solvent[s] to achieve bulk discounts?’	One entrepreneur sold the products of her peer entrepreneurs through her own company. She coordinated a joint marketing campaign by asking 10 fellow entrepreneurs to build an exhibition house in a sparsely populated region to showcase their innovative capabilities for domestic and international markets. Using an entrepreneurial, opportunity-driven approach, a mutual agreement was soon reached, and the construction started within three weeks of when the idea was shared. The project lasted for around one year and attracted attention in both domestic and international markets (with on-site visitors from many countries, including Japan). None of the participating micro-enterprises could have afforded such a marketing effort by themselves.
Building an argument	‘How do people in other countries do this? Armed with this information, it will be easier to convince my ministry to make some changes’.	After discussions in his group, one entrepreneur employed his first worker, overturning an earlier decision not to hire employees. He had said many times in the meetings that he would never employ a worker in his company. However, the arguments and experiences of other entrepreneurs made him re-evaluate this decision.
Growing confidence	Before I do it, I’ll run it through my community first to see what they think’.	One entrepreneur got a final push to start the active expansion of his company as a result of a meeting. The entrepreneur commented, ‘I got a feeling that now that project must be started’. Without the new approach, the turnover of the company would probably have dramatically decreased.
Discussing developments	‘What do you think of the new CAD system? Does it really help?’	One entrepreneur shared a novel product idea, which was still in the development stage. The group gave first-hand feedback on the product and further development ideas. Another entrepreneur tested a new service concept in a session, and the other entrepreneurs gave creative comments on how to further develop the concept.

<p>Documenting projects</p>	<p>'We have faced this problem five times now. Let us write it down once and for all'.</p>	<p>The network meetings were documented by the researchers and business development agents attending the meetings. The entrepreneurs filled in web-based feedback surveys, and their discussions were audio-taped for research use. The entrepreneurs also participated in individual interviews on their growth intentions. In between the meetings, the entrepreneurs could use closed Facebook and WhatsApp groups for continued discussions.</p>
<p>Visits</p>	<p>'Can we come and see your after-school program? We need to establish one in our city'.</p>	<p>Each meeting was organized in the business facility of one of the members. Visiting other entrepreneurs' facilities stimulated creativity and helped each member understand the others' businesses better.</p>
<p>Mapping knowledge and identifying gaps</p>	<p>'Who knows what, and what are we missing? What other groups should we connect with?'</p>	<p>Discussions with other members made some entrepreneurs realize that they could perceive other micro-entrepreneurs not only as peers but also as potential customers.</p>

Discussion

This paper has presented the basic logic of the micro-entrepreneur peer-to-peer network concept and provided practical examples of the activities of the entrepreneurs during MicroENTRE network meetings. As shown by the analysis of the findings, all of the typical CoP activities classified by Wenger (2011) could be identified in the context of the micro-entrepreneurs' peer-to-peer network. The present network concept is an example of a community of people seeking solutions, peer support and new partners for business-related issues. In addition to a shared domain, community and practice (Wenger, 2000; Wenger & Snyder, 2000; Wenger et al., 2002), CoP membership also implies a shared competence that distinguishes its members from other people. In the peer-to-peer network, competence refers to acting as an owner-manager of a micro-enterprise. Each of the members brings a unique skill set to the CoP, which is then shared to create a greater body of knowledge and skills amongst the members of the community (du Plessis, 2008). Knowledge is one of the most important resources for an organisation, contributing to its competitive edge and providing a sustainable advantage in a competitive and dynamic economy (e.g., Foss & Pedersen, 2002; Pan & Scarbrough, 1999). Entrepreneurs do not need to interact and work together daily to engage in joint actions and discussions according to their shared interests. During the network meetings, they help each other, share knowledge and learn through their relationships with the other members. These actions can also be continued between meetings either among the entrepreneurs or as joint development activities with the PBAS business development experts and the researchers.

CoPs can be very technologically advanced, e.g. using enterprise content management systems, or as simple as a group of like-minded people discussing a work-related problem and seeking a solution using no or limited technology (du Plessis, 2008). The main goal of the MicroENTRE network concept is to provide new ideas for entrepreneurs and help them

find new ways to develop their businesses. The meetings provide the members with valuable networking possibilities and advice, and they are important forums for negotiation, learning, meaning and identity (Wenger, 1998). CoP members continuously interact and communicate. This includes talking about their work, posing questions, raising problems, offering solutions, constructing answers, laughing at mistakes and discussing changes (Brown & Duguid, 1991; Wenger, 2004).

Since the local network groups were launched, the entrepreneurs have participated in steering the activities within the network; therefore, the network is considered to be micro-enterprise-driven. The CoP members develop a pool of collective knowledge, which transcends any individual's knowledge and is accessible to all members (Brown & Duguid, 2000). Pyrko, Dörfler and Eden (2017) introduced a trans-personal knowing process of thinking together, arguing that 'without thinking together, CoPs cannot exist'. There is a recognized need for research that explores the knowledge creation role of thinking together, as well as the adoption of thinking together as a perspective for interpreting and comparing the nuances of the practices of different communities:

In the light of the concept of thinking together, an assumption that knowledge can be literally transferred from one person to another can be considered as naïve; instead, thinking together stresses that tacit knowledge is shared only in the sense that it is redeveloped as people discover each other's performances in practice and they learn together and from each other, rather than being acquired or replicated (Pyrko et al., 2017).

CoPs can be cultivated but not managed because thinking together cannot be simply imposed by managers (Pyrko et al., 2017) or other external experts who decide that they 'want to have a CoP'. To sum up the findings, our study shows that participation in network meetings can launch unpredicted, new insights for micro-entrepreneurs. Through discussions with their

peers on shared managerial issues, entrepreneurs receive knowledge and confirmation for their managerial decisions, but sometimes they may also re-evaluate micro-entrepreneurs as a reference group. For instance, as noted above, as a direct result of his CoP participation, one micro-entrepreneur began to consider other group members as a potentially relevant customer segment. This transfer of tacit knowledge to explicit knowledge is one of the areas where CoPs can make a significant impact (du Plessis, 2008). New insights, which only occur through this kind of interaction, prove that the CoP context is valuable.

Implications

The aims of the MicroENTRE network concept are twofold. First, the network provides micro-entrepreneurs with a forum that fosters social interaction with other entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs often use networks to gain access to economic resources, but networks can also provide entrepreneurs with access to useful, reliable, exclusive and relevant information, which, in turn, improves the likelihood that the entrepreneurs' companies will be successful (Brüderl & Preisendörfer, 1998).

Second, micro-entrepreneur networks can provide researchers with access to rarely available data on how and why micro-entrepreneurs participate in a network and how they use the network to boost their entrepreneurial activities. Through participatory observation and immediate interaction between researchers and entrepreneurs, new knowledge on the social dimensions of the entrepreneurship process is gained. Some of the meetings were audio recorded for research purposes, and the entrepreneurs were interviewed after a few months or a year in the network. In addition, online feedback was gathered after each meeting. The analysis of this information has provided the researchers with a deeper and more vivid understanding of how micro-entrepreneurs identify themselves, their goals and aims and what motivates them to attend the network meetings and develop their businesses.

Our example demonstrates that CoP membership can be successfully built between organizations with a common interest. The motive for collaboration can be learning from partners in order to develop experts and expertise, which can, in turn, be widely exploited within the individual organizations (Kimble, Li, & Barlow, 2000).

Li et al. (2009) highlighted several key characteristics of the CoP concept, such as support for formal and informal interactions between novices and experts and an emphasis on learning and sharing knowledge, which can enhance members' sense of belonging. Some communities do self-organize and are very effective, but most communities need some cultivation to be sure that members get the most value for their time (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015).

Through the MicroENTRE network, a group of researchers at the University of Oulu and PBAS organizations from different regions co-created a forum to help enterprises in SPA. Launching and sustaining formal networks is a means to encourage business contact development in a geographical region (Lefebvre, Lefebvre, & Simon, 2015). In the present concept, the PBAS organizations and the university invested people, time and money to carry on the efforts to manage and develop network activities in several local groups. The concept gives entrepreneurs and researchers a platform to share a common interest (small business management and pursuit for business growth), as well as develop, disseminate and benefit from the acquired common knowledge.

Conclusions

The present findings show that facilitated network meetings provide an entrepreneur-centred forum for social interaction and peer support between micro-entrepreneurs. The peer-to-peer network is also a resourceful platform for gaining new knowledge on the entrepreneurial process and the social context of entrepreneurship. Micro-entrepreneurs need peer support

and practical examples for business development and growth management. As such, regularly organized peer-to-peer network meetings with local business development agencies and researchers are acceptable and accessible for micro-entrepreneurs in sparsely populated areas.

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